

Questions for “The Principles of Newspeak:” This essay is actually at the end of *1984* but I like starting with it because it explains some of the language of the novel. **Oceania** is the country where the novel takes place. The world is essentially divided into three main “countries” or “territories”: **Oceania**, which includes North & South America, England, the southern-most part of Africa, and Australia; **Eurasia**, which includes the rest of Europe and the entire Soviet Union; **Eastasia**, covers Japan, Korea, China, and northern India. These three superstates are at constant war with one another. Oceania is always at war either with Eurasia or Eastasia. The main political structure of Oceania is **Ingsoc** – a form of oppressive socialism – whereby society is classified into three major groups: The Inner Party, the Outer Party, and the Proles (short for proletariat). Language is the medium by which the Inner Party oppresses the other two groups and keeps them under control. Read and annotate “The Principles of Newspeak.” Annotate means you make notes in the margins, underline key passages, circle words you do not know or understand, make “??” in the margins next to things you don’t get, write text speech “WTH? (What the heck?), or “LOL,” etc. Answer the following questions as or after you read. Sorry I couldn’t be here today, but the roads were uber-bad. ☹ Just to be helpful, *etymology* means the root of words. When the author says “etymological plan” he means, essentially, normal grammar rules.

Some of this essay is heavy, and I know you’re not gonna’ understand all of it. But, remember, *I care about your brain here so stretch those neurons*, and try to connect this new knowledge to old knowledge. Just reading and annotating and trying to answer these questions will build brain cells (regardless of whether you “like” it or not ☺).

1. What does Ingsoc stand for?
2. What is Oldspeak?
3. What is the purpose of Newspeak?
4. What is a heretical thought?
5. How does Newspeak diminish the range of thought?
6. What kinds of words does the A vocabulary contain?

7. What happens to adjectives in Newspeak? How do you use adjectives in our daily language and why might this change be significant in how we speak / communicate / think?

8. What kinds of words does the B vocabulary contain?

9. We are the “oldthinkers” mentioned in the B vocabulary. How would you define “unbellyfeel” in the example “Oldthinkers unbellyfeel Ingsoc?” (in your words, not his please).

10. What inferences/assumptions can you make about this culture based on its definitions of “goodsex,” “sexcrime,” and “crimethink?”

11. What is “duckspeak” and how is it (dis)connected to speech and thinking?

12. What words does the C vocabulary contain?

13. Why can't something like the Declaration of Independence be translated into Newspeak?

14. Can Shakespeare and classic literary authors' works be translated into Newspeak? What happens in translation?