

CREATING YOUR OWN ARGUMENT

EXAMPLE: Brainstorm various issues and ideas connected with your topic:

- Utopia/Dystopia
- Totalitarianism/Fascism
- Political alignments mirrored in 1984 – events of WWII
- Socialism vs. totalitarianism – fine line – socialism gone wrong
- Hunger for power
- Controlling one’s very thoughts
- Fear
- War
- Hate
- Psychological manipulation
- Physical control of individuals
- Control of history/information
- Newspeak – doublethink – language as means of control

Creating a thesis: Remember: every thesis and topic sentence must contain not only a topic but also opinion words, which tell us the attitude of the writer toward the topic.

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| (1) Form questions using words from the brainstorm
(use the journalists’ questions: who, what, how, why, where, when) | → | (2) Create a thesis;
answer the questions
(seek <u>opinions</u> that need to be proven not unarguable facts) | → | (3) Deepen the thesis by asking “so what”? Why should we be concerned? How is this important? What can be learned from this? |
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Practice in creating a thesis:

(1) Create **questions** using words from the brainstorm:

- What does the dystopia of 1984 represent?
- How are the dangers of socialism realized by Orwell in the way of totalitarianism?
- How was the future of 1984 shaped by the events of the mid twentieth century?
- How was control maintained by the totalitarian government in 1984?
- In what ways is language a threat to total power and how was this subject dealt with in 1984?

(2) **Answer** your best questions:

- The dystopia of 1984 represents the dangers and a possible outcome of totalitarianism rule.
- Totalitarian aspects presented in 1984 are the means by which Orwell forewarns of dangerous ideals beginning to be realized in Socialism and Fascism.
- The events of 1984 are shaped by the happenings of the mid twentieth century which shattered the earlier ideal of a utopia on Earth.
- Control by the Party in 1984 was maintained by a system of fear, psychological manipulation, and information regulation.
- Language is a threat to the idea of total power because it is a means by which free thought is disseminated.

(3) **Deepen** several of your answers to #2; take them a step further by asking “so what”? Why should we be concerned? How is this important?

- The dystopia presented in 1984 represents not only a danger, but the possible outcome of the fate of mankind, as Orwell saw it, with the rise of power-hungry super nations marching towards the realm of totalitarian rule; a premonition of the future which must be heeded lest a work of fiction become reality.
- The spoken and written word are the means by which ideas, opinion, and free thought are spread; it is the catalyst of revolutions, a right which we often overlook, but so powerful a weapon that its control assures one power over the future.