

1. *Gender roles.* There are many varying stands you can take on the perception in gender roles in 1984. Even examining the symbolism of certain women or the relationships between people of different genders could bring you to some startling conclusions. In this dark, dystopian society, how have gender roles been defined? What is the meaning behind these gender definitions, and what does it mean to the story as a whole? **How are gender roles in today's society similar/dissimilar to those of Orwell's novel, 1984?**
2. *Sex.* Always a popular topic, 1984 directly communicates this intimate aspect as well. What role does sexual intimacy play in 1984? What does it symbolize? Explore the concept of sex in light of 1984 and you'll have an interesting (and perhaps a little edgy) essay on your hands. **In what way(s) could The Party's views of sex be appropriate for our society today?**
3. *Technology.* An often-overlooked topic, technology runs rampant through 1984. Its importance cannot go under appreciated. How does technology function in the course of the book? How does it affect the society (of Oceania)? Is it beneficial, or detrimental? Students can have a lot of fun exploring technology in their 1984 essay. **1984 was written in 1948. How has Orwell's prophecy of technology (and the use of technology) been accurate to today's society?**
4. *Freedom vs Security.* The book 1984 directly attacks the idea of freedom. What is freedom, and do people in this society (Oceania) still have it? Exploring the world of Orwell's dystopian society in relation to the concept of freedom vs. security has always been a major component in discussing the text. **In what way(s) is our society today similar/dissimilar to Oceania's society in regards to freedom and security?**
5. *Power.* Everyone seeks it, but it's the one uniform government that possesses it in 1984. What role does power play? Who has power, and how do they keep it? Exploring the strategies that both the Party, and perhaps other characters, employ in this book to keep power might bring you to some frightening conclusions about the human psychological condition. **How similar is our society today in regards to our governments' desire, hopes, wants of power? Who has the power in today's society? Is that good or bad?**
6. *Certain characters.* Some essays work to understand certain symbolic meanings behind characters, or even their role in another character's life. What is the purpose behind certain characters; what concepts do they represent, or how do they affect the course of the story – and why? Exploring characters can be a great essay topic when done correctly. **Who are some "lesser known" individuals today who have helped the "bigger picture/greater cause"?**
7. *Social standards.* Who is respected in Orwell's dystopia? Who is rejected? How does this contribute to the novel? What does it tell us about mankind, the human condition, or the society in which we find ourselves? Explore the social disparities and dysfunctions of 1984 and you'll have one interesting paper. **Who is respected in today's society? Who is rejected in today's society? What is it that earns and/or loses respect in our society today? How does this impact the way we are seen as humans, as cultured individuals, as a country?**