

Worksheet 8 – O'Brien

Review: Lecture 7: Julia

Where does Julia work, and why is she often covered in oil?

Recall: Lecture 8: O'Brien

Answer these questions after watching the video lecture to check how much you remember.

1. Complete this quotation from Part 1 Chapter 1: "it was not even unorthodoxy that was written across his face, but simply _____"
a) Friendliness c) Understanding
b) Intelligence d) Empathy
2. Complete this quotation from Part 3 Chapter 2: "[Winston] had a curious feeling that O'Brien was his _____"
a) Protector c) Teacher
b) Friend d) Father
3. Complete this quotation from Part 2 Chapter 8: "[O'Brien] gave an impression of confidence and an understanding tinged by _____"
a) Smugness c) Irony
b) Superiority d) Sadness
4. What does Winston become when confronted with the rats in the Ministry of Love?
a) "A screaming child" c) "A screaming monster"
b) "A screaming animal" d) "A screaming fool"

Bonus question: why is this interesting or uncanny?

Analysis

5. In the lecture, Dr Waddell suggests that O'Brien is interesting because "in some ways he is the only person who Winston has any real closeness to." Do you agree? Overall, do you think Winston is closer to Julia or O'Brien? Write a PEE / PEA paragraph explaining your answer.

Evaluation

6. Read the five critical quotations below which are all about Part Three of the novel. Rank them 1-5 – 1 being the one you agree with the most, 5 being the one you agree with the least. Write a couple of sentences on each one, justifying their ranking.

Deutscher: "In the third part of the novel, Orwell is far more intense, far more sado-masochistic, in his description of cruelty and pain."

Woodcock: "O'Brien is an extreme and monstrous form of the pretensions of all men in power."

Harris: "O'Brien reveals to Winston a utopia of sado-masochism, where the highest joy is the loss of self to an absolute authority."

Rissanen: “The Party isolates every individual, destroying all social bonds... all Winston has left is O'Brien.”

Rorty: “the worst thing is to use agony in such a way that even when the agony is over the victim still cannot reconstitute himself.”

Glossary

- **Gentility** – Social superiority, usually shown through respectable manners, behaviour or appearances.
e.g. The hotel had an air of faded gentility.
- **Sceptical** – Having doubts or reservations about something; not easily convinced.
e.g. The civil servant was deeply sceptical about the government's proposals.
- **Transpose** – Cause two things to swap or exchange places.
e.g. Children with dyslexia may sometimes transpose words whilst reading.
- **Uncanny** – Strange or mysterious, usually in an unsettling way.
e.g. He had an uncanny feeling that he was being watched.
- **Antagonist** – In literature, the principal opponent of the main character.
e.g. In many ways, O'Brien is the antagonist to Winston, the protagonist.