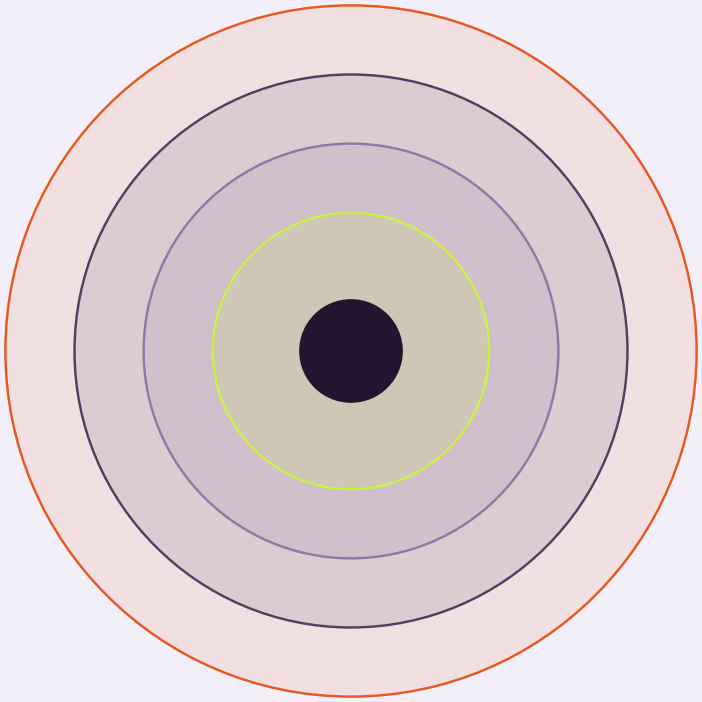


Nineteen Eighty-Four

A reading of the book by George Orwell (1949)

1. ACTION BOOK

CONTENTS

Inside this edition

The book in a minute 3

The takeaways 4

Your action book 6

Before you go 7

PART TWO · THE ACTION BOOK

The setup checklist 9

Translate one sentence a day 10

Ask who did it 11

Wait ten minutes before you share anger 12

ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of Nineteen Eighty-Four, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

George Orwell was the pen name of Eric Blair, an English writer and journalist who fought in the Spanish Civil War and wrote Animal Farm. Nineteen Eighty-Four, his last novel, follows Winston Smith, a clerk at the Ministry of Truth whose job is to rewrite old newspapers so the record always matches what the Party says now. The book shows a state that rules by controlling language, records and attention. Newspeak cuts the words available for dissent, doublethink lets people hold contradictions, telescreens watch every room, and the past is rewritten on demand. Winston resists in small ways, by keeping a diary and by his affair with Julia, until the Thought Police and O'Brien break him. It is a novel, not a manual, but its terms have become everyday tools for spotting manipulation.

Below are the 9 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Cut the words people have, and you cut what they can think.

Newspeak is the Party's language, and it is designed to shrink. Syme, a colleague of Winston's who works on the dictionary, is proud that each new edition has fewer words. The appendix spells out the aim: once the old words are gone, a rebellious thought has nothing to be said in. Watch the words you are given for the things you might want to object to.

2 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Whoever can edit the record can edit the past, and the past is what people use to judge the present.

Winston's job at the Ministry of Truth is to rewrite old newspaper stories so they match whatever the Party says now. The originals go down the memory hole to be burned. Once every copy agrees, there is nothing left to check a promise against. One of the Party's slogans links the two: control the present and you control the past, and through it the future.

3 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Doublethink is believing two things that cannot both be true, and then forgetting that you noticed.

The clearest scene comes during Hate Week, when the enemy changes from Eurasia to Eastasia in the middle of a speech. The crowd carries straight on, and turns on the old banners as sabotage. Doublethink is not stupidity. It is a trained habit of not looking, and milder forms of it are common in ordinary life.

4 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

When you can never tell whether you are being watched, you start watching yourself.

The telescreen in every room both shows and records, and there is no way to know when anyone is looking. So people act as if someone always is, down to the look on their faces. The novel even has a word for the wrong expression: facecrime. The control works because people end up doing the watching for the state.

5 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Anger on a schedule is easy to steer.

Every day, Party members gather for the Two Minutes Hate and shout at the face of Emmanuel Goldstein on the screen. Winston dislikes it and still finds himself joining in, and he notices that the rage can be switched from one target to another. Feeds that reward outrage work in a similar way, so it is worth asking who gains from your anger.

6 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

A war that never ends keeps people poor, scared and loyal.

Oceania is always at war with one of the other two superstates, and the war is never meant to be won. The book Winston is given, said to be by Goldstein, argues that constant war uses up what people produce and keeps everyone afraid and obedient. The lesson for today is to ask what a permanent emergency is being used to justify.

7 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Keeping your own record is a small act of keeping your own mind.

Winston's first rebellion is buying a blank notebook in a junk shop and writing in it, out of the telescreen's view. He doesn't know who it is for, only that putting his thoughts into his own words is something the Party forbids. A diary can't stop a rewrite, but it lets you see when your memory has been changed.

8 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Freedom rests on being allowed to say what plainly checks out.

Winston writes in his diary that freedom begins with being able to state simple arithmetic, and he holds on to it as solid ground. In the Ministry of Love, O'Brien sets out to make him accept a false sum because the Party says so. The point is not the maths. A person who will give up an obvious fact under pressure can be made to give up anything.

9 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Control is complete when people stop trusting each other.

The Party breaks every private bond it can. Children report their parents, as Parsons finds out when his own daughter denounces him, and love is treated as disloyalty. Room 101 exists to make Winston betray Julia, because a person with no one left to trust has nowhere to stand. Protecting your close relationships also protects your judgement.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] Start a paper diary
- [ ] Mute the outrage accounts
- [ ] Check what can watch you
- [ ] Start a record of claims
- [ ] Write your own plain-word list

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Translate one sentence a day
- ◯ Ask who did it
- ◯ Wait ten minutes before you share anger

30 days · Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

☐ SETUP 1

Start a paper diary

Buy a cheap notebook and write three lines tonight: the date, what happened, and what you think about it.

Use paper, and keep it somewhere private.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 2

Mute the outrage accounts

Scroll your main feed for ten minutes and note which accounts leave you angry with nothing to do.

Mute the three worst. Unfollowing works too.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 3

Check what can watch you

Open your phone's privacy settings and review which apps can use your microphone, camera and location.

Turn off access for every app that does not need it.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 4

Start a record of claims

Make one folder for promises and claims that matter to you: a company's terms, a policy pledge, a news report.

Save a copy or an archive link with the date, so you can check later what was really said.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 5

Write your own plain-word list

List five euphemisms you hear at work or in the news, and next to each write what it means in plain words.

Keep the list where you will see it.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Translate one sentence a day

Take one vague or loaded sentence you read today and rewrite it in plain words.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Ask who did it

When a sentence says something was decided, cut or lost, ask who did it.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

Wait ten minutes before you share anger

When a post makes you furious, wait ten minutes before you share it or reply.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

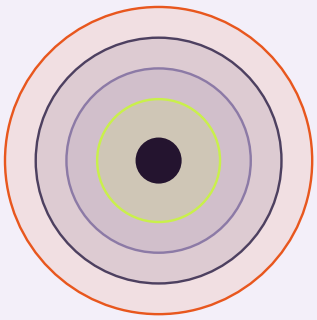
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



Keep your own words and your own record. A free mind starts there.

HOURLIFE NOTE AFTER GEORGE ORWELL