

# Fun with “Thoughtcrime” and “Doublethink”

1984

# Background

Big Brother, the government of Oceania in 1984, attempts to control ideas of the population by introducing an invented language - "Newspeak." This is a simplified version of "Oldspeak," which is what we commonly know as English.

The grammar and rules of Newspeak are described in an appendix at the end of the novel, but a few of the words are introduced early on:

**Ingsoc** = English Socialism; **Doublethink** = believing two contradictory ideas at once; **Thoughtcrime** = thoughts that question the government

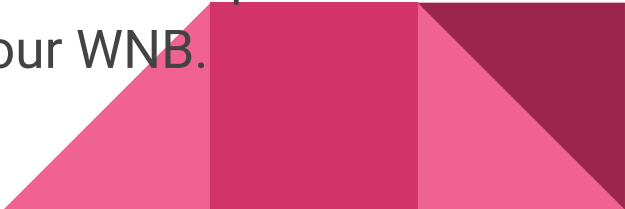


# Fun with “Thoughtcrime”

Do you ever find yourself thinking thoughts that go against the organization or activity you are participating in?

Think of an organization that you belong to or are familiar with (could even be school). Every organization has rules, beliefs, principles, and standards. If your thoughts go against these, even if you are physically abiding by them, Big Brother would consider that a “thoughtcrime.”

What organization do you have in mind? What might be examples of a thoughtcrime for this organization? Write them in your WNB.



# Fun with “Doublethink”

Do you ever find yourself believing two contradictory notions at once? Is it possible to believe both notions at the same time?

Is it possible to believe strongly in a principle such as, “Honesty is the best policy,” and then do the opposite?

Discuss examples of doublethink with a partner or small group. Write some examples in your WNB.

