
KÖNIGS ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Band 108

George Orwell, 1984

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PRÜFUNGSAUFGABEN MIT MUSTERLÖSUNGEN

In Ergänzung zu den Aufgaben im Buch (Kapitel 6) finden Sie hier zwei weitere Aufgaben mit Musterlösungen. Die Zahl der Sternchen bezeichnet das Anforderungsniveau der jeweiligen Aufgabe.

Aufgabe 5 **

Explain the meaning of some leitmotifs of the novel (e.g. varicose ulcer, dust).

Model answer

DEPRESSING
ATMOSPHERE
OF THE STATE

The leitmotifs used in the novel cohere with the politically critical message implied in the novel. Thus, Winston's varicose ulcer and the omnipresent dust are, for instance, symbolic of the dark, shabby and depressing atmosphere of the state. They are repeated regularly and underline this negative mood throughout the novel pointing the reader to a critical view of the presented world and its destructive future effects.

THE
VARICOSE ULCER

The varicose ulcer symbolizes how Winston suffers mentally and also physically from the forces around. He is sick, literally, and the pain is always enflamed when Winston opposes directly or indirectly to the system. This happens when he walks up his flat, where he secretly hides his diary at the beginning of the novel. As he starts writing he feels an itching. In contrast, when Winston enjoys his love affair with Julia in their supposedly secret room above the antique store, the ulcer is almost healed. But as Winston is tortured in the love ministry with no hope left, the pain enforced by the ulcer is hardly endurable.

THE DUST

Similarly, the dust is everywhere right from the beginning of the novel. It is part of the system's permanent warfare and it symbolizes the forced human decay. It is repeatedly mentioned when the system or characters are described (cf. p. 3, the dust in the face of Parsons, p. 22), Winston uses dust to mark his diary and finally, dust is used for the devastating letters on the table which are a symbol of the system's ultimate victory over the last man in Europe Winston Smith: "Almost unconsciously he traced with his finger in the dust on the table: $2 + 2 = 5$ " (p. 303).

Aufgabe 6 **

Explain the function of Goldstein's book in the novel 1984.

Model answer

SCIENTIFIC
EXTRACT

Goldstein's book is a supposedly scientific extract about the system of Oceania and as such it is subtitled with "THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF OLIGARCHICAL COLLECTIVISM" (p. 191). This is what the system stands for since it refers to collectivism as an ideology according to which the individual has no relevance to the whole apart from being part of the whole. There is no social structure anymore, individuality, self-control or private properties are neglected and replaced by organisations of the common good. It is oligarchically ruled by a small group of leaders.

GOLDSTEIN'S
BOOK AND
BROTHERHOOD

The function of this book becomes clear at the first reading of the novel. Only by Goldstein's book does the reader get a properly explained version of the state mechanisms. Winston suffers from since most of the world is shown through the eyes of Winston himself. It summarizes the basic principles of enduring power and is deliberately placed to reinforce the dramatic effect of Winston's imprisonment at the peak of supposed safety in the room above the antique store. Here, he has to realize that both the Brotherhood and Goldstein's book are but mere inventions of the system to detect and control thoughtcrime.