**1984 Discussion Questions – Section 2, Chapters 8-9**

**Chapter Eight**

1. Summarize their encounter with O’Brien, being sure to include all relevant details that we learned.

**Chapter Nine**

1. Why is so much of The Book’s text included?

2. Do you think this section is too didactic? In other words, is Orwell warning us too overtly? If so, is it okay given the cultural/historic times?

Of the three groups, only the Low are never even temporarily successful in achieving their aims. It would be an exaggeration to say that throughout history there has been no progress of a material kind. Even today, in a period of decline, the average human being is physically better off than he was a few centuries ago. But no advance in wealth, no softening of manners, no reform or revolution has ever brought human equality a millimetre nearer. From the point of view of the Low, no historic change has ever meant much more than a change in the name of their masters.

3. Compare and contrast this account of history with our current world. Consider the perpetual wars, jockeying between social classes, etc.

4. Is our pyramidal structure similar to that of Oceania?

5. Explain how CRIMESTOP (267) has affected Julia.

The first and simplest stage in the discipline, which can be taught even to young children, is called, in Newspeak, CRIMESTOP. CRIMESTOP means the faculty of stopping short, as though by instinct, at the threshold of any dangerous thought. It includes the power of not grasping analogies, of failing to perceive logical errors, of misunderstanding the simplest arguments if they are inimical to Ingsoc, and of being bored or repelled by any train of thought which is capable of leading in a heretical direction. CRIMESTOP, in short, means protective stupidity

6. Do you think most of these concepts could’ve been deduced earlier in the novel by observant readers? Did they have to be explicitly stated?

7. Why is there such an emphasis on opposites (war is peace, etc.) in this novel? Use your own deductions as well as any explicit text evidence.

8. How does the woman’s song, repeated again on page 275, now relate to Winston after he has read The Book?

‘They sye that time ‘eals all things, They sye you can always forget; But the smiles an’ the tears acrorss the years They twist my ‘eart-strings yet!

9. How could we have determined earlier that Charrington wasn’t what he seemed? What hints or inferences might we have made?

10. What does their capture tell us about the possibility of overcoming totalitarianism?