**Politics and the English Language-George Orwell**

1.

1. In the opening two paragraphs, what general attitude does Orwell identify as an impediment to the improvement of language usage?
2. In the second paragraph, locate and underline Orwell’s complete thesis.
3. After Orwell clarifies his thesis with a number of examples show that he uses a problem-solution structure to organize the essay.
4. In the interaction between thought and language, which element does Orwell believe must predominate? Why?

2. Identify each of the four main “language tricks” orwell catalogues. In a sentence for each summarize the four points he is making.

3. What does Orwell hope to achieve through his parody of the excerpt from *Ecclesiasstes*?

4. A sixth “language trick” is to write by habit, stringing together” ready-made phrases.” Why does Orwell condemn this approach?

5. What are some of his concerns about political language?

6. Why does Orwell maintain that“ the great enemy of language is insincerity? ”

7. Orwell shows that thought and languages are inexorably intermingled. He states that if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought.” How does he demonstrate his interaction?

8. In *Teaching Language*, Edward Debono says, “ Language provides the handles with which we grasp the world.” Explain why Orwell would agree with this statement, given his contention that, “ language is an instrument for expressing and concealing thought. “ Make specific reference to Orwell’s essay.

9. Orwell claims that the improper use of such devices as metaphors and similes are a symptom of lazy or slovenly language. What are some of the devices Orwell uses in his essay? Can you find any instances of these very rhetorical devices in Orwell's own writing? If so, how do they stand up to his criteria for the appropriate use of language?

10. How does Orwell feel about the role of euphemism in political language? Do you agree or disagree with him? Can you think of any examples of euphemisms from today's world that act the way Orwell is describing?

11. Orwell seems to have very few positive things to say about the use of rhetorical devices. In just a few words, how would you characterize his attitude toward using these devices? Is his attitude absolute? That is, does it apply to every instance in which one might embellish one's language or are there exceptions to his "rules"?

12. Go back into Orwell's text. How would you describe his conception of the relationship between thought and language? How do rhetorical devices play into this relationship?