

These tasks will help you prepare a piece of writing to enter the Orwell Youth Prize 2024, on the theme of 'Home'



LESSON 4: RESEARCH

George Orwell did his own research. But he couldn't rely on YouTube videos. Orwell stayed in the homes of the industrial working class in Depression-era Wigan; he worked among the poorest in London and Paris; he fought in the Spanish Civil War.

Don't worry, though. No one expects secondary school students to travel so far, in space or time. Orwell was also very well-read, with a keen eye for what could be trusted and what was propaganda.

Where do I begin?

Hidden Homelessness

"I was blindsided by the realisation that my own childhood housing precarity was, in fact, a type of homelessness."

Read '[Hidden Homelessness: Exploring Silences](#)' by the inaugural winner of the Orwell Prize for Reporting Homelessness, Freya Marshall Payne:



And listen to our '[Down Not Out](#)' podcast with Secret Lives of Prisons, on the daily reality of homelessness, and the solutions.

Sustainable Housing and the Natural World as Home

Read Architect Rowan Moore's [Guardian article](#) on stone as a sustainable building material

[Read and watch](#) Greta Thunberg's famous 'Our house is on fire' speech at the World Economic Forum in 2019, about the world as our home and what we have to do to save it.

Home and Identity

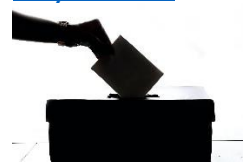
Watch 15 year old Mariam Mekhail's [TED Talk](#) on the true meaning of home, and how it feels to have multiple homes

Local Council

Find out about who makes the decisions which affect your home, your local neighbourhood:

<https://www.gov.uk/understand-how-your-council-works>

And how you can get your voice heard: <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/welcome-your-vote/resources-14-18-year-olds>



You have access to information with an ease and immediacy that Orwell could only have dreamt of. You are also exposed to misinformation in a way that Orwell did dream of ... in his nightmares. Check out 2023 Youth Prize judge Marianna Spring's Royal Television Society video on disinformation and online conspiracies here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjzGgDO8cE> and who starts viral misinformation here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UAY6PI5UtSU> .



Before you research your topic for the Prize, carry out these exercises to help you prepare to get sound, useful information – and fight off the misinformation-makers who are everywhere out there, trying to mislead you.

ACTIVITY

Use Michael Caulfield's 'Four Moves' to assess information on the web.

- Choose two stories from his blog. <https://fourmoves.blog/>
- Then apply the SIFT technique to each story – and record your results in the table attached. <https://www.notion.so/Introducing-SIFT-04db7879dd7a4efaa76bfb2397d11ffd>

“Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And the process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right.”
George Orwell, 1984

Research Activity: SIFT

Stop

Investigate the Source

Find trusted coverage

Trace claims, quotes, and media back to the original context

<p>Stop! How do you feel about this story?</p>	<p>Investigate: what did you find out about the Source?</p>
<p>What better trusted coverage did you find? In what ways was it a better source?</p>	<p>Were you able to trace claims, quotes, and media back to the original context?</p>

	What did you find? Did your views change?
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What have you learned about research from this exercise?
Share your thoughts with others. What did they think?

Now you are ready – hopefully! – to research your topic for your own piece.