Opening Activity: ***Read the following passage from 1984, underline and annotate things you find interesting!***

You think, I dare say, that our chief job is inventing new words. But not a bit of it! We’re destroying words—scores of them, hundreds of them, everyday. We’re cutting the language down to the bone. The Eleventh Edition won’t contain a single word that will become obsolete before the year 2050…

It’s a beautiful thing, the destruction of words. Of course the great wastage is in the verbs and adjectives, but there are hundreds of nouns that can be got rid of as well. It isn’t only the synonyms; there are also the antonyms. After all, what justification is there for a word which is simply the opposite of some other words? A word contains its opposite in itself. Take ‘good,’ for instance. If you have a word like ‘good,’ what need is there for a word like ‘bad’? ‘Ungood’ will do just as well—better because it’s an exact opposite, which the other is not. Or again, if you want a stronger version of ‘good,’ what sense is there in having a whole string of vague useless words like ‘excellent’ and ‘splendid’ and all the rest of them? “Plusgood’ covers the meaning, or ‘doubleplusgood’ is you want something stronger still. Of course we use these forms already, but in the final version of Newspeak there’ll be nothing else. In the end the whole notion of goodness and badness will be covered by only six words—in reality, only one word. Don’t you see the beauty of that, Winston. It was B.B.’s idea originally, of course,” He added as an afterthought (Orwell, 51-52).

* My reaction to this passage is…

Writer’s Notebook Response. *Answer these questions below in your writer’s notebooks when you are finished reading the passage above…*

1. What are some of my favorite words?
2. Words that make me laugh…
3. Words that make me cry…
4. Words I have trouble pronouncing…
5. Words I have trouble spelling…
6. Words I will never forget…
7. Words of wisdom…
8. Words that hurt…
9. Words my parents/others say that drive me crazy
10. Words that teachers should use more (or less) often…
11. Words that motivate me…
12. Words I wish I hadn’t said…

Close Reading #2: *Read the following passage from 1984, and highlight/circle/underline some powerful words choices that Orwell uses…*

One of these days, thought Winston with sudden deep conviction, Syme will be vaporized. He is too intelligent. He sees too clearly and speaks too plainly. The Party does not like such people. One day he will disappear. It is written in his face (53).

Unquestionably Syme would be vaporized, Winston thought again…There was something subtly wrong with Syme. There was something that he lacked: discretion, aloofness, a sort of saving stupidity. You could not say that he was unorthodox. He believed in the principles of INGSOC, he venerated Big Brother, he rejoiced over victories, he hated heretics, not merely with sincerity but with a sort of restless zeal, an up-to-dateness of information, which the ordinary Party Member did not approach. Yet a faint air of disreputability always clung to him. He said things that would have been better unsaid, he read too many books, he frequented the Chestnut Tree Café, haunt of painters and musicians. There was no law, not even an unwritten law, against frequenting the Chestnut Tree Café, yet the place was somehow ill-omened (55).

The quacking voice from the next table, temporarily silenced during the Ministry’s announcements, had started up again, as loud as ever. For some reason Winston suddenly found himself thinking of Mrs. Parsons, with her wispy hair and the dust in the creases of her face. Within two years those children would be denouncing her to the Thought Police. Mrs. Parsons would be vaporized. Syme would be vaporized. Winston would be vaporized. O’Brien would be vaporized. Parsons, on the other hand, would never be vaporized. The eyeless creature with the quacking voice would never be vaporized. The little bettlelike men who scuttled so nimbly through the labyrinthine corridors of Ministries—they, too, would never be vaporized. And the girl with the dark hair, the girl from the Fiction Department—she would never be vaporized either. It seemed to him instinctively who would survive and who would perish, though just what it was that made for survival, it was no easy to say (61).

* Writer’s Notebook Response: Think about our world today. Who are three people you know *would be* vaporized in the world of 1984. Explain *AND/OR* Who are three people you know that *wouldn’t be* vaporized? Explain… USE DETAIL, EXAMPLES, and REALLY EXPLAIN!