Directions: *Read and annotate the text. Take special note of the paperweight and its symbolism throughout the story…*

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As Winston wandered toward the table his eye was caught by a round, smooth thing that gleamed softly in the lamplight, and he picked it up.

It was a heavy lump of glass, curved on one side, flat on the other, making almost a hemisphere. There was a peculiar softness, as of rainwater, in both the color and the texture of the glass. At the heart of it, magnified by the curved surface, there was a strange, pink, convoluted object that recalled a rose of a sea anemone.

“What is it?” said Winston, fascinated.

“That’s coral, that is,” said the old man. “It must have come from the Indian Ocean. They used to kind of embed it in the class. That wasn’t made less than a hundred years ago. More, by the look of it.

“It’s a beautiful thing, said Winston…

What appealed to him about it was not so much its beauty as the air it seemed to possess of belonging to an age quite different from the present one. The soft, rainwatery glass was not like any glass that he had ever seen. The thing was doubly attractive because of its apparent uselessness, though he could guess that it must once have been intended as a paperweight (Orwell, 95-96).

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Winston did not get up for a few minutes more. The room was darkening. He turned over toward the light and lay gazing into the glass paperweight. The inexhaustibly interesting thing was not the fragment of coral but the interior of the glass itself. There was such a depth of it, and yet it was almost as transparent as air. It was as though the surface of the glass had been the arch of the sky, enclosing a tiny world with its atmosphere complete. He had the feeling that he could get inside it, and that in fact he was inside it, along with the mahogany bed and the gateleg table and the clock and the steel engraving and the paperweight itself. The paperweight was the room he was in, and the coral was Julia’s life and his own, fixed in a sort of eternity at the heart of the crystal (Orwell, 147).

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There was another crash. Someone had picked up the glass paperweight from the table and smashed it to pieces on the hearthstone. The fragment of coral, a tiny crinkle of pink like a sugar rosebud from a cake, rolled across the mat. How small, thought Winston, how small it always was! (223).

Annotation Reaction: **what do you make of the paperweight in this book? What is its symbolic purpose or value for the story, for Winston, etc.? Explain…**

WN Response: *Go around my room and grab a knick-knack that is interesting you. When you grab it, take it back to your seat and use it for writing inspiration. If the object is too large/can’t be moved, “pretend.” Remember—you must put the knick-knack back where you found it when we are done!*