Understanding 1984

We will be discussing the role of foreshadowing, theme, and irony in the novel. As such, your task will be to select 2 quotes from each section and analyze and explain how they are examples of either foreshadowing, theme or irony. Select any two quotes. Connect your quotes from the theme section to the theme topics below.

Foreshadowing

1. “Suddenly he was standing on short springy turf, on a summer evening when the slanting rays of the sun gilded the ground… The girl with dark hair was coming towards them across the field. With what seemed a single movement she tore off her clothes and flung them disdainfully aside.”
2. “He know that sooner or later he would obey O’Brien’s summons. Perhaps tomorrow, perhaps after a long delay – he was not certain. What was happening was only the working out of a process that had started years ago. The first step had been a secret, involuntary thought, the second had been the opening of the diary. The last step was something that would happen in the Ministry of Love. He had accepted it: or, more exactly, it was like a foretaste of death, like being a little less alive… He had the sensation of stepping into the dampness of a grave, and it was not much better because he had always known that the grave was there and waiting for him.”
3. “Instead he began thinking of the things that would happen to him after the Thought Police took him away.”
4. “It was inconceivable that they could frequent this place [the room above Charrington’s shop] for more than a few weeks without being caught. But the temptation of having a hiding place that was truly their own, indoors and near at hand, had been too much for the both of them.”

Theme

1. “It was almost normal for people over thirty to be frightened of their own children. And with good reason, for hardly a week passed in which The Times did not carry a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak – “child hero” was the phrase generously used – had overheard some compromising remark and denounced its parents to the Thought Police.”
2. “…he was struggling to think his way backward into the dim period of his early childhood. It was extraordinarily difficult. Beyond the late ‘fifties everything faded. When there were no external records that you could refer to, even the outline of your own life lost its sharpness.”
3. “But this [the newspaper clipping] was concrete evidence; it was a fragment of the abolished past, like a fossil bone that shows up in the wrong stratum and destroys a geological theory. It was enough to blow the Party to atoms, if in some way it could have been published to the world and its significance made known.”
4. “In the end the Party would announce that two and two made five, and you would have to believe it. It was inevitable that they should make that claim sooner or later: the logic of their position demanded it. Not merely the validity of experience, but the very existence of external reality was tacitly denied by their philosophy.”

Irony

1. “‘They can’t do that,” she said finally. ‘It’s the one thing they can’t do. They can make you say anything – *anything* – but they can’t make you believe it. They can’t get inside you.’”
2. “‘Sometimes, Winston. Sometimes they are five. Sometimes they are three. Sometimes they are all of them at once. You must try harder. It is not easy to become sane.’”
3. “He pushed the picture [memory of playing Snakes and Ladders] out of his mind. It was a false memory. He was troubled by false memories occasionally.”
4. “But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won victory over himself. He loved Big Brother.”

\*For the Irony section, please identify what type of irony each one you select is an example of.

Important Themes in 1984

1. The corrupting nature of power.
2. The importance of individual freedom.
3. The qualities that make us human.
4. The importance/fragility of history.
5. The importance of taking a stand even if you lose.
6. The impact of isolation on the individual.
7. The importance of questioning those in power.
8. The importance of language.

Theme is the main lesson or moral of a text. Theme cannot simply be a topic. It needs to comment something **ABOUT** that topic. The theme of *Titanic*, cannot be love. It needs to be **WHAT** the message is **ABOUT** love from the movie. Therefore, the above statements are not fully developed. As a class, we will develop the above **theme topics** into proper **theme statements.**