

Shooting an elephant  
george orwell english  
literature essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

George Orwell is a writer, novelist and essayist. He was born in June 25, 1903 and died last January 21, 1950 at London, England (Bookrags.) He was born with the name Eric Arthur Blair in Motihari, Bengal, where his father was an employee at the Opium Department of the Government of India. Orwell's nationality is British. Moreover, he belongs to the middle-class upbringing in England. He successfully set forward in life using his talent and gift for writing (Bookrags, Book Rags.) From a very early age of five or six years old, he knew then that when upon growing, he will be a writer. Though, he went into a crisis during his seventeen and twenty-four years and left this idea neglected, but fought such feeling. He found his true nature and sooner wrote books (George Orwell, Sonia Orwell, Ian Angus.) Orwell's book of "Nineteen Eighty-Four" shows a fate of courage and strength amidst imperialism. It tells a story taking place in Burma, after 1936, which depicts two of the irreversible lines of demarcation in Orwell's career. Though, others thought that he would have preferred hiding from public with the success of his book, such disappearance would mark an extra step in the cutting of personality and class origins he have pursued to achieve in enthusiasm (Courtney T. Wemyss.)

He changed his name of Eric Blair and later on became George Orwell. This transformation was greatly reflective in "Nineteen Eighty-Four." Two of his most generally anthologized essays are the, "Shooting an Elephant" and "A Hanging." Their settings are both in Burma, wherein his novel "Burmese Days" is recurrently mentioned in discussions cited by Edward Morgan Forster in his own literal piece, "A Passage to India." It is well known that Orwell's experience of being a police officer employed with the Indian

subcontinent was told in the "Shooting an Elephant." In here, he shaped his political outlook (Courtney T. Wemyss.) He cited his views on shooting an elephant, through this quote: "But I did not want to shoot the elephant. I watched him beating his bunch of grass against his knees, with that preoccupied grandmotherly air that elephants have. It seemed to me that it would be murder to shoot him. At that age I was not squeamish about killing animals, but I had never shot an elephant and never wanted to. (Somehow it always seems worse to kill a large animal.)" (George Orwell)

Particularly, he wanted to establish awareness in the reader on a form of self-destruction resulted from the system of government. Its main theme is a total effect of repulsion on imperialism and atrocity. According to him, this can be a jagged tipped sword able to ruin the oppressor and the oppressed. This conclusions were generated from his experiences back in Burma when he was still working under the British government as a police officer. On his anecdote regarding man and life on earth, he said, "I perceived in this moment that when the white man turns tyrant it is his own freedom that he destroys". (Santiago.) In terms of plot, it is arranged chronologically and climactically, with suspense and expresses of the ideas clearly. The plot contributes to the criticism on imperialism, because without telling his dilemma on shooting the elephant, he could not have been very convincing of his views. Orwell's overall attitude is uncertainty and bitterness. Wherein, there is usage of a formal English language, with a little bit of eastern terminology. The tone of the story is serious, humorless and critical in ways that helps build the whole effect of the story line and show a credible attack on imperialism by Orwell. Wherein, the conflict is man versus man or even

against nature (Santiago.) This is seen more as internal and psychological debates as Orwell, who is Eric Blair in the scenes and the protagonist of the story, fights against himself. There is self-torment happening from own ideas thought and emotions felt. He did not want to look funny to the Burmese natives of the land, which is why he acted the way he did when he thought of shooting an elephant. The said internal conflict was not put an end into until Orwell had his chance of realization from the results of his deeds. The atmosphere created throughout reading the paragraphs is characterized by hatred from both dueling parties of the Burmese hatred for the imperialist invader and the sided British officials' defense of their sides. The setting took place in Moulmein, which is a town in Lower Burma, during the 1920's where Great Britain was still an imperialist country, but was predicted to suffer a decline after World War One.

The point of view used to tell the story is first-person. Blair was a consistent and trustworthy narrator of his own story, who was an active protagonist in the events, as well as he was able to gain insight and perception after being a character in the story. He became more objective in sharing as time passed.

Additionally, the two dominant characters are the elephant and its executioner. Moreover, Blair was recognized more of being a British officer or the executioner and acts as a symbol of the imperial country, with a round and dynamic character experiencing mixed feelings of compassion and fury for the Burmese government. The use of irony was seen when he finally decided on shooting the elephant. This gives the reader an uncomfortable feeling and imagery which hangs them of almost up to a point that of Blair <https://assignbuster.com/shooting-an-elephant-george-orwell-english-literature-essay/>

seems to give up on the. His style of communication is simple, but has complex sections to express enough deepness. On the other hand, the symbols of the elephant are freedom and the victims of imperialism, wherein it is compared to machinery that became later on a motherly air. The said character gains sympathy from readers. Moreover, the yellow faces of the Burmese also symbolize the victims of imperialism; even supposing they ironically dominates Orwell.

Lastly, the Buddhist priest has a stereotype and flat character, who gives contrasting roles to the actions and decisions coming from Orwell.