

A BIOGRAPHY OF GEORGE ORWELL



“Men can only be happy when they do not assume that the object of life is happiness.”

Real Name—Eric Arthur Blair

- Lived 1903-1950
- Born in India
- Moved to England as a small child
- His childhood dream: “From a very early age, perhaps the age of five or six, I knew that when I grew up I should be a writer.”
- His pen name: George “sounds solidly English” and Orwell is the name of “a river in Suffolk, England”

Orwell's Education

- Attended expensive preparatory schools in England
- Grew up middle class surrounded by upper class students
- Felt inferior to upper class boys at school



Schooling

Blair earned a scholarship to “*the most costly and snobbish of the English Public Schools*” Eton College where he attended between 1917 and 1921.



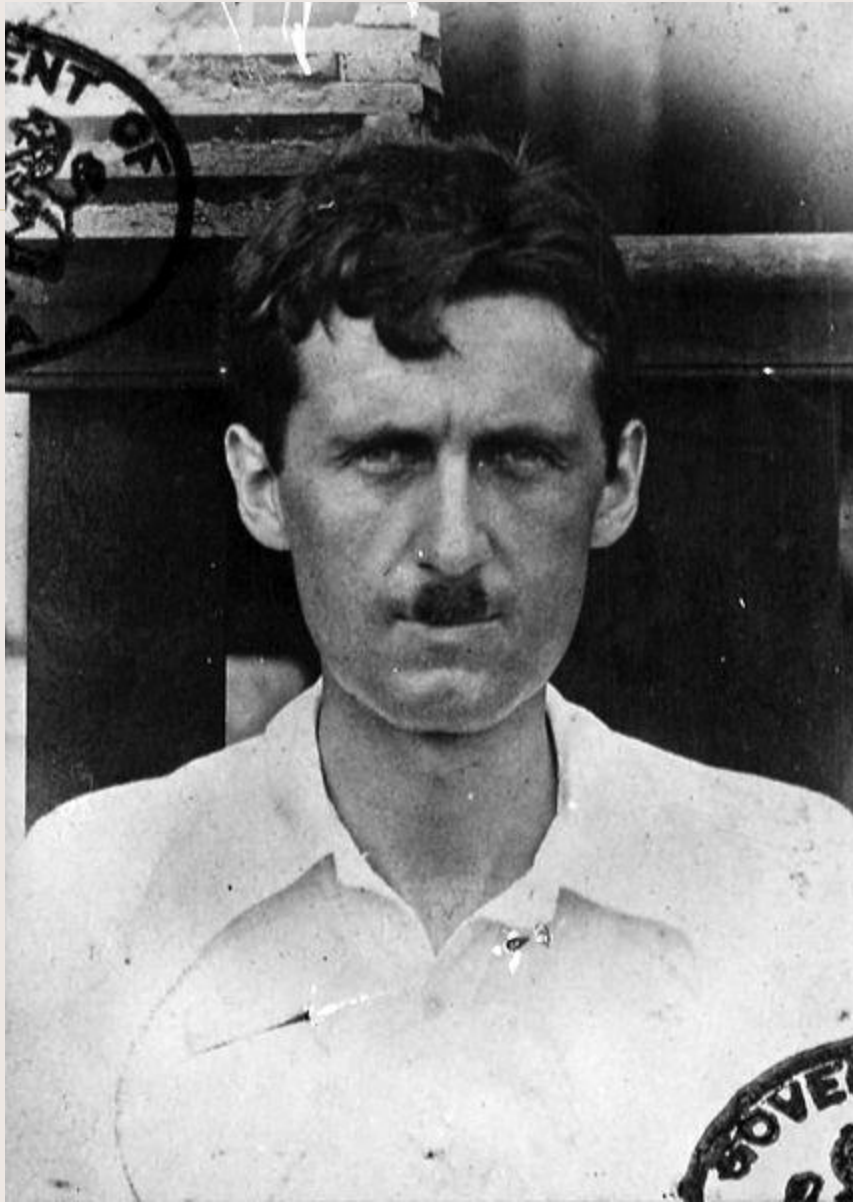
Life at Eton

- One of his teachers was Aldous Huxley – who taught him French



Life After School

- Served in Burma with the Indian Imperial Police
- During the next five years, he grew to love the Burmese and resent the oppression of Imperialism and decided to become a writer instead.



Orwell
pictured in a
passport
photo during
his Burma
years.

Paris and London 1928-1936



In the first 6 months after his decision, Blair went on what he thought of as an expedition to the East End of London to become acquainted with the poor people of England.

As a base, he rented a room in Notting Hill. In the spring, he rented a room in a working-class district of Paris.

Career Path

- Chose to live in poverty
- Worked as a dishwasher
- Wrote *Down and Out in Paris and London*
- Exposed harsh working conditions of the poor
- Investigated England's coal-mining industry
- Wrote *The Road to Wigan Pier*
- Exposed terrible conditions of the miners

Effects of These Jobs

- Grew to hate a “class system”
- Became a socialist
 - Socialism
 - All goods in a country are shared with others
 - No one has more than others
 - For example, “You have two cows. The government takes one and gives it to your neighbor.”

Spanish Civil War

In July 1936 the Spanish Civil War broke, and Orwell went to Spain.

After his arrival in Barcelona, he joined the Unified Marxist Workers' Party and served with them in action in January 1937.



Orwell's Political Views

- He considered himself a democratic socialist and was critical of communism.
- He hated intellectuals, lying, cruelty, political authority, and totalitarianism.
- He strongly opposed Stalin and Hitler -- he was very outspoken during WWII.



To Make Ends Meet

- Writing wasn't paying the bills
- Other jobs:
 1. Teacher
 2. Grocer
 3. Bookshop assistant
 4. BBC writer
- Fought in Spanish Civil War against communists
- Shot in the throat in battle
- Wrote about this war
- *Homage to Catalonia*

NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS

7 John Street, Bedford Row, London, W.C.1

Phone :
HOLborn 2258

Telegrams :
NatuJay Holb, London

This is to certify that

Mr. **GEORGE ORWELL**
of **The Tribune**



is a member of the **T. + P.**
Branch of the National Union of Journalists.

{ **Leslie R. Alonso** Branch Sec.
(Address) **66, Priony Lane, N.6.**

Personal Life

- In 1936 Blair and once student of J.R.R. Tolkien student Eileen O'Shaughnessy married.
- Diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1938.
- In 1944 they adopted a son Richard Horatio.



Personal Life Continued...

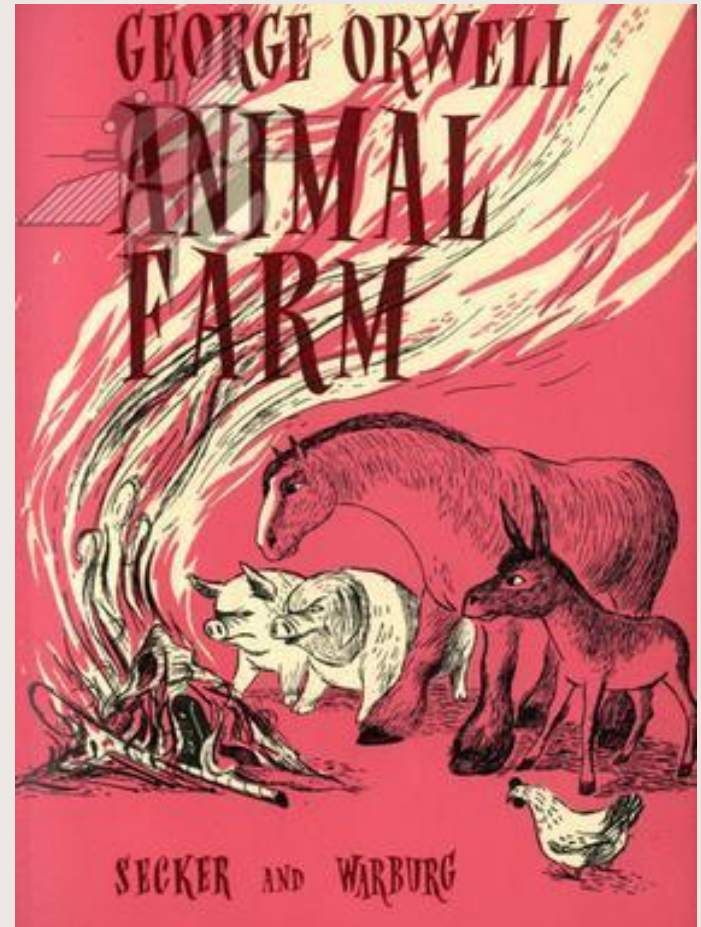
- Wife died in 1946
- Orwell entered a London hospital in September 1949 and the next month married Sonia Brownell (three months before his own death) .
- He died in London on Jan. 21, 1950.

1943

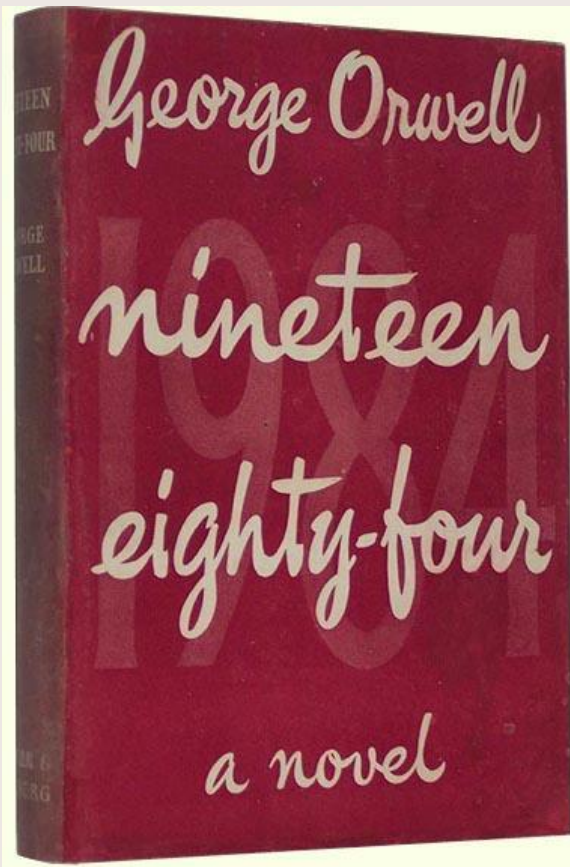
- The year 1943 was an important one in Orwell's life for several reasons.
 - His mother died in March.
 - He left the BBC to become literary editor of the *Tribune*.
 - The most important event occurred late that year, when he commenced the writing of *Animal Farm*.
 - Orwell had completed this satire by February 1944.

Most Famous Works


- *Animal Farm*
- Published in 1945
- Wrote it “to expose [Joseph] Stalin’s perversion of socialism”
- Fusion of “political and artistic purpose”
- Immediate commercial success
- Quickly translated into many languages



Most Famous Works



- *1984*
- Published in 1949
- His final novel
- Grim vision of future society
- “Big Brother” is watching/controlling all
- Considered a masterpiece

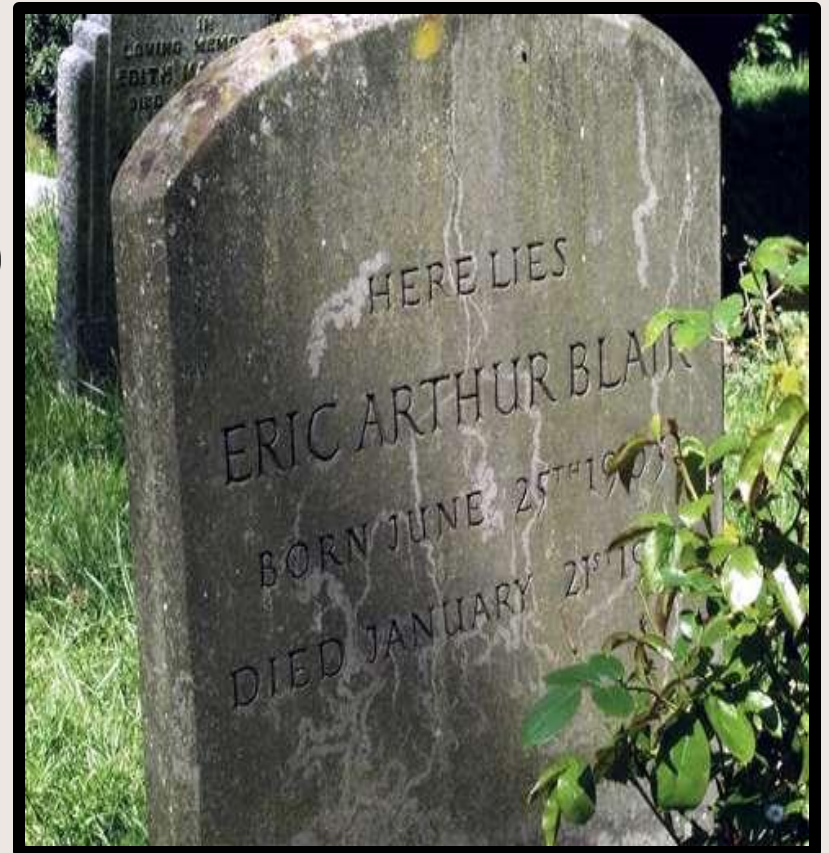
A silver metal spiral binding is visible on the left side of the page, looping through a series of holes. The page itself is white and has a thin horizontal line across its middle.

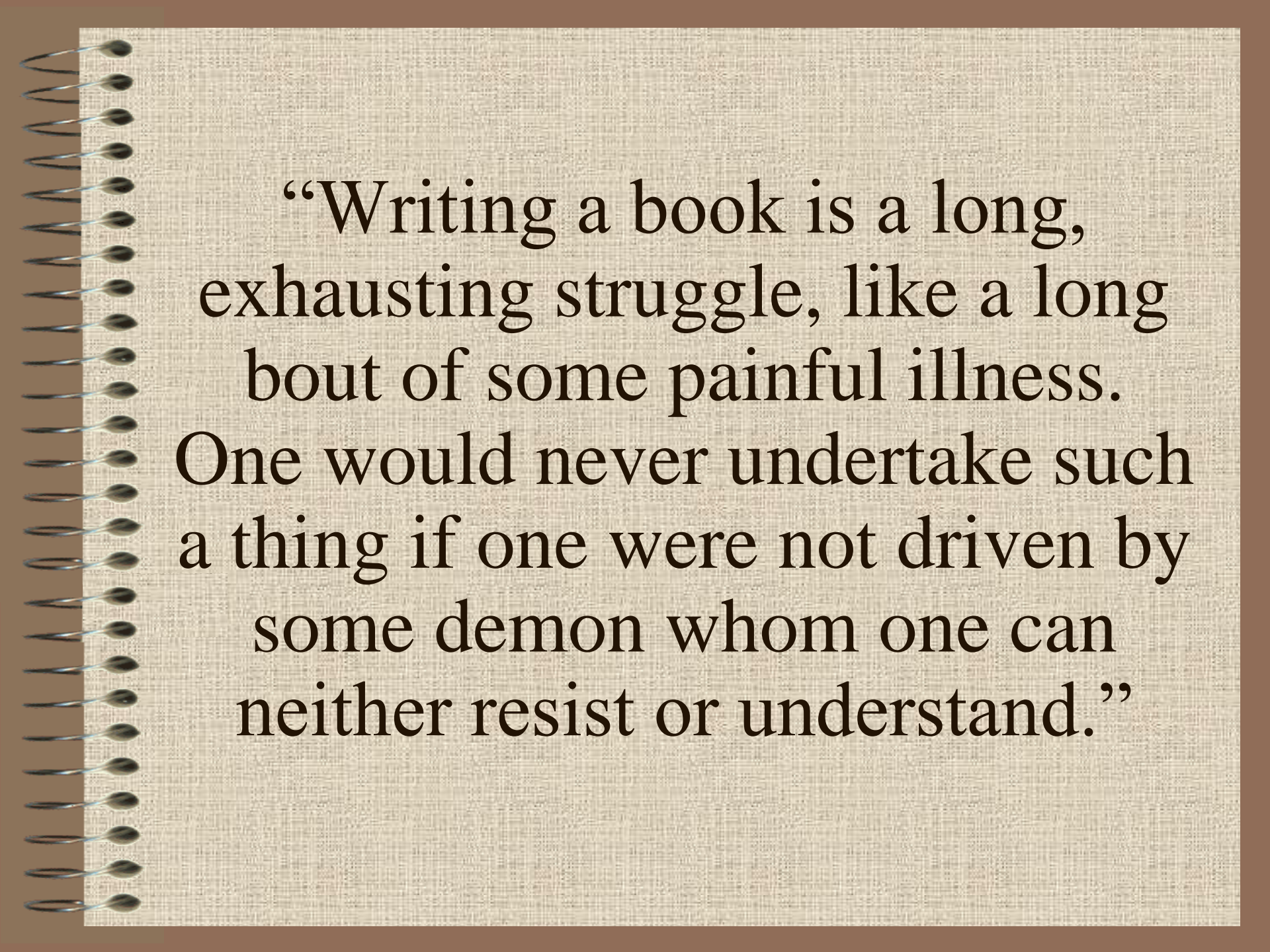
“During times
of universal deceit,
telling the truth
becomes a
revolutionary act.”

~George Orwell

Final Years

- Suffered a tubercular hemorrhage (lung bleed)
- Died in 1950 at age of 46



A spiral-bound notebook with a light-colored, textured cover. The metal spiral binding is visible on the left side. The text is centered on the page in a black serif font.

“Writing a book is a long, exhausting struggle, like a long bout of some painful illness. One would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven by some demon whom one can neither resist or understand.”

George Orwell Review



Question #1

Eric Blair cast around for a pseudonym and finally landed on George Orwell, the surname being taken from an English

A. village

C. river

C. moor

D. pub

Question #2

**When Orwell was a student at Eton,
one of his teachers was**

- A. Aldous Huxley
- B. H.G. Wells
- C. E.M. Forster
- D. Bertrand Russell

Question #3

Orwell's first professional job was that of

- A. civil servant in India
- B. agricultural manager in Rhodesia
- C. journalist in Spain
- D. policeman in Burma

Question #4

Down and Out in Paris and London, following Orwell's experiences of "tramping" with the poor and homeless, includes the memorable section where he describes his time in Paris working as

- A. dockhand
- B. hospital orderly
- C. dishwasher
- D. lavatory attendant

Question #5

**Orwell fought in the Spanish Civil War
with the**

- A. International Brigades
- B. Unified Marxist Workers' Party
- C. Independent Labor Party
- D. Union of Communist Peoples

Question #6

In France, *Animal Farm*'s publisher quietly changed the name of the pig Napoleon to

- A. César
- B. Augustine
- C. Alexandre
- D. Anatole

Question #7

What is George Orwell's real name?

A. Eric Cantona

B. Eric Blair

C. Eric Morecambe

D. Eric James

Question #8

Which war did Orwell fight in?

A. Spanish Civil War

B. Korean War

C. Irish Civil War

D. World War II

Question #9

Which School did George Orwell attend?

- A. Oxford
- B. Eton College
- C. Charterhouse
- D. Harrow School

Question #10

On his deathbed in a London hospital Orwell married his second wife, the beautiful Sonia Brownell, whom many of his friends considered to be a gold-digger and collector of literary “stars.” She became extremely wealthy with the royalties of Orwell’s works and went on to

- A. marry an Italian poet
- B. edit a stylish literary journal
- C. die a penniless drunk in Paris
- D. be swindled of all her money by an English lord

Quotes

- In a time of universal deceit - telling the truth is a revolutionary act.
- War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength.
- Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.
- Freedom is the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.



Arr!
ENGLISH

Arr!
FRENCH



Arr!
GERMAN

Arrrrrr!
SPANISH

اارر
ARABIC

аРЯ!
RUSSIAN

INTERNATIONAL
Talk Like
A Pirate
Day 2012

