

Literary Analysis

REFLECTIVE ESSAY

A reflective essay connects a writer’s personal observations with a universal idea. In “Shooting an Elephant,” Orwell describes one event that happened while he was a police officer in Burma in the 1920s. However, he does not present this story as an entertainment or traveler’s tale. He carefully connects events in the story to the universal theme of imperialism, or the rule of one country over other countries or colonies.

**Directions:** Complete this chart to understand how the events in this reflective essay reveal Orwell’s attitude toward imperialism. Two details are provided. Select and analyze four additional details.

Detail from the Essay	What It Shows About Imperialism
Orwell was “hated by large numbers of people” while he was a police officer in Burma.	
Orwell is torn because he does not support the British empire, but he is also greatly annoyed by the Burmese who make his job difficult.	