

**welcome**

A lesson on the  
following topic will  
be imparted to the  
learners

# Shooting an Elephant



George Orwell gave the event of his shooting the elephant a careful build-up. He killed it in spite of himself. When he saw it he opted against shooting it for valid reasons. But thousands of Burmese followed him in his wake. He assumed the likeness to a conjurer in their estimation, and they all expected him to shoot the elephant dead. He could stake his image on his ability to spare the beast. In that case the natives would most probably laugh at him. This probability casts light on a jealously guarded secret of Europeans in the East.

A European in India had to live up to the image of a sahib. It means that he was of superior stature and the least prone to the fallibility common to ordinary humans. If he acted otherwise, he might become a laughing stock. It was out of the question for him. So he was mechanically attuned to the role assigned to him by his office and expected from him by the natives. It was a kind of automation that detracted considerably from his autonomy. He admitted it in private but not in the open. With thousands of natives around him, he was agonizingly alive to the fact that he was an actor in front of them. This fact dawned on Orwell when he said that the shooting incident was in a roundabout way enlightening. Especially when a European held a position that entitled him to flex his muscles, he was reduced to compulsive acting. Because his heightened stature made his defects more derogatory to his dignity.

In the conclusive Para Orwell made clear the actual reason for shooting it. He simply could not disappoint the Burmese at the expense of exploding the myth of a smart European policeman. He would be pleased if nobody could guess his motive.



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Funny Dog.mp4