



George Orwell's *Animal Farm*

Study Guide for GCSE

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Teacher's Introduction

George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is a tale of power and corruption. Through accessible language and a straightforward storyline, Orwell conveys his views on the Russian Revolution and its side effects. Published for the first time in 1945, the ideologies in *Animal Farm* are still pertinent as they can be linked to modern-day totalitarian regimes.

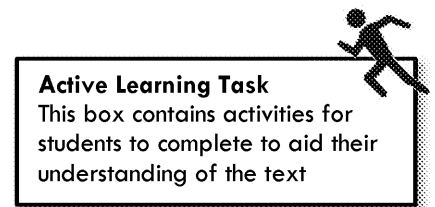
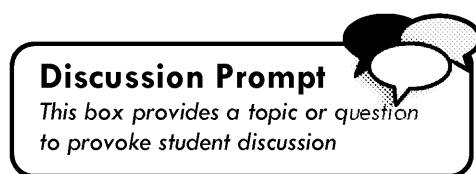
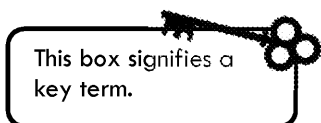
Because of its relevance, *Animal Farm* has been chosen as a set text for three of the major English Literature specifications. This study guide explores the subject matter, language, themes, symbols and socio-historical context of the novel. The information in the guide is closely linked to the requirements of the specifications for AQA, Edexcel and OCR.

Pages have been designed for students, to make sure that they understand what they need to do in order to achieve good grades. These pages can be photocopied and used in class, or as homework or revision notes.

The guide contains:

- A detailed study of the context of the novel with ideas for class activities and links to online videos that can be shown in class to help students understand the socio-historical background of the novel
- A brief plot summary
- A chapter-by-chapter plot summary with some useful quotations, language analysis, discussion points and essay questions
- A detailed character analysis
- Sections on language, settings, form, structure and themes with suggested activities
- A glossary of useful terms, particularly useful to ensure students understand and use appropriate subject terminology
- A set of post-reading tasks aimed to provide students with a more in-depth understanding of the novel and its relevance

Key for using this resource



Page references in this study guide refer to the New Longman Literature edition.

Please note that this resource does not address spelling and grammar (SPaG) although this is assessed in the AQA and Edexcel specifications.



A webpage containing all the links listed in this resource is conveniently provided on ZigZag Education's website at **zzed.uk/1630**

You may find this helpful for accessing the websites rather than typing in each URL.

Teacher's Notes

'Oral Presentation' Task (p. 28)

Give the students a lesson or homework time to prepare. Give them a choice of topics for their presentation. As well as increasing confidence in speaking, having heard a variety of discussions your class will have shared ideas on a variety of topics.

'The Trial of Napoleon Task' (p.29)

I recommend that you act as judge too, or chaos may ensue! I recommend perhaps one lesson or homework time to prepare, and one lesson to perform and enjoy the results. It is up to you how long each case should be. To add a bit more spice and an element of unpredictability, why not change the groups at the last moment, so that each Napoleon–Squealer partnership faces a totally unexpected pair of lawyers, and vice versa? (As long as each partnership has students of similar ability!)

October 2015

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* resulting from minor specification changes, suggestions from teachers and peer reviews, or occasional errors reported by customers

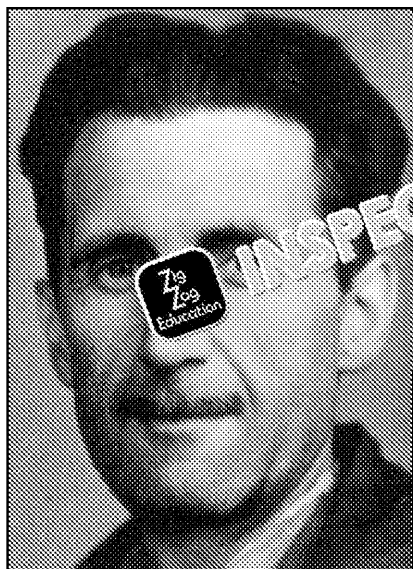
Go to zzed.uk/freeupdates



Background Information

The Life and Works of George Orwell

Video links: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4s9pdL7tpA>
(This is only the first part; the rest of the programme can be seen on the right hand side of the video.)



A photo of George Orwell taken in 1933

George Orwell was born in India in 1903. His real name was Eric Blair – Orwell being the pen name he was later to use. He was a civil servant, and he grew up in relative poverty. In 1917 George Orwell was sent to school. Yet he surprised his peers by not going to university; instead he became a policeman. Even when he landed in India, he began to have second thoughts about being a policeman being applauded by rich Englishmen. By the time he left in 1927, he had developed an antipathy towards, particularly the imperial oppression of the poor. This led him to write *Burmese Days* in 1934.


On his return to Europe, he spent several years in poverty, including two years as a dishwasher in Paris. This led him to write *Down and Out in Paris and London*, an account of these times. He returned to England in 1930, including teaching and tutoring posts. In 1931 he visited areas of great poverty in England – notably Wigan. *The Road to Wigan Pier* was the result of his study of the lives of impoverished Wigan residents.

In 1936 Orwell volunteered to fight in the Spanish Civil War – partially to collect stories and ideas for his writing, and partially to stand up for the socialism that he found in Catalonia. He fought against Franco's fascists, then later against the hard-line Communists when they turned on their former allies. When he was wounded he and his wife had to escape back to England. Once he had returned home Orwell wrote *Homage to Catalonia*, his account of the war. Following ill health in 1938, he was admitted to a sanatorium, having contracted tuberculosis. He would never be fully healthy again.

In 1939 he went to Mexico, hoping that the climate would help his tuberculosis – a terminal illness in those days. Whilst there he wrote *Coming in on the Bowling*, a socialist living in the world on the edge. It was the terrible place it would become afterwards that led him to write *Eighty-Four*, the final nightmarish novel that he is best known for.

Active Learning Task

Using Windows Movie Maker or any other film-editing software, create a film about George Orwell's life. Use the quotations on the right hand side of the page.



During World War Two, Orwell worked for the BBC, as well as joining the Home Guard. In particular he wrote a weekly radio commentary for India on recent events, intended to counteract the German and Japanese propaganda of the period. During the latter part of the war he composed his political fable, *Animal Farm*, a savage attack on the excesses and deficiencies of Stalin's rule in the USSR.

Active Learning Task
Make a film about George Orwell's life. Use the quotations on the right hand side of the page. Underline the influence of Orwell's experiences on his writing.

Active Learning Task
In the final part of the film...

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Discussion Prompt

What do you expect from this book? What ideas do you think will be the background of the text?

After the war, Orwell became increasing the literary editor of *Tribune*, than later and *Manchester Evening News*. Despite continued to work towards his final den *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. This was his night 1984, ruled by a totalitarian state and ke eye of 'Big Brother'. This was published and was the one novel, over all his other worldwide fame.

George Orwell finally died from tuberculosis in 1950, aged just 47. Yet in his short satires had made an indelible mark on English Literature. His writing had been do totalitarian regimes, as he himself would explain:

Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, as a protest against the system in which I tried, with full consciousness of what I was doing, to impose order on chaos.



His work had had a great effect on the public consciousness and on historical revisionist Harry Elmer Barnes would proclaim of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*:

Orwell's book is the keenest and most penetrating work produced in this generation on policy and world affairs. To discuss world affairs today without reference to Orwell is like reference to Darwin!

Harry Elmer Barnes: 'How "Nineteen Eighty-Four" Trends Threaten America'

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Extract from 'Why I Write' by George Orwell

From a very early age, perhaps the age of five or six, I knew that when I grew up I would write. Between the ages of about 17 and 24 I tried to abandon this idea, but I did so only because it was outraging my true nature and that sooner or later I should have to settle down to it.

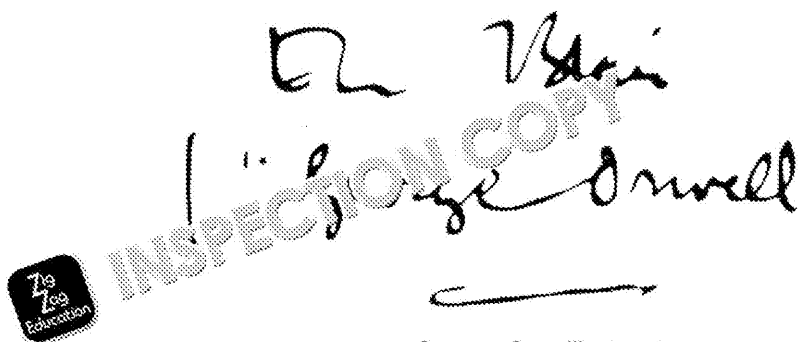
I was the middle child of three, but there was a gap of five years on either side before I was eight. For this and other reasons I was somewhat lonely, and I suffered from mannerisms which made me unpopular throughout my schooldays. I had the habit of telling up stories and holding conversations with imaginary persons, and I think from an early age my ambitions were mixed up with the feeling of being isolated and undervalued. I was fond of writing with words and a power of facing unpleasant facts, and I felt that this created a certain strength which I could get my own way in my failure in everyday life. Nevertheless the writing was not seriously intended, and the writing which I produced all through my childhood and adolescence was to half a dozen pages. I wrote my first poem at the age of four or five, my mother dictated it.

[...]

When I was about 16 I suddenly discovered the joy of mere words, i.e. the sort of words. The lines from *Paradise Lost* –

*So hee with difficulty and labour hard
Moved on: with difficulty and labour hee.*

which do not now seem to me so very wonderful, sent shivers down my backbones. The 'he' was an added pleasure. As for the need to describe things, I knew all about it from the kind of books I wanted to write, in so far as I could be said to want to write books. I wanted to write enormous naturalistic novels with unhappy endings, full of detailed descriptions and also full of purple passages in which words were used partly for the sake of the words. My first completed novel, *Burmese Days*, which I wrote when I was 30 but projected for years, was of this kind of book.

A handwritten signature of George Orwell in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive style, with 'G. Orwell' clearly visible. There is a small 'Zig Zag Education' logo in the bottom left corner of the signature area.

George Orwell's signature

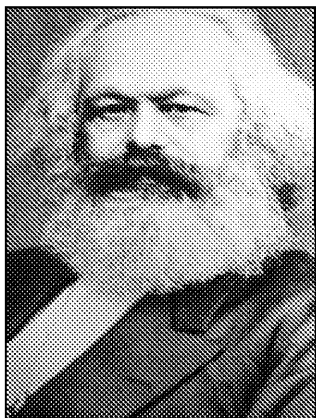
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Socio-Historical Background

From Marx to Soviet Russia



A photograph of Karl Marx



In 1848, a German philosopher called Karl Marx worked with Friedrich Engels. In this pamphlet, Marx discussed society, one in which the equal distribution of wealth would result in all people living happily. He criticised the existing society. *Further information:* <http://www.biography.com/people/karl-marx/9401219#synopsis>

The **Communist Manifesto** proved to inspire many people in Europe. Between the 1850s and 1860s, Marx formed the Communist Party. Vladimir Lenin and Leonid Brezhnev, who had been exiled for political reasons, emerged as leaders within the Russian Revolution, whose real surname was Dzhugashvili. Lenin was the leader but he was still in Russia.

Further information: <http://www.biography.com/people/vladimir-lenin/9401219#synopsis>
<http://www.biography.com/people/leonid-brezhnev/9401219#synopsis>

While many European countries were in the process of 'industrialisation', Russia was still a rural country with many poor farmers. This resulted in hungry, poor, unemployed Russian citizens.

In 1914, with the outbreak of World War I, Russia joined the United Kingdom, France and Italy in the fight against Germany. However, the Russians suffered drastically as the country supported the war effort. Therefore, there were many minor revolts, protests and strikes.

In February 1917, Tsar Nicholas II was overthrown by the communists. For months Russia went through an unsettling period with a provisional government. Meanwhile, Lenin, who was a fantastic strategist and speaker, Stalin and Trotsky planned their next move. On 17th October 1917 they toppled the provisional government.

Further information: <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/nicholas.htm>

The first years of communism were tainted with civil discontent as the formerly rich Russians were forced to part with their land and possessions to pay up a debt to the enemy as stated in the treaty at Brest-Litovsk, Poland, in March of 1918. The Soviets formed a 'Red Army' to execute any suspected anti-communists.

Further information: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/russia/lifeinleninsrussiarev1.shtml>

Lenin died in 1922 after having suffered from strokes. Although Trotsky was a true believer in communism and an excellent speaker who had won a lot of support, it was Stalin who rose to power because he had gained the support of powerful people among the Soviets.

Stalin ruled for 25 years through terror, using the internal police force (KGB) to eliminate any (real or fictitious) threat to his regime. Systematically since 1934 people were made to conform to the regime or immediately executed. He also continued to use the propaganda department in the Soviet Union to make people believe in his own cause.

Stalin died in 1953, yet the Soviet Union continued as an oppressive regime which controlled the world and manipulated the lives of its citizens and their thoughts until the 1980s.

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Discussion

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Further information: <http://www.history.com/topics/joseph-stalin>

Video links: <http://www.spike.com/video/animated-soviet/2810474>
(Part 4/4 Animated Soviet Propaganda)
<http://www.biography.com/people/joseph-stalin-9491723>
(Life of Stalin)



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Plot Summary

One evening, the animals in Mr Jones's farm gather in the big barn to hear about Old Major's dream. Old Major, a highly regarded white boar, incites the animals to rebel against Mr Jones and take over the farm. He teaches the animals the song 'Beasts of England' which will later become the hymn of the farm. Soon afterward Old Major dies and the pigs begin to organise the rebellion, with Snowball, Napoleon and Squealer as their leaders.

Mr Jones is driven out of the farm as the animals successfully complete their rebellion. Control over the animals is destroyed and the Seven Commandments are written on the wall. The milk disappears.

Animal Farm has the best harvest ever. Boxer, one of the horses, shows incredible strength. The animals decide to have regular meetings on Sundays, however, a sense of uneasiness grows. Snowball dies.

Neighbouring farmers, Mr Pilkington and Mr Frederick, begin to worry about the animals. They help Mr Jones invade Animal Farm. However, due to Snowball's shrewd planning, they are driven out. The Battle of the Cowshed becomes a national anniversary.

In order to improve the farm's production, Snowball wants the animals to build a windmill. Napoleon disagrees as he prioritises food production. While they are holding a meeting for the first time, Napoleon's dogs chase Snowball out of the farm. As the only leader now, Napoleon decides to abolish Sunday meetings and to build a windmill.

Under Napoleon's regime, the animals are working harder than ever yet seeing no improvement. The windmill is still not built. Meanwhile, the pigs move into the house. A gale destroys the windmill. Napoleon blames Snowball.

As starvation hits the farm, the hens start a rebellion protesting against selling their eggs. In a horrible massacre, the hens die. As usual, Snowball gets the blame for anything that goes wrong. In a horrible massacre, the hens are executed. The singing of 'Beasts of England' is banned. A definite gloom settles over the farm.

Squealer, Napoleon's mouthpiece, reassures the animals that everything is fine and that the harvest is increasing. The windmill is finally completed but Frederick, whom Napoleon has invited to visit the farm and blows up the windmill. Although the animals win the battle again, they are exhausted and glory as there was in the Battle of the Cowshed. The pigs discover a case of violence among the animals of the victory.

Winter arrives and the food becomes scarce. Old Boxer dies and is sent to the glue factory. There is a sense of irreversible misery amongst the animals.

Years have passed and there is a new generation of animals who believe in Animalism. The older animals are not able to remember the original ideas. The Seven Commandments have been changed one by one and the system is now so corrupt that there is no trace of a once glorious idea. The pigs are now walking on two legs and beating the other animals. They throw a party for humans, the other animals look through the window and fail to recognise the men.

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Chapter Summaries

Background

The story is set on a farm in England. It focuses on the animals that inhabit the farm and the cruel farmer Mr Jones. The story begins one night as the farmer snores in bed. The next morning, the animals wake up, and the farmer, Mr Jones, calls a meeting.



Chapter One

Major, the wisest and most respected animal on the farm, has a dream about a world where all the animals are free from human domination. He calls a meeting, and tells the animals that they will all die of old age soon, but that after he is gone all the animals on the farm should start a new life. He then rounds off his great speech by teaching the animals a song, 'Beasts of England'. The animals are inspired, and their life could be different without humans to rule over them, and it becomes their duty to fight against Mr Jones.

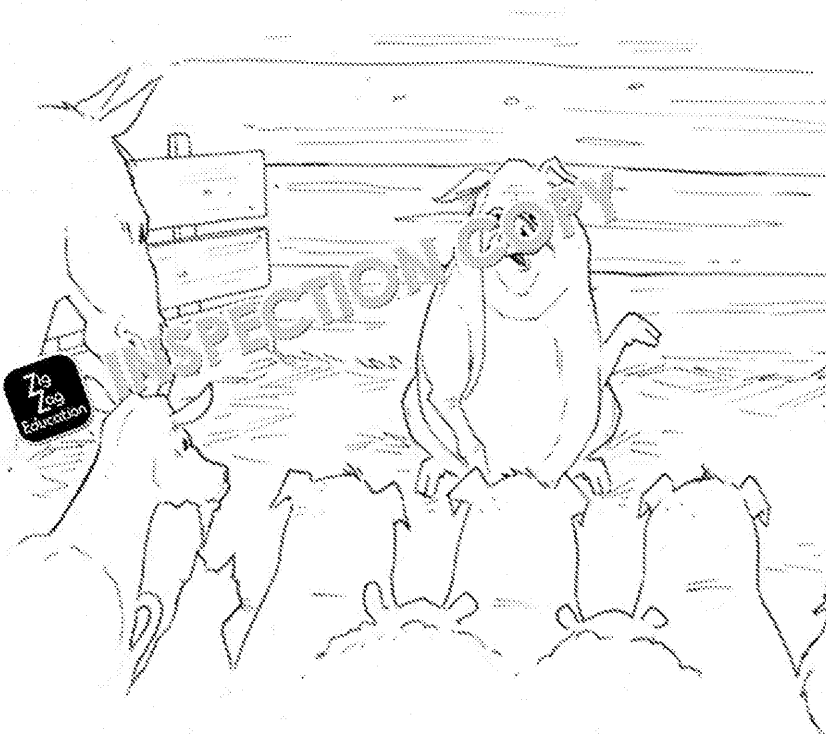
Analysis

Old Major's speech presents an idealistic view of a world without humans, a world in which animals would live happily working for each other and enjoying the fruit of their own work. This idea mirrors Marx's ideologies. Like in real life, these ideologies are often used for a small group's benefits and the reality becomes a world far from ideal. To make this clear from the start, Orwell uses foreshadowing in Old Major's speech: *'And remember also that in fighting against Man, we must not come to resemble him.'*

After the speech, the animals are filled with a sense of pride and the conviction that everything is possible if they work as a team and fight for their beliefs. The reader, however, would be slightly more sceptical if they reflect on Orwell's subtle foreshadowing.

Active & Inspiring

As a piece of rhetoric, the speech begins with a bold statement, 'As I have dreamed of a better world for you, so I have dreamed of a better world for myself.' This is a powerful statement that sets the tone for the rest of the speech. The speech is also a call to action, urging the animals to fight against Mr Jones and to create a new world for themselves. The speech is a masterpiece of rhetoric, and it is one of the most powerful speeches in the history of literature.



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Chapter One: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

‘...comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious, and short.’ (Page 15)

This is a clear example of Old Major’s rhetoric. In this quotation we can see a rhetorical question, first person plural, a group of three and emotive language (in this case, negative adjectives). Old Major is cleverly trying to convince fellow animals to rebel against Mr Jones.

‘And remember also that in fighting against Man, we must not come to resemble him.’

Orwell cleverly uses foreshadowing in Old Major’s speech. In this passage, the wise old boar is warning animals not to take up man’s disgusting habits. However, throughout the novel, we learn how Napoleon and his followers not only adopt each of the habits condemned by Old Major but become almost humans, so much so that at the end of the novel, the creatures outside the farm house ‘looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which’.

‘Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland,
Beasts of every land and clime,
Hearken to my joyful tiding
Of the golden future time.’ (Page 19)

This is the last verse of the song that Old Major teaches the other animals. The whole song encourages a revolution as it stirs the emotions of the animals. The words ‘every land’, ‘joyful’ and ‘golden future time’ carry the promise of an ideal world, full of unity, happiness and great expectations for the future.

This song and the ideals stirred by it become a threat to Napoleon later on in the novel; therefore Squealer changes it into a chant that praises Napoleon, erasing the optimistic spirit of the original version.

Discussion

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Question

Explore the persuasive techniques used by Old Major in his speech.



Chapter Two

Major dies peacefully in his sleep. Three months pass, in which the animals secret out their revolution. Three pigs in particular come to the fore: Napoleon, a fierce and cunning pig, Snowball, an inventive and intelligent animal, and Squealer, who could talk the hind leg off a donkey. They turn Major's ideas into a philosophy: Animalism. Meanwhile, Mr Jones has been neglecting the farm, so the animals savagely attack him; both he and his wife flee. The rebellion is complete! The animals burn all of the whips and reins that Jones repressed them with, and paint Seven Commandments on the wall of the farm to guide them. Most importantly that 'all animals are equal'.

Analysis

After Old Major dies, the pigs emerge as the natural leaders as the animals plan the revolution. We already see that from the start: the pigs will not be treated equally; the pigs will be the ruling class. However, at this point in the story, we still believe that the pigs have the welfare of the farm at heart. Their ideas of Animalism seem fair and well thought out.

Despite the careful planning, the revolution happens suddenly and the animals, once they get rid of Jones and his wife. There is a sense of achievement and general elation. The animals will consider the animals' cause as a fair and just one.

Perhaps one of the most poignant moments of this chapter is the burning of all the instruments of torture and discipline as it symbolises the end of a tyrannous era and the beginning of a new era. However, this feeling does not last, as the mystery of the milk at the end of the chapter lets the reader know that the regime is not at all as open and honest as the animals expected.

Chapter Two: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

'His men were idle and dishonest, the fields were full of weeds,' ... 'and the animals were underfed.' (Page 25)

As the animals are preparing for the rebellion, Orwell describes the misery of the farm in vivid detail. Again, man is seen as a blemished creature who neglects his duties and makes nature suffer for it. In these lines, we can clearly see how Orwell criticises social inequality and the mistreatment of workers, in this case, the animals.

Key Terms

- Imagery
- List
- Emotion
- Verbs

'... the bits, the nose-rings, the dog-chains' ... 'the rubbish fire which was burning in the yard'

After describing the revolution and the cowardly escape of Mr Jones and Mrs Jones, Orwell describes how the animals got rid of all the instruments of torture and discipline previously used by Jones. A detailed list is very effective as it highlights the animals' freedom and the sense of triumph at the time. In these lines we can see the sympathy that Orwell felt for the mistreated animals forced to lose their dignity.

Active Learning Task

The Animal Times Front Page

Design the front page of *The Animal Times* featuring the rebellion and write the feature article. Add images with captions and an 'in this issue' column with other headlines that would feature inside the newspaper, e.g. 'Down with torture, down with discipline'.

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Discussion Prompts

1. The three pigs seem to represent the Communist leaders. Who represents who? As the novel develops, try to find out which pig represents Stalin, which pig represents Trotsky, and which pig represents Napoleon. If you do not believe that they represent specific historical people, try to follow which themes and ideas they represent.
2. The leaders of the 'Animalists' try to dissuade the other animals from believing in 'Sugarcoated Lies'. How do you think this fits in with the communist view of religion?
3. Boxer and Clover, the carthorses, are the most faithful disciples of 'Animalism'. Do you find their loyalty touching? What do they represent?
4. There are many conditions that allow Mr Jones's farm to get into such a state of disrepair as to facilitate the success of the rebellion. After a lengthy and expensive lawsuit, the buildings start falling apart, the other farm vultures become lazy and self-serving, and the animals remain unfed. Link this to the actual history of how the Russian Revolution became possible, including the Tsar's role, the role of World War One, and the conditions of the Russian people.
5. Discuss the significance of the destruction of Mr Jones's whips, reins and saddles.
6. What do you think happened to the missing milk? Is this portentous?



Essay question

How does Orwell make the rebellion against Mr Jones and his expulsion from the farm a significant passage?

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Chapter Three

The animals gather in their first harvest with great success: there was never so much food. In particular Boxer, the huge workhorse, labours long and hard. However, a rivalry exists between the two most important pigs, Napoleon and Snowball. Some of the animals, especially the sheep, find it difficult to remember all seven commandments, so Napoleon shortens them to one sentence: 'Four legs good, two legs bad'. Worryingly, the pigs, who are the cleverest of the animals, are now in total charge. The milk and apples should be for them only.

Analysis

Although the rebellion had been powered by Old Major's ideals of equality, this chapter shows the undoing of these ideals. The pigs are now completely in charge and they decide to keep the apples and milk exclusively for themselves. Orwell's deliberately simple narrative highlights the animals' acceptance of their tragic, unavoidable fate.

Active Learning

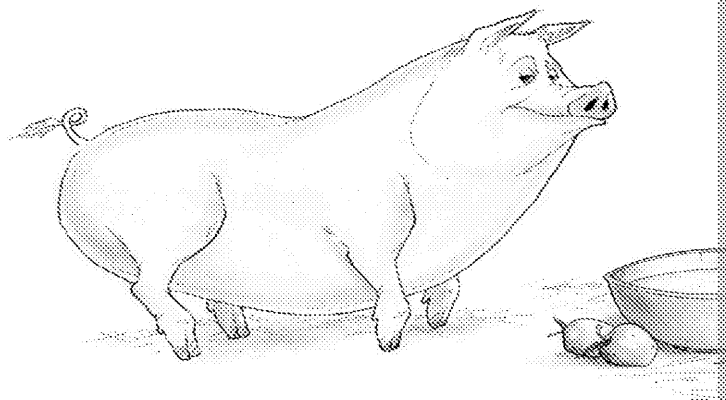
Success story

At the beginning of the chapter, the atmosphere of success is described using words or phrases that create a positive atmosphere.

Write an article describing the atmosphere when you felt successful or when you felt the atmosphere such as this.

There is a clear example of indoctrination when the sheep are made to learn the motto that comprises the commandments, 'Four legs good, two legs bad'. This becomes one of the pillars of Napoleon's propaganda.

The emerging rivalry between Napoleon and Snowball adds to the readers' uneasiness about the animals' striving to achieve the utopian animal society described by Old Major.



Chapter Three: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

'The pigs did not actually work, but directed and supervised the others. With their superior knowledge it was natural that they should assume the leadership.'
(Page 33)

With very simple and short, straightforward sentences, Orwell tells the audience the idea that 'all animals are equal' is not sustainable. The word 'natural' in this quotation makes this sudden change go unnoticed on first read. The whole description of the events at the beginning of this chapter is full of such subtleties.

'All through that summer the work on the farm went like clockwork.' ... 'produced by the animals.'
(Page 33)

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When describing life on the farm without Man, Orwell paints an idyllic vision. In the positive phrases such as 'clockwork', 'happy', 'every mouthful', 'positive pleasure' everything is too good to be true. This idea continues throughout the chapter as there is a sense of uneasiness amongst the animals and towards the end of the chapter we see that the other animals but are in fact leaders who enjoy benefits such as milk and apples.

'Four legs good, two legs bad!' (Page 38)

This quotation could be described as a turning point in the novel. The commandments are written on this statement so that the rules can be understood and memorised by all animals. The significance of this change lies in what has been lost in the reduction of the commandments. One of the themes of the novel is that most of the animals will forget the other commandments therefore they will not understand exactly how Napoleon is manipulating them. Orwell was against the ruling elite classes who abused language to control lower classes. The Seven Commandments that with time, towards the end of the novel, will prove to be fairly meaningless.

Discuss Prompts

1. Read about how hard Boxer works. In light of what happens later in the novel, do you think Boxer is naive? Discuss the possibility that Boxer represents the hard-working Russian people; whatever was up to them to work harder to make amends.
2. Account for Mollie's behaviour. How does she fit into Orwell's allegory?
3. What does the animals' flag remind you of?
4. What parts of the animal's new society are good?
5. What bad elements are emerging?
6. How do you think the rivalry between Snowball and Napoleon will develop? Put this in the context of the Russian Revolution.
7. What is your personal response to the behaviour of the pigs? Were they right to require the other animals to work harder? Are they already acting manipulatively?



Essay question

How does Orwell show the reader that from the early moments of *Animal Farm* that suggest that Animalism could fail?

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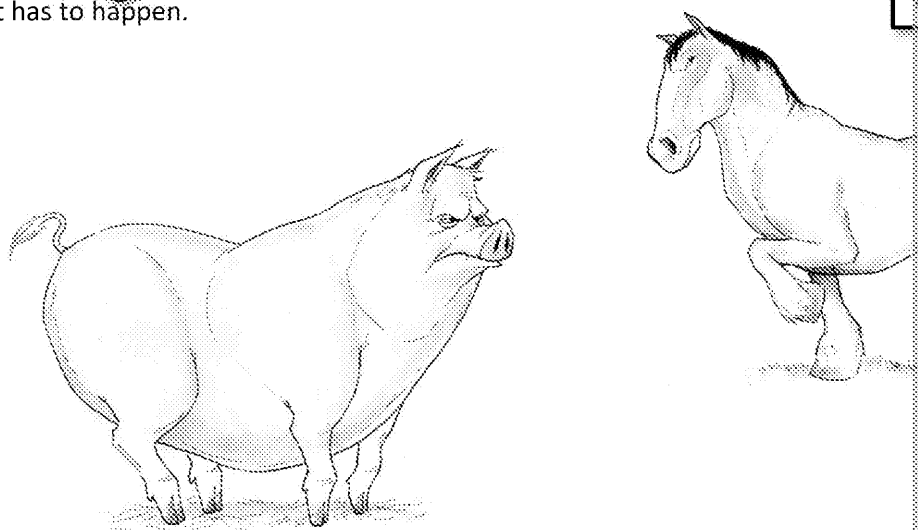
Chapter Four

Meanwhile, news of the rebellion has spread to all the animals in the country. Far and several other men armed with sticks, to try and recapture the farm. The animals

In particular Snowball the pig and Boxer the horse fight magnificently. Napoleon and the humans are forced to give up. After the 'Battle of the Cowshed' the pigs award medals.

Analysis

This is a very interesting chapter as the animals get the chance to prove that their rebellion was not just a whim but a true statement of intent. The animals get the chance to show how much they care for their rights and their farm. The reader also notices who the real heroes are: Snowball and Boxer. There is, however, a clear distinction between the views of Boxer and those of Snowball. Boxer is really troubled by the death of the boy, whereas Snowball is more coldblooded about it and sees it as a sacrifice that has to happen.



Chapter Four: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

"He's dead," said Boxer said sorrowfully.' (Page 44)

'War is war. The only good human being is a dead one.' (Snowball) (Page 45)

After the battle, Boxer realises the stable boy is dead and is awful about it. Boxer struggles to express himself, as if he was struggling to find the words to express his very cold-blooded about the situation. There is no pity or remorse. This dialogue of the animals were not prepared to deal with the consequences of the battle. All for themselves and defend their own farm, they are not prepared for violence and the pigs start to become more ruthless and capable of violence.

'At the graveside Snowball made a little speech, emphasising the need for all animals to need be.' (Page 45)

There is irony in Snowball's words as it is clear that although the animals thought they were truly fighting for the pigs and their cause. This links to the previous chapter where most of the animals do not quite understand the philosophy of Animalism but have lost the true essence of Old Major's teachings. Reading between these lines, we can see the manipulative speeches and totalitarian communism.

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Discussion Prompts

1. 'Rumours of a wonderful farm... continued to circulate in vague and distorted forms.' Is the farm really wonderful? Link this to the perception certain members of the lower class had of Soviet Russia.
2. What do the farms of Mr Pilkington and Mr Frederick represent? Other countries? If so, which? Why were they so scared of what happened on Animal Farm? Link this to its historical and political context.
3. What do you make of the way in which the tale of Animal Farm spreads rapidly to other parts of the world about the tune 'Beasts of England'. Explain what this represents historically.
4. Why do you think Orwell included the invasion of the farm by 'Jones and his men'? Explain why it was Boxer above all who forced the retreat.
5. Is it notable that Napoleon takes no part in the battle?



question

How does Orwell make the 'Battle of the Cowshed' an engaging passage?



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Chapter Five

Mollie, a vain horse who had never really been enthusiastic about the rebellion, leaves the farm. Meanwhile, the rivalry between Snowball and Napoleon is becoming dangerous. The biggest disagreement they have is over whether to build a windmill to supply them with power. It is decided to put it to a vote. Snowball is clearly in the right, and it is obvious that he will win. But just before the vote, Napoleon makes a signal, and several fierce dogs rush in. He has kept the dogs secretly and trained them to be his bodyguard. At Napoleon's signal, they chase Snowball off the farm, never to be seen again. Napoleon is now in complete control. Yet, three weeks after the expulsion, the animals are surprised to hear that Napoleon wants to build the windmill after all! Squealer, working for Napoleon, convinces the animals that it had really been Napoleon who had made plans for the building, whereas we know it was not him at all!



Analysis

In this chapter, the animals' world is turned upside down again; however, this time it is not for the best. The difference is that this time it is not their own doing but Napoleon's and his guards, the dogs. The reader, who would have noticed the signs all along, would be sorry for the trusting, innocent animals.

Napoleon emerges as a tyrant straight away but his terrible deeds are covered up by Squealer and his powerful rhetoric. The animals have no choice but to believe what is being said to them and to carry on working in the name of Animalism, a philosophy that will become more an excuse than an ideology.

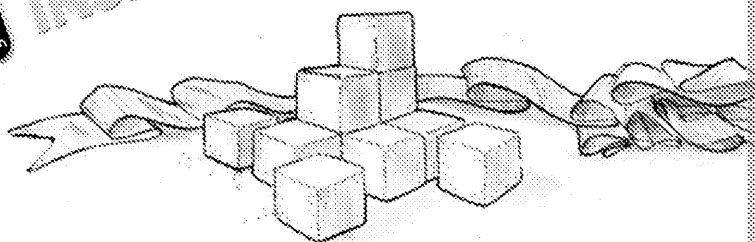
There is a very clear contrast in the language used by Orwell before and after the point, the language chosen by the writer becomes more and more violent to illustrate how much worse in the farm.

Active Learning Task Social Media

Design Snowball's Facebook or Instagram account. Make it show the character's feelings at the time through the use of pictures, tweets, etc. until the time of the Animal Farm.

OR

Design a series of Instagram posts or tweets showing followers' comments that they share at the time in the farm.



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Chapter Five: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

'It had come to be accepted that the pigs, who were manifestly cleverer than the other animals, should decide all questions of farm policy...'
(Page 50)

Key Terms

- Irony
- Adjective
- Persuasive

At this point in the novel we see a complete supremacy of the pigs. The quotation happened naturally as the word 'accepted' and the description of the pigs as 'manifestly cleverer' than the other animals. Orwell uses irony again as the ideals of Animalism were meant to empower all animals, not just the pigs or the cleverest. The idea of mirrors what happened to the ordinary people as a result of the Russian Revolution.

'Silent and terrified, the animals crept back into their quarters.' (Page 54)

The adjectives at the beginning of this sentence describe again the resignation of the animals. Their leaders argue and now their freedom has been chased away. Orwell creates a sense of the animals' fear. They now 'creep' as oppressed, low creatures. The quotation suggests an irreversible downfall for the animals' lives.

'No one believes more firmly than Comrade Napoleon that all animals are equal.' ... 'and it is his job to see that this principle is carried out.'
(Page 56)

After Snowball's expulsion from the farm, Squealer becomes the voice of Napoleon to the other animals down as he is able to turn every argument against Napoleon into a positive one. This quotation shows clear examples of persuasive techniques used by Squealer: the use of rhetorical questions and emotive language. Orwell is exemplifying how dictators used rhetoric to justify their terrible behaviour.

Discussion Prompts

1. What is your reaction to Mollie?
2. Carefully monitor the rift between the two main pigs as it widens. Do you accept that it is the other Trotsky? Which is which? How significant is it that the sheep follow Napoleon?
3. In light of this chapter, who do you think would make the better leader: Snowball or Napoleon?
4. What do you think the windmill represents? The industrialisation of the USSR?
5. Napoleon ultimately has to resort to the use of his dogs to defeat Snowball. What does this say about the police?
6. Read the historical notes, particularly about Stalin exiling Trotsky. What light does this shed on the novel?
7. 'It was noticed that the dogs wagged their tails to Napoleon in the same way as the dogs of Mr Jones.' Can you predict what this might mean for Napoleon and his ruling class of pigs?
8. Major's skull is paraded so prominently. Does this remind you of Lenin's mausoleum in the USSR?
9. It seems that Squealer easily convinces all the animals of the righteousness of Napoleon's actions. Discuss this propaganda in the context of the novel.
10. Is this chapter a turning point? Are we witnessing the birth of a police state?



Essay question

Explore Napoleon's behaviour throughout this chapter.

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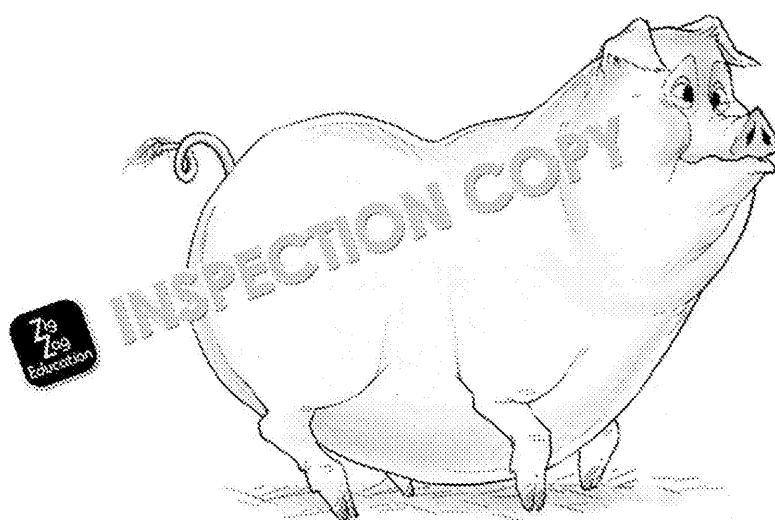
Chapter Six

The animals begin work on the windmill, and strive long and hard all year. The work is very tough, and they work extremely long hours, but it seems all worthwhile now that they know they are working for themselves. Napoleon decides that the animals must start trading some of their produce in order to get machinery for the mill – even though one of the original agreements was that they would never deal with humans. But Napoleon denies such an agreement was made and Squealer convinces the animals that the rule against trading was made up by Snowball before his expulsion. A solicitor, Mr Whymper, starts visiting the farm regularly to organise the trade. Meanwhile, all the pigs move into the farmhouse. Despite the fact that this had been forbidden in the original commandments, Napoleon secretly alters the commandments with paint to allow this. One night there is a great storm, and the windmill they worked so hard on collapses. The animals despair, but Napoleon blames Snowball again, saying he must have crept in and destroyed it. Work begins on another mill.

Analysis

Now that Napoleon is completely in charge, his tyranny begins. He unscrupulously betrays Animalism, blaming Snowball when the other animals raise doubts or using Squealer to persuade others that everything is fine. This mirrors the use of propaganda in Stalinist Russia.

Like the Russian working class, the animals work extremely hard and against all adversities to build the windmill. Therefore, when it collapses, the reader shares the animals' despair. Although the destruction of the windmill was entirely caused by an unavoidable weather phenomenon, Napoleon uses this opportunity to instil hatred against Snowball among the animals who once worshipped him. Orwell cleverly shows how tyrants never miss an opportunity to change truths to serve their own intentions.



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Chapter Six: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

'This work was strictly voluntary, but any animal who absented himself from it would have his rations reduced by half.' (Page 61)

The animals are working harder than ever, even on Saturday afternoons. The use of the word 'voluntary' is quite ironic as the reader by now knows that only the pigs make decisions. Orwell has filled this chapter with ironic remarks to make more obvious, highlighting how they have come to change the original ideals of Animalism. We can draw connections between the events in this chapter and the aftermath of the Russian Revolution.

'The advantage of only having to feed themselves, and not having to support five extra mouths, was great that it would have taken a lot of failures to overcome.' (Page 62–63)

These lines are significant because they show that Animalism is failing. As in the past, the animals feel a sense of acceptance and belonging amongst the animals. As long as they do not see humans, they can hold out hope. However, towards the end of this chapter, we see the first signs of humans. Orwell's clever use of irony reveals that although the animals are not working for humans, they are working for an equally totalitarian regime.

'He assured that the resolution against engaging in trade'... 'lies circulated by Snowball.'

Squealer's rhetoric comes into play again to put the animals' minds at rest. He uses the name of an animal that they were wrong about the 'resolution against engaging with trade' as a traitor and using his, by now much despised, name to be held responsible for the current situation causes a sense of uneasiness in the farm.

Discussion Prompts

1. Read the first paragraph of Chapter Six. Does this strike you as bitter or ironic? In what way?
2. Do you find the description of Boxer working tragic? He has had to do far much more under Mr Jones, but he bears it willingly, living by his slogans 'I will work harder' and 'I will do my best'. How does this relate to the tragedy of the Russian people during the twentieth century?
3. How are the animals losing touch with their original commandments? How can Napoleon be seen as a traitor?
4. What are the perceptions of the outside world about Animal Farm now? How is this perceived by the animals? How is this perceived by the USSR during the Cold War?
5. Discuss how the Seven Commandments have begun to change. Is the old utopian Animalism still alive?
6. Discuss in a group the now familiar catchphrase, 'surely it is no good you wishes to see Jones back'. How do the animals feel about this? Is there any difference now between 'once we have the pigs' and 'once we have the humans'?
7. What do you make of Napoleon's 'I am not to blame Snowball for the destruction of the farm'?



Essay question

How does Orwell use the character of Squealer to convey his ideas on...

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Chapter Seven

The winter that follows is especially bitter and food starts to become scarce. Yet Napoleon conceals these shortages from the outside world. To pay for the machine, he lays many more eggs to sell. The hens refuse, and as a protest start breaking all the eggs. Napoleon crushes the rebellion by withholding food from the hens – four starve to death in the process. Meanwhile, Squealer makes up even more lies about Snowball. He alleges that Snowball was a traitor, a battle, and had even tried to betray them. Many of the animals remain unconvinced. Then one day, Napoleon calls all the animals to a meeting. He announces that many of the animals have been plotting against them, and are in league with Snowball. Napoleon's dogs publicly execute three hens, three pigs, and a goose. Napoleon is determined to rule with terror. Snowball's loyal workhorse, Boxer, is shaken and confused. She can't understand how their ideal society has gone so wrong. As the final insult, 'Beasts of England' is banned as an anthem.



Analysis

This chapter is probably the most violent of the book. It shows Napoleon's tyranny at its most cruel. Napoleon allows the hens to rebel. A kind leader would have tried to calm them down. Napoleon chooses to ignore them, leaving them to their fate. This is a way to teach others a lesson. Not happy with the executions. The scene in which the animals are executed is described in gory detail, leaving a lasting impression of the likes of Napoleon and helplessness for the other animals.

In the meantime, Squealer continues to convince the animals and to justify Napoleon's deeds. This propels the terror inflicted by Napoleon and his dogs, leading to the pigs' dictatorial government.

Active Learning Task Oh the horror!

The 'tale of confessions and executions' is described as a horrific scene. Find words or phrases that help Orwell create this atmosphere of terror.

Study the words and phrases you have selected. What connotations have they got? What effect would they have on the reader?



Chapter Seven: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

'If a window was broken or a drain was blocked up, someone was certain to say that Snowball had come in the night and done it...' (Page 76)

The weather has become harsh and the animals are struggling to keep up with their work. Animalism seems to be going downhill. Snowball has been blamed for everything that goes wrong. Napoleon continues to use Squealer to convince the animals; his propaganda is working as the silliest incidents are blamed on Snowball. We can see how Napoleon is like Stalin, who used Trotsky as a scapegoat.

'And so the tale of confessions and executions went on, until there were a pile of corpses and the air was heavy with the smell of blood' (Page 78)

This quotation is quite dramatic. Orwell's description creates a horrific picture: Napoleon's reign of terror before a pile of slaughtered animals. The 'smell of blood' makes the horror more real. The positive ideas of Animalism have been corrupted and a reign of terror has taken over the society. This is another clear allegory to what happened in the USSR.

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'If she [Clover] herself had had any picture of the future' ... 'no one dared speak his mind'

Towards the end of the chapter, Orwell reminds the reader of the original ideas of Major's dream. He uses Clover, an old, knowledgeable mother figure, who would now, like many others, too frail and scared to stand up for the ideals. Orwell shows a way of twisting ideals and ruling through terror. The contrast between the brutality of the chapter and Clover's calm, yet, upsetting thoughts leave the reader with a sense of how Orwell has cleverly begun to achieve his purpose.

Discussion Prompts

1. Discuss Napoleon's decision to hide the food shortages from the farm from the outside world. What do you know about Stalinist Russia?
2. Napoleon shows raw brutality in the execution of the hens. Would you agree that this is a dictatorship, buttressed by terror? Again, link back to the real history of the USSR.
3. 'It seemed to the animals as though Snowball were some kind of invisible influence, permeating the farm with all kinds of dangers.' Reread the extract in which Napoleon starts this remark. Does this remind you of Stalin's obsessive fear of traitors or rivals?
4. Squealer rewrites the history of the Battle of the Cowshed, giving Napoleon a heroic role. What is your feeling towards Napoleon at this point in the novel?
5. What do you think of Squealer's persuasive abilities? Look at the techniques he uses to glorify Napoleon's righteousness.
6. What is your reaction to Napoleon's 'show trial' and the bloodshed that follows? Examine the significance made all the more poignant by Boxer's remedy: 'The solution, as I see it, is to work harder'.
7. Clover realises that the picture of the future she and the rest of the animals had in mind is the exact opposite of their reality. Yet still Clover cannot even think of rebelling. What light does this shed on the desires and tragedies of the Russian people as a whole during the twentieth century?
8. What do you think about the abolition of 'Beasts of England'? Does this signify the end of the revolution or its replacement, 'Animal Farm, Never Through Me Shalt Thou Come to Harm' strike you as ironic?



Essay question

Explore Napoleon's use of violence and threats in this chapter to maintain his power.

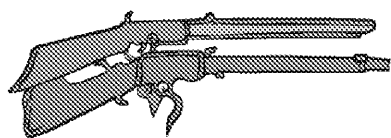


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Chapter Eight



Some of the animals, still shaken by the slaughter, are given another commandment: 'no animal shall kill another animal, but man may kill him if he has been secretly altered. Work continues on the windmill and finally, by a tremendous, exhausting effort, the animals now needs is the machinery to make it work. To

sell a pile of wood to a neighbouring farmer, Mr Frederick. There were two farmers bidding for it, Frederick and Pilkington but Napoleon settles on the former. They are paid in notes. But then, horror of horrors, it is discovered that the notes are forgeries. Worse still, Frederick invades the farm. But this time, there are 15 men with six guns – much more serious than Mr Jones' attack. The animals are beaten back, until they cower in their holes. They watch as Frederick and his men use explosives to blast the windmill, the symbol of the suffering they suffered so much to build from the face of the earth. With a great roar, the animals charge toward the men for revenge – and though they are beaten, Frederick and his men are beaten and have to run for their dear life. The animals have won the battle but at a great cost.

Analysis

This is a tragic chapter; despite the animals' hard work, their new windmill is destroyed again. The windmill symbolises their fruitless struggle; whatever they do, they cannot build and keep something.

It seems that each time they do achieve something, they do it at a great cost. This is seen in the battle, which is won by the furious animals, but so many of them were wounded and bloodily killed that it did not seem like a victory. In Chapter Four, Orwell had described a battle in great detail, with words and phrases that highlighted the animals' victory. This time, the details are sparse and there is no sense of greatness.

Active Learning Task

🎵 Song Writing

Reread the two main songs 'Animal Farm', 'England', sung by Major (the pig), and 'Napoleon', by Minimus (the goat). Write lyrics to your own song set to the tune of 'Animal Farm'. It may be another song or a spread of allegiance to the animals. You may compose a song in favour of Napoleon himself. You may wish to write in a similar style to the others. Perhaps you want to write a song for the other animals to your point of view.

Active Learning Task

'When the battle's lost and won'

The animals won both the Battle of the Cowshed and the Battle of the Windmill, but which of the two victories felt more of a victory to the animals? Write an essay giving reasons for your opinion. In your answer you should consider:

- The events in each battle
- The animals' gains and losses
- The animals' reactions to the victory
- Any other points of your own

It is also interesting to note that even though the animals had a better life, they became distraught and disillusioned, leaving them. Like the Russian people, who were accustomed to their gloomy life, they were not used to a better life.

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Chapter Eight: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

'There were times when it seemed to the animals that they worked longer hours and fed no better than they had done in Jones's day.' (Page 83)

Before this chapter, there was a sense of resignation and acceptance amongst the animals, based on the thought that whatever happened, they would never be worse off than under Mr Jones's orders. This quotation marks a significant moment as the animals are losing the only 'hope' they had, losing the pride of fighting for a cause and realising that the revolution are now forgotten.

'It was a savage, bitter battle.' (Page 91)

'They had won, but they were weary and bloody.' (Page 92)

Orwell described the Battle of the Windmill in less detail than the Battle of the Cowshed. Although this battle is considered a victory, it lacks the feeling of glory and pride of the battle against Jones. The brief, negative language in these quotations contrasts with the more uplifting vocabulary Orwell used to narrate the Battle of the Cowshed, suggesting that the days of glory for Animal Farm are over, just as they were for Stalin and his comrades.

'A cry of lamentation went up.' (Page 94)

'With tears in their eyes they asked one another what they should do if their Leader were to die.' (Page 94)

Towards the end of the chapter, the animals believe Napoleon is dying when he is poisoning. We can see in the words 'cry', 'lamentation' and 'tears' that the animals are in a state of despair. In irony again, this time to expose Napoleon's ignorance. These quotations almost suggest that the animals, who have become so used to Napoleon's regime that they fail to see a future without him, might know that they would be better off with Jones or any other.

Discussion Prompts

1. The animals see, or think they see, that there were good reasons for killing the 'traitors'. Examine how the animals are manipulated. As usual, fit this into Orwell's wider message.
2. Examine how a 'cult of personality' arises around Napoleon. Does he deserve such protection?
3. What does the description of Frederick's farm remind you of? Nazi Germany?
4. Do you find it unfair that the mill be named 'Napoleon Mill'? Link this to such showpiece buildings of 'Stalingrad'.
5. Given that we have already seen the resemblance of Frederick's farm to Nazi Germany, how does Napoleon change his mind and forge an alliance with Frederick? Link this to the non-aggression pact between Hitler and Stalin in 1939. What do you think will happen next?
6. Examine the many parallels between the Battle of the Windmill and the Nazi invasion of Russia. Look at the fact that it is the animals, particularly Boxer, who bear the brunt of the fighting.
7. Do you agree with Squealer's view that it is a 'victory'?
8. The pigs find a case of whisky and Napoleon is even seen to be wearing a bowler hat. How do the original Seven Commandments are now all but worthless. Is Napoleon actually dying?



Essay question

Compare Orwell's use of language when describing the battle in this chapter with the language used to describe the battle in Chapter Four.

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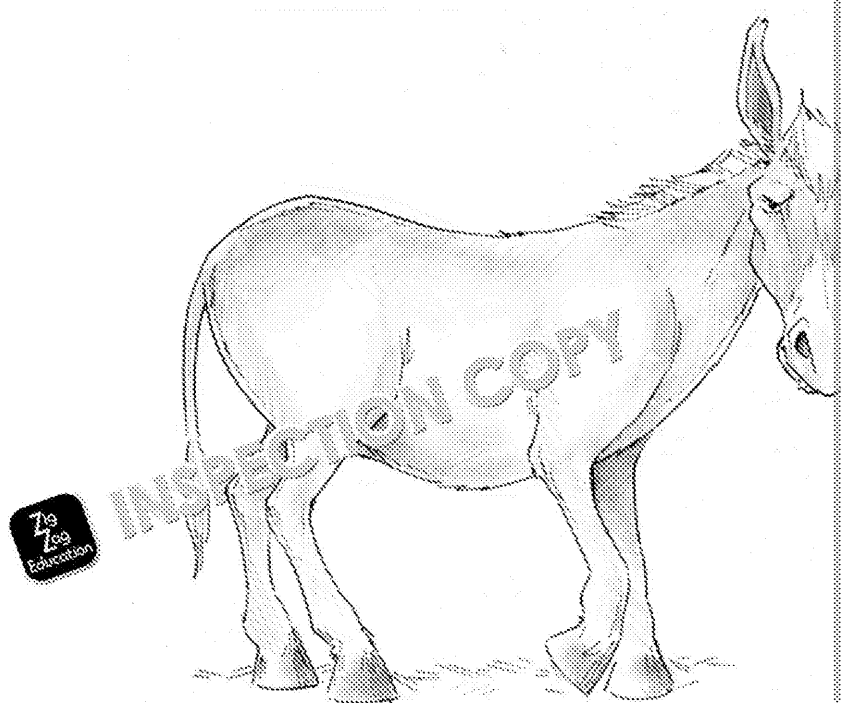
Chapter Nine

It is decided to rebuild the windmill yet again. As usual, Boxer does the hardest work, but he is weaker, and has a serious cracked hoof. Many of the animals (apart from the pigs) refuse to help. It is another harsh winter, and food is even scarcer so rations are reduced. The animals are reassured by Squealer, who tells them repeatedly how much better off they have been under Jones. Even though food is scarce, the pigs start devoting more resources to their own needs. Then one evening, while working extra hard, Boxer collapses. Napoleon promises to take him to the vet. A van comes to take him away but, to the animals' surprise, it is not the 'Alfred Simmonds, Horse Slaughterer'. Boxer has not been taken to be treated, but to be used for glue. The pigs spend the money on whisky – and convince the other animals that the crime is unnoticed.

Analysis

This is probably the most shocking chapter of the story as Boxer, the faithful hardworking horse, is sent to be mercilessly killed when he is old and unwanted. As the Russian working class, Boxer tried as hard as he could to please the leaders; he worked tirelessly under the motto 'I will work harder' and his loyalty was reflected in his belief that 'Napoleon is always right'. Despite such beliefs, his efforts were hardly ever acknowledged or praised and when he needed help (when he was wounded and weak), he was discarded in the most cruel possible way. By this point, the reader will feel nothing but contempt for the likes of Napoleon. With the simple but powerful descriptions of the events in this chapter, Orwell manages to expose fully the failings of a dictatorial regime. The simplicity in the language he has used highlights how helpless and hopeless the situation is; the animals' fate has been decided and there is nothing they can do about it.

Activity
Boxer's Fate
Do a role-play where a group of animals ask Squealer for information about Boxer's fate. The pigs should be given time to prepare their answers.



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Chapter Nine: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

'A too rigid equality in rations, Squealer explained, would have been contrary to the principles of Animalism.' (Page 97)

Again, Squealer's eloquence convinces the animals that things are better than they think and that there is nothing wrong with the pigs' and dogs' rations being more than those of the rest of the animals. Orwell uses juxtaposition by combining the words 'too rigid' and 'equality'. With this, he is showing again how the true meaning of the word 'equality', a term, however, much used in their speech of Orwell using irony.

'Napoleon had commanded that once a week there should be something called Spontaneous Demonstrations, in which the animals would march round the precincts of the farm in military formation...' (Page 100)

Orwell uses irony again. He shows how these 'Spontaneous Demonstrations' were in 'military formation'. The contrast of the latter terms with the word 'spontaneous' twisting the meaning of words and using language to manipulate people and hide the truth.

'But alas! his strength had left him; and in a few moments the sounds of drumming hooves were heard no more.' (Page 105)

As he is being taken to the slaughterhouse, Boxer tried to get out of the van. However, he was abandoned. This is possibly the saddest episode in the story, as the most beloved animal on the farm is taken away because he is simply not useful anymore. Orwell describes this with emotive language. He wants the reader to fully understand the brutality and self-interest of the regimes. Dictators did not even care for the people who believed in them the most. Boxer, who worked extremely hard for the regime died abandoned, their tireless and selfless.

Discussion Prompts

1. *'The animals knew that life nowadays was harsh and bare, that they were often hungry, that they were usually working when they were not asleep. But doubtless it had been worse in the days of the old masters; the animals in a group; and link this discussion to the tragedy of the people of USSR.'*
2. *There are many ways illustrated in this chapter in which Napoleon puts the other animals to work, supply his luxuries, of which beer production is the most obvious. But the animals still find it hard to believe the old days: 'there were more songs, more speeches, more processions.'* Look at the irony.
3. *Look too at the deep irony of the statement that 'the animals found it comforting to believe that they were truly their own masters and that the work they did was for their own benefit'.*
4. *Boxer is getting thinner, and looking decidedly unwell. What does this signify about the people after many years of serving Stalin?*
5. *If any metaphor could express the cruelty and brutality of Stalin's regime, it is Boxer's fate. That there could be nothing more tragic, nothing more despicable, and nothing more cruel than the fate of the loyal and hard-working horse and the fate of the industrious Russian people.*



Essay question

How does Orwell make the passage when Boxer gets sent to the slaughterhouse so powerful?

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Chapter Ten

Years pass. Many of the new animals have little knowledge of the rebellion at all. The farm is more prosperous now – the windmill is complete, and two new fields have been ploughed. But the animals receive less food than ever – apart from the pigs, who live in luxury. One day, the pigs walk out in procession on their hind legs. Then all of the pigs walk out in procession on their hind legs too – in strict contrast to the 'two legs bad' rule! The sheep, taught by Squealer, begin a new chant: 'Four legs good, two legs better!' Worse still, Clover and Benjamin the donkey see a new alteration to the commandments: 'All animals are equal. **But some are more equal than others.**' Soon enough, the pigs invite the local human farmers to see their farm. The tour ends in a meal, in which one farmer points out that Napoleon's pigs do more work for less food than any in the country! Clover and some other animals peep through the window to look from pig to man, and from man to pig – but it is only too difficult to tell which is which.



Active Learning Task

From pigs to humans

At the end of the novel, animals find it difficult to tell the difference between the human beings and the pigs. Make a list of human traits that Orwell has given the pigs in this particular passage and in the rest of the novel.



Analysis

This final chapter describes the new regime; they are now living in a regime, one that is worse than the old one, against all those years ago. The pigs have become almost human.

Chapter Ten: Useful Quotations and Language Analysis

'Only old Benjamin professed to remember' ... 'the unalterable law of life.' (Page 111)

Orwell uses the old donkey as his mouthpiece, voicing his own disappointment with the revolution. The word 'unalterable' in this quotation highlights the resignation of the animals. The revolution has almost been forgotten or even worse, proven to be a failure. The speech with ideals of freedom and an idyllic world has been muted forever.

'All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others.' (Page 114)

The commandments have been changing to suit the pigs' regime. Orwell has shown how the pigs have twisted ideas for their own benefit throughout the story. This last rule is the ultimate irony, as the pigs have completely lost its meaning.

'The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but each time it was impossible to say which was which.' (Page 115)

The last words of the novel show how the supposed leaders of a revolution have become as horrifying as the villains that prompted it. Orwell finishes his novel with an ironic remark that leaves the reader thinking that ideals can easily be corrupted. After the uplifting speech of Old Major in chapter One and the success of the revolution in Chapter Two, the story starts to spiral into a tale of corruption and horror that leaves the reader with an irreversible sense of disappointment. Orwell himself had been a believer in socialist ideals but was disenchanted when totalitarian regimes took these ideals and infected them.



Active Learning Task

Oral Preparation

Prepare a presentation on the topic given in front of the class. Each group should include:

- What is the main theme of the novel?
- Animal characters
- Boxer's story
- A comparison of the pigs and Snowball

But of course, each group should have their own ideas.

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Discuss Orwell's use of irony in this chapter.



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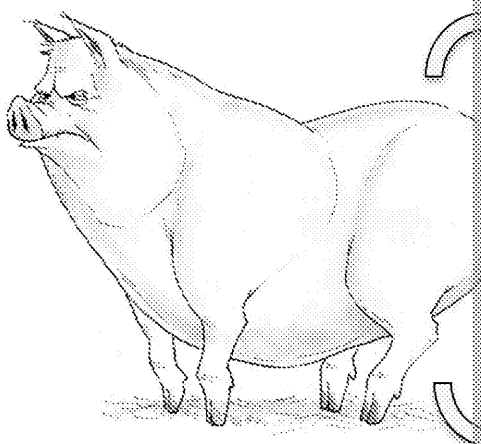


Characterisation

Characterisation: the way characters are presented in a story.

Napoleon

Napoleon is described as a rather fierce Berkshire Boar – not much of a talker, but Although reasonable at the beginning of the fable, he rapidly becomes corrupted. After expelling Snowball he assumes complete control, ruling the farm under what the fable progresses we see him becoming more ruthless – resorting to show trial regime. He uses dogs as a 'secret police', and justifies wicked decisions with even Towards the end of the novel we see him at the forefront of the pigs as they mimic closely. By the end of the book Napoleon has become a risky drinking, pipe smoking, fickle and cruel version of Mr Jones. He is as far removed from Old Major's imagine. We see him contributing nothing to the rebellion, its ideas or its ideology with passion is the rearing of the guard dogs. Napoleon presents Stalin in many ways, his ruthlessness and cruelty strongly reminiscent of the Russian dictator. But it is testament to the universality of Napoleon's character that he is also relevant to a much historically wider range of figures – from the old, such as his namesake Napoleon Bonaparte, to the recent, such as Slobodan Milošević or Saddam Hussein. Power corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.



Active Learning Task

The Trial of Napoleon

As a class, divide into groups of four. Each group must choose one member to play Napoleon, one to play Squealer, and two members to play barristers for the prosecution. The barristers may be chosen by the class or by the group. You are to act out a hypothetical trial, in which Napoleon stands accused of crimes against the farm. The barristers and Squealer must work together to plan their defence, and perhaps draft some speeches. The prosecution must do the same. Then each group must carry out their trial in front of the whole class. The whole class acts as jury and votes on the guilt of Napoleon. By the end, having watched the trials and heard the verdicts, the class should have a really solid grasp on the issues surrounding Napoleon's character.



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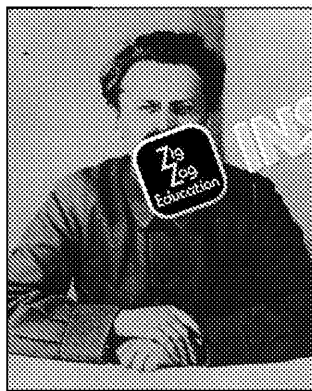
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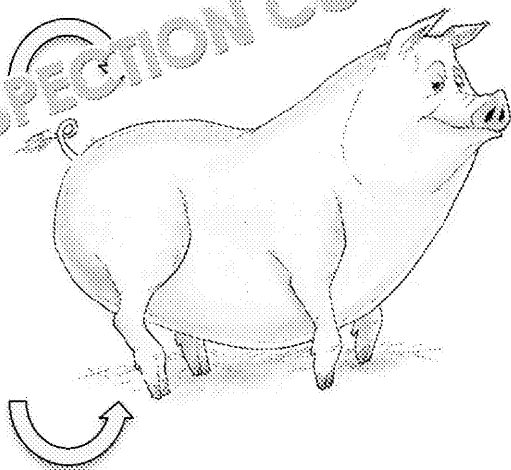


Snowball

Snowball is described as a vivacious pig, quick with speech and inventive. Along with the two pigs who take the forefront following the rebellion. They seem to be the animals' new society. But whereas Napoleon is ruthless and self-serving, Snowball is not. It seems that he genuinely has the best interests of the farm at heart. He comes up with ideas, for instance forming animal committees, or suggesting a windmill. As the time goes by, there is an evermore serious rivalry with Napoleon. Eventually, when he is exiled by Napoleon, his generous and forward-thinking form of Animalism is lost completely, leaving his totalitarian state. Napoleon uses Snowball for a scapegoat whenever he makes mistakes. If the weeds overgrow a crop, Snowball is blamed. Eventually Snowball is written out of the story altogether – in particular, Napoleon denies that he ever took part in the Battle of the Windmill. It is spread that Snowball had been working with the humans all along, trying to undo the rebellion.



Leon Trotsky



this all is ultimately idealistic. It doesn't eliminate the need for a leader. It does. It is Orwell's point. Leon Trotsky was an intellectual who wanted to create a whole new society. Trotsky was Snowball.

Active Learning Task

✍ Short Story

Write a short story, imagining that Snowball had become leader and not Napoleon. If you could live in the number of years, so that it studies how Animal Farm develops. Will the windmill get built? Will the pigs live in luxury as they do under Napoleon? Will the farm be ruled by terror as it is under Napoleon? Will its inhabitants enjoy? These are all things to consider in your work.

Active Learning Task

✉ Snowball's Letter

Imagine that you are Snowball, and having been exiled you are living at Foxwood Farm. You are one of the bad things that are happening at Animal Farm – a place that you once loved and had the hope of making better for the animals. As a tyrant Napoleon is, you write an open letter to them. Write this letter to the animals, explaining a bad leader, and what he is doing so wrong. Try to explain that you were never a traitor, but the way forward. Perhaps you could suggest some sort of rebellion? Above all, make it very clear that he is a criminal, and is far from the 'Friend of the Fatherless' that he is seen as.

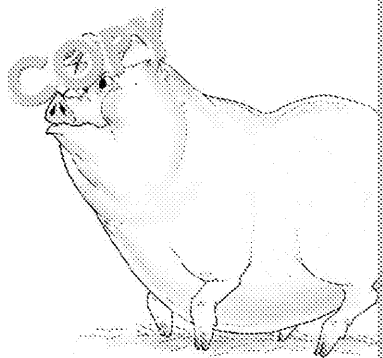
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Squealer

Squealer comes into the limelight after Napoleon snatches total power, as his 'pig' a small fat pig, with very round cheeks and twinkling eyes, all swift nimble movements. He is a brilliant talker – some of the animals say that he could turn black into white. He is skipping from side to side and whisking his tail when asked difficult questions – and he is very persuasive. Squealer is Napoleon's right-hand man – by the end of the book, in fact, all, it is Squealer who makes all his announcements. Squealer is a propaganda machine who convinces the animals completely deceived throughout – in particular, demonising Snowball. Squealer exploits the disparity between the lifestyles of the pigs and their rulers, using lies and false statements to create a need for the dictators of totalitarian regimes to use rhetoric and oratory to maintain control. He could be compared to the propaganda department in Lenin's government, which continued to lie to the people. Squealer uses a baffling array of techniques to these ends, from simplifying issues (such as his creation of the 'four legs good, two legs better' slogan, which drastically changes the meaning of the commandments) to overcomplicating them (cite his explanation of why Napoleon had changed his mind about the windmill).

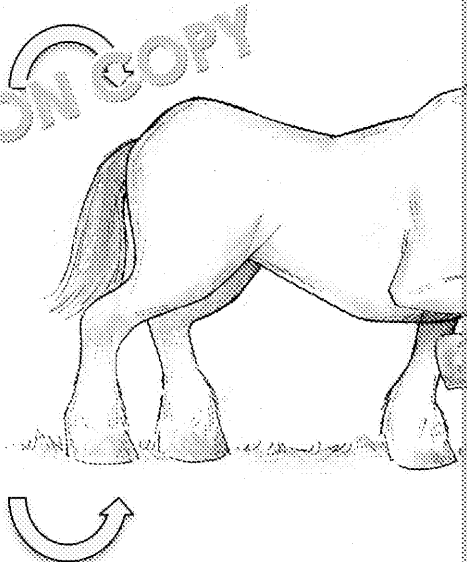


Boxer

Boxer is the most noble and hard-working of the animals on the farm. A giant with an enormous beast, nearly eighteen hands high, and as strong as any two ordinary horses. A white stripe down his nose gives him a somewhat stupid appearance. It is true that he is slow-witted in the farm, but he makes up for that with 'his steadiness of character and tremendous capacity of endurance'. Boxer can be seen to represent the exploited Russian people, or the working class. Like the Russian people, his naïve trust in his leaders, coupled with a huge determination and capacity to work hard, he seems to walk into exploitation, totally unable to see even the most blatant of betrayals. Boxer is the final illustration of his cruel betrayal by the leaders to whom he gave his heart and soul. The book is his tragedy, as the century was Russia's.



A Russian peasant in the early twentieth century



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Major

Old Major, or Major, is the wise old pig who first suggests the rebellion. He is a pig described as a 12-year-old and rather stout creature. He is a rather 'majestic-looking' pig with a benevolent appearance'. While still alive he is extremely highly regarded by the other animals on the farm. It is he who first has a wonderful dream about a land without human beings and he who inspires the animals to rebel. Major seems to represent both Karl Marx, who was the first to formulate communist ideas, and Lenin, who came to the fore of the Russian Revolution. It is no surprise that Orwell treats him very sympathetically, when it is remembered that he held both Lenin and Marx in a great deal of respect. Like both Marx and Lenin, and unfortunately for the animals on the farm, Major's vision of a better future is never to come to fruition.



Mr Jones

A drunkard and a layabout, Mr Jones is the farmer who runs the farm before the animal rebellion. He lets the farm disintegrate and looks after his affairs so badly that, by the time the animals revolt, the walls are crumbling, the hedges are out of control, and the animals are unfed. He cares only for indulging himself with luxuries, while the animals go hungry. In many ways Mr Jones represents the Tsar of Russia before its revolution, Nicholas II. Both are incompetent leaders with virtually no organisational skills. Both suffer a great blow to their respective kingdoms before they are overthrown; the Tsar was humiliated in the costly First World War, while Mr Jones lost much money in a legal dispute. Mr Jones is a piteous figure in the book, eventually dying of alcoholism – yet by the end the reader knows that he had run the farm less cruelly than Napoleon, just as Stalin's ruthlessness and incompetence outstripped any of the crimes Nicholas II had to offer.



Tsar Nicholas II of Russia

Mr Frederick

Mr Frederick owns a neighbouring farm. He is described as 'a tough, shrewd man' who is perpetually in legal trouble with the courts and with a name for driving a hard bargain'. He cheats Napoleon by buying his wood with forged notes, and then invading his farm. Mr Frederick represents Adolf Hitler in the book. The first clue is in his name, for Hitler was Frederick Barbarossa, an ancient Teutonic king. Like Hitler, Frederick tricks Napoleon into making an alliance with him, before brutally stabbing him in the back. Frederick's invasion of Animal Farm has many parallels with the German invasion of Russia. The pigs are at first much better armed than Napoleon's, and seem the favourites to win; they cause horrendous damage to the farm, killing and wounding many, and they drive the animals back to the very heart of their farm. It is the grit, determination and sacrifice of the animals that make the difference, mirroring that of the Russian people, who win the day.

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Neville Chamberlain,
British Prime Minister
1937-1940

Mr Pilkington

If Frederick represents Germany, Pilkington must represent another local farm, he is described as an 'easy going gentleman of his time in fishing or hunting according to the season'. His farm, is a 'neglected, old-fashioned farm, much overgrown, its pasture worn out and its hedges in a disgraceful condition'. Pilkington is very worried by the revolution at Animal Farm. He is a pro-Animalist propaganda (mirroring the British fear of communism) but he tries to keep the minds of his own animals.

Benjamin

Benjamin is a wily old donkey, the oldest and worst tempered of the animals living on the farm. He is the only animal who talks; when he does, it is to make some cynical remark. He is the only animal who is not carried away with the excitement of the rebellion; he is never truly enthusiastic about Animalism at all. He takes the rather depressing view that life will always be an unpleasant struggle, regardless of who is running things. Despite the fact that he is only a minor character, Benjamin is still important to the fable. He is the only animal with the insight to see through the pigs' lies – as we can see when Squealer, while trying to amend a commandment, falls from the ladder. Yet he never chooses to do what he perhaps ought to: organise a resistance to the pigs and spread the truth. As such, Benjamin could be seen to represent the sceptical class of angry intellectuals that Orwell belonged to himself. Orwell's message seems to be that Benjamin had a responsibility to alert the others to the failing of their leaders, but wasted that power.

Clover

Clover is Boxer's truest friend, urging him to rest and conserve his health when the pigs just expect him to work more and more. She is a female carthorse, described as a 'stout motherly mare approaching middle life, who had never quite got her figure back after her fourth foal'. She is loyal to Boxer, and often suspicious of the pigs' motives, but can never quite bring herself to believe that the pigs are doing anything bad. Several times she correctly thinks that Napoleon is breaking one of the Seven Commandments, but has agreed on but each time the commandment has been pointedly changed. The novel climaxes with the alteration of 'All animals are equal' to 'All animals are equal. But some animals are more equal than others'. Her importance to the novel as a passive and exploited observer is highlighted when she leads the animals to spy on the banquet between the pigs and humans, revealing how similar they have become.

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Mollie

Mollie is the vain and self-centred horse who used to pull Mr Jones's trap when he went to market. She had always been spoilt by the humans, and therefore finds it difficult to fit in with the human-less society of Animalism. She shows a characteristic love for other human items. She very strongly avoids work. Mollie perhaps represents the aristocracy who fled Russia once their patron, the Tsar, was no longer there to spoil them.

Mr Whymper

Mr Whymper is the solicitor who handles all of the transactions between Animal Farm and the outside world. He is the one who finds markets to sell the farm's produce in, and he is the one who has to buy in any supplies the farm needs. He is described as 'a sly looking little man with silver whiskers'. He is the only human to visit Animal Farm and its human neighbours, so it is not surprising that the other animals are not particularly fond of him. It is notable that he eventually fails in his attempt to prevent Napoleon from being elected to the position of leader of the farm at the timber sale.

Minimus

A pig with a great gift for writing songs and poems, he is Squealer's junior partner. It is he who writes the song to replace 'Beasts of England', and he who composes the propaganda songs for the godlike Napoleon.

Bluebell and Jessie

These are the two dogs who give birth to the litter of puppies that Napoleon takes as his own. He is blamed for it, but their children become the secret police, or KGB, of Napoleon's regime.

Muriel

Muriel is the white goat who, despite playing a bit-part role in the novel, still performs an important function. It is she who reads the commandments to the short-sighted Clover each time they are changed to justify Napoleon's latest excesses.

Moses

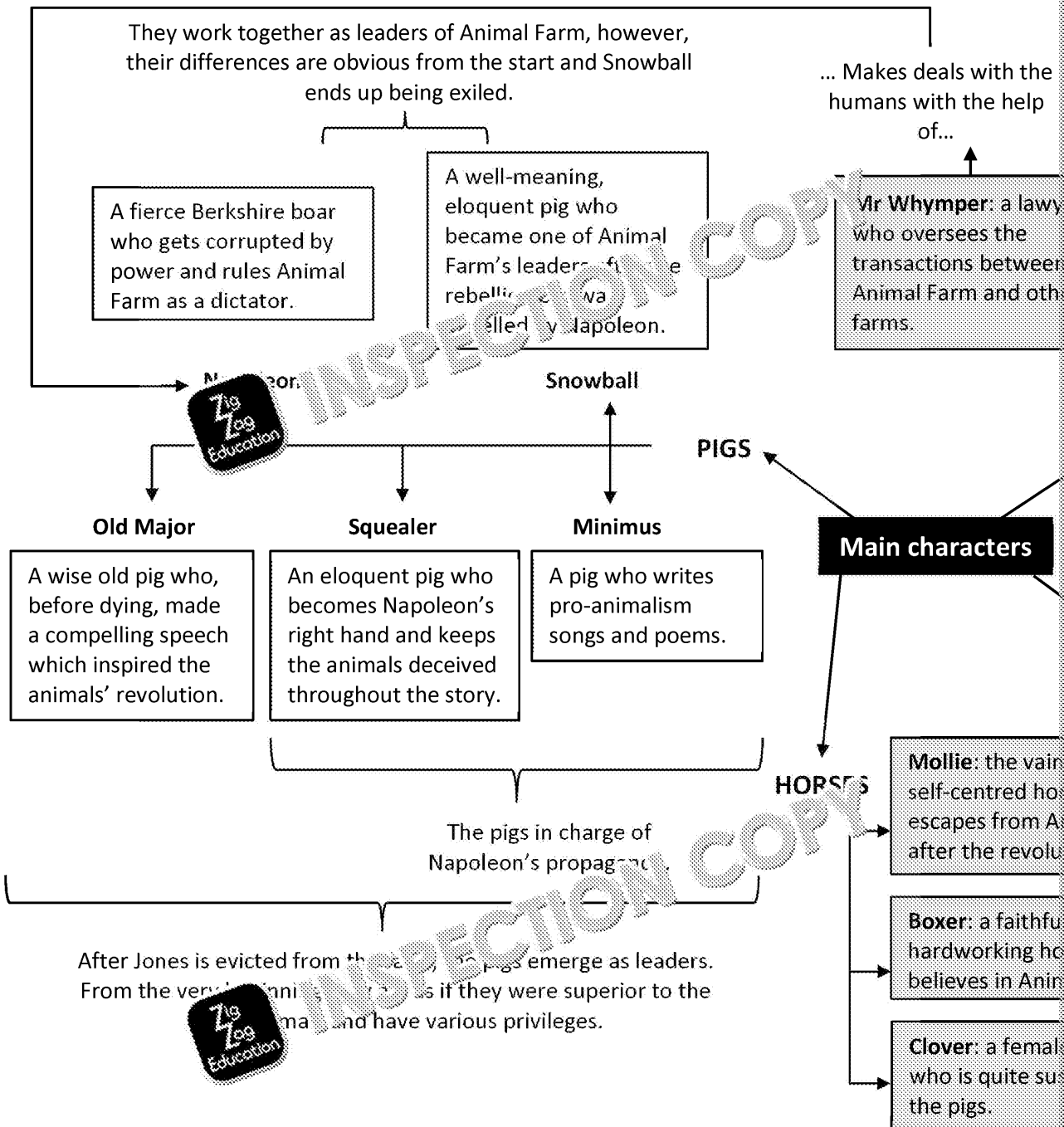
Moses is a tame black raven, and one of Mr Jones's 'especial' favourites. Before the revolution, he refers to 'Sugarcandy Mountain' a mythical land of rest and luxury, much like heaven. He plays a small part in the book, but it is an important one; he allows Snowball to challenge the idea of the mountain, which was merely a thing invented by rulers to oppress the masses.

The dogs

Bluebell and Jessie are the two dogs who are born towards the beginning of the story and are used by Napoleon as 'instrumental terror'. They are used to keep the animals scared so that they do not rebel. They represent the KGB, Russia's secret police who had total power and whose members were allowed to kill anyone who opposed Stalin's regime.

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Settings

General setting

The novel is set in an imaginary farm in England. Although no time is specified in the text, it is clear that the story happens at the time of the Russian Revolution (1917–1945).

The barn

At the beginning of the novel, the animals meet in the barn once Mr Jones has gone to sleep. Since then, the barn becomes a meeting place for the animals. At one end of the barn has a raised platform lit by a lantern. After Old Major's speech, this platform became the perfect place for the pigs to deliver their speeches. It is important to remember that the Seven Commandments are printed on the barn wall.

Quotations

'At one end of the barn, at the end of a raised platform, Major was already ensconced on a rug, which he had brought from the farmhouse.' – Chapter One

'FOUR GOOD, TWO LEGS BAD, was inscribed on the end wall of the barn, and in bigger letters' – Chapter Three

'Napoleon, with Squealer and another pig named Minimus,' ... 'sat on the front of the dogs forming a semicircle round them, and the other pigs sitting behind. The rest of the animals stood round the body of the barn.' – Chapter Five

Sugarcandy Mountain

According to Moses, the raven, Sugarcandy mountain is a beautiful, lush place in the clouds where they die. Just as Marx thought that religion was a lie that 'opiated' people, the pigs thought of Sugarcandy mountain as they thought it was a fable. However, Napoleon decides to talk about this place because he taught animals to work and not complain.

Quotations

'Sugarcandy Mountain, to which all animals went when they died. It was situated some little distance beyond the clouds, Moses said. In Sugarcandy Mountain it was Sunday season all the year round, and lump sugar and linseed cake grew on the hedges.' – Chapter Eight

'A thing that was difficult to determine was the attitude of the pigs towards Moses. They had heard the stories about Sugarcandy Mountain were lies, and yet they allowed him to remain on the allowance of a gill of beer a day.' – Chapter Nine

The farmhouse

After the animals' rebellion, they all parade through the house in a mixture of awe and fear. All animals agreed to keep the house as a museum and never live in it. However, at the end of the novel, the pigs move into the house and enjoy its luxuries. It is significant that Orwell chose to end his novel in this place, with the pigs behaving like humans in the house.

Quotations

'They tiptoed from the room, afraid to speak above a whisper and gazing with a kind of awe at the bed with its feather mattresses, the looking-glasses, the horsehair sofa, the Brunswick clock, the Victorian drawing-room mantelpiece.' – Chapter Two

'A unanimous resolution was passed on the spot that the farmhouse should be preserved as a museum, and no animal must ever live there.' – Chapter Two

'It was also more suited to the dignity of the Leader (for of late he had taken to speaking of himself as the Leader) to live in a house than in a mere sty. Nevertheless, some of the animals were disturbed when they took their meals in the kitchen and used the drawing-room as a recreation room, but also some of them were not.'

'Napoleon rarely appeared in public, but spent all his time in the farmhouse, which was his private domain.' – Chapter Seven

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Themes

Theme: a broad idea or topic that is dealt with or referred to in the story

Appearance and Reality

There are many examples of appearance and reality being confused in the story.

- At the beginning of the novel, Mr Jones appears to be in control of the farm secretly in the barn, which suggest that he is not at all in charge of the farm
- Old Major's speech seems to be full of hope and his words sound as if they will be fulfilled. However, as the story progresses we realise how naïve his ideals really are.
- Squealer appears to be friendly to the other animals. However, he is deceiving them to justify the brutal and selfish regime of the pigs.
- The fact that each of the characters in the novel represents an influential historical figure is an example of appearance and reality as a theme in the story.

Betrayal

The story is full of examples of betrayal:

- Mollie abandoned the animals to be looked after and spoiled by humans
- Napoleon betrayed Snowball
- Squealer kept lying to the animals about the horrifying events that took place
- Boxer's death
- Old Major's ideals were betrayed

Corruption

Mr Jones at the beginning of the novel and, most importantly, the pigs throughout prove to be corrupt and abuse their power. These are examples of their dishonesty:

- Snowball's eviction
- The rewriting of the commandments
- Squealer twisting reality
- Boxer's death

Greed

In Old Major's speech, we learn how greedy human beings can be. Mr Jones's decision that Old Major is right to make this judgement. However, as the story progresses the pigs become more and more greedy. These are examples of their insatiable nature:

- They starved the other animals but made sure all pigs were fed more
- The excessive alcohol consumption
- The ambition to become more and more human-like

Active Learning Tasks

1. Think of at least one more example of one of the themes above.
2. Find a quotation to support each of the examples for one of the themes above and explore the language in each quotation.

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Leaders and Followers

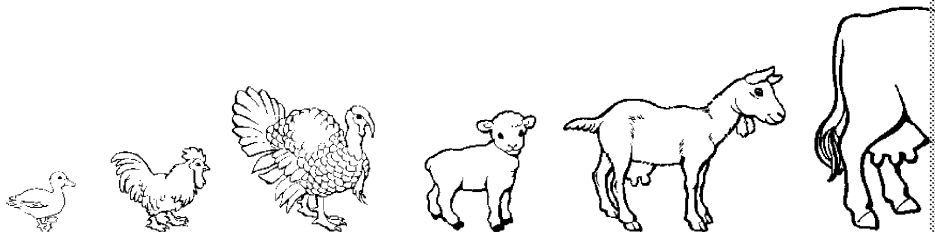
Orwell regarded highly Karl Marx's ideas and was disgusted to see these ideas corrupted by totalitarian communist leaders. Therefore, the theme of leaders and followers is probably the most important theme in the story.

Each of the following characters are, at some time in the story, leaders:

- Mr Jones, the owner of the farm, was the leader before the rebellion. He was such a careless and strict ruler that he pushed the animals into a rebellion.
- Snowball and Napoleon shared the leadership of the farm for a while after the rebellion. However, they did not get along very well. Snowball was the more charismatic leader and would have been the absolute leader of the farm had it not been for Napoleon's brutal plans. After Snowball's eviction, Napoleon became the absolute leader and rules in a terrifying regime.

The following characters are examples of followers:

- The majority of the sheep, who are always seen as a group
- Boxer and Clover, who are loyal followers and fail to see the corrupt nature of the regime
- The rest of the animals who accept the terrible events in the farm and their place in the hierarchy



Propaganda and Communication

Orwell shows in his novel how dictators used rhetoric to manipulate masses and justify their terrible behaviour. After Snowball's expulsion from the farm, Squealer becomes the voice of Napoleon. Squealer's name suggests duplicity and treason. His rhetoric seems to calm the other animals down as he is able to turn every argument against Napoleon into something positive. In his speech, he uses facts, figures, emotive language, repetition and the first person. Squealer's eloquence and its effect on the animals is a clear example of how totalitarians abused language for their own benefit.

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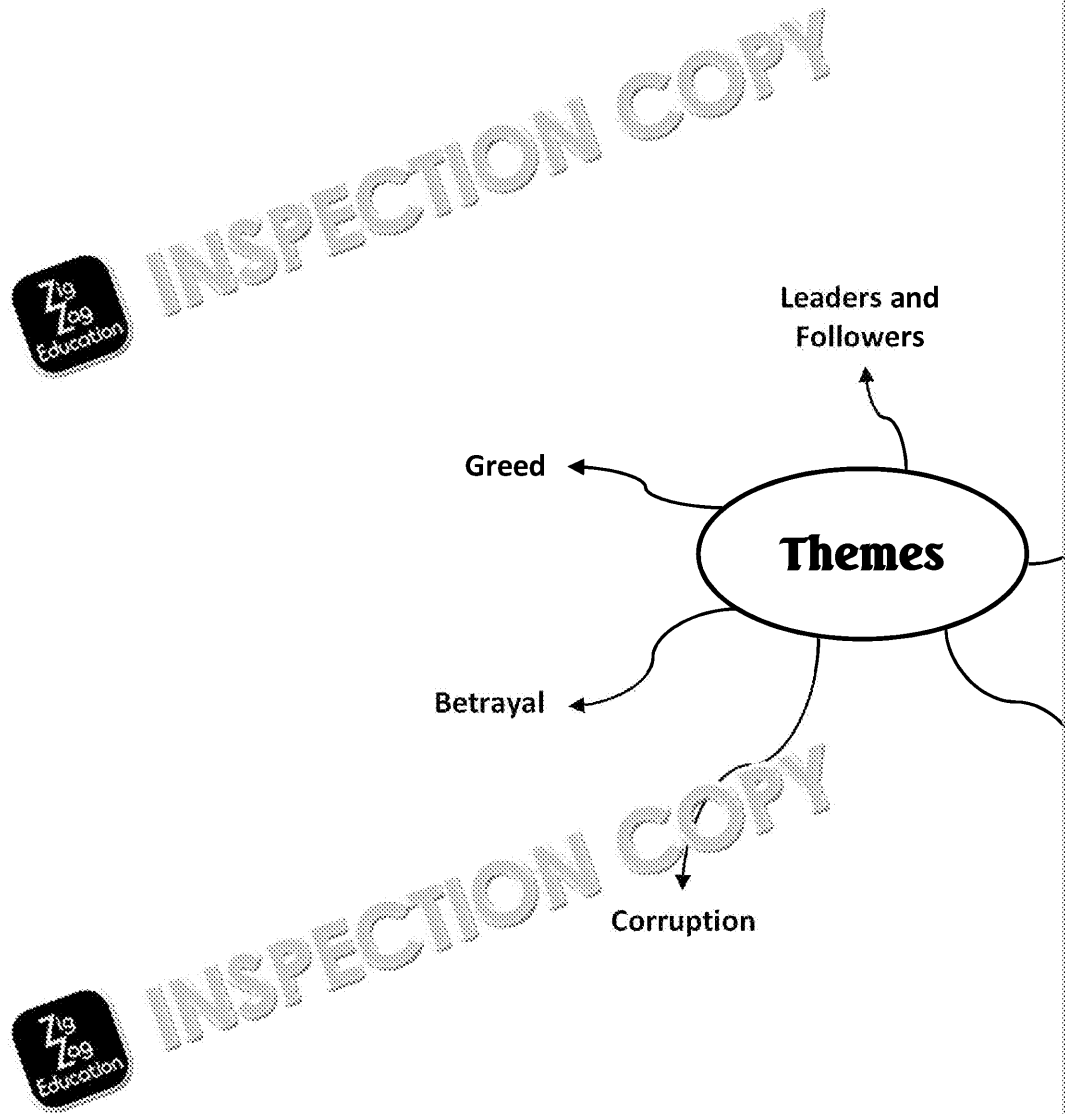
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Active Learning Task

Themes Mind Map

Complete the following mind map with events, characters, situations, etc. that exemplify each theme.



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Allegory

Animal Farm can be read on two levels. On the more simplified level, it is a straight story about animals overthrowing the hated farmer who extorts them. But as well as being a simple story about the failings of Soviet Russia.

But what is an allegory?

The long, complicated and boring answer is as follows:

1. The representation of abstract ideas or principles by characters, figures or events in narrative, dramatic or pictorial form.
2. A story, picture, or play employing such representation. Examples include Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

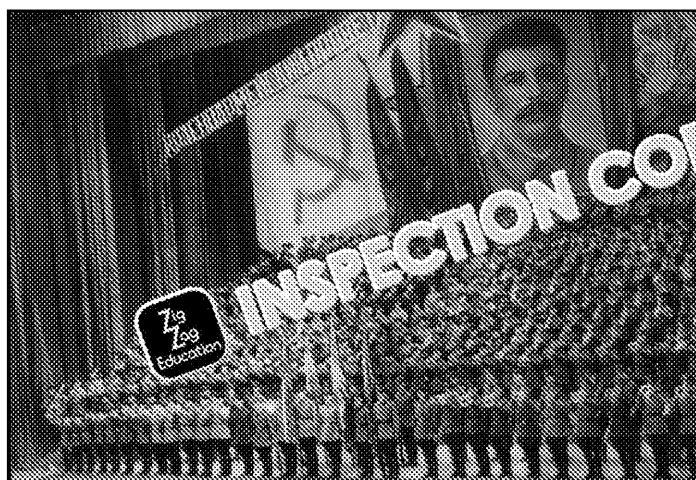
But what does it actually mean?

Perhaps the best way to explain is by using George Orwell's *Animal Farm* as an example. Orwell had a strong hatred of Stalin, and what he had done to Russia. Orwell saw communism as a force that had been corrupted so badly by Stalin. Therefore Orwell wanted to spread the word that it had ruined the potentially noble force of communism. The best way he could spread the word was to write a novel that, without ever directly referring to Stalin or Russia, was clearly a **metaphor** for what was happening in the USSR.

For example, in real life, the Tsar of Russia had ruled selfishly over the Russian people. In *Animal Farm*, Farmer Jones rules over his animals selfishly until they throw him off the farm. Similarly, in real life it was Stalin who snatched power, and created a dictatorship. In *Animal Farm*, Napoleon the pig takes power and rules the farm with a rod of iron.

Indeed, all the events in the book somehow **mirror** what happened in Stalinist Russia. The book is a failure of communist Russia as much as it is about animals overthrowing their farmer. Without mentioning Stalin or Russia, George Orwell leaves us in no doubt that this is what he was concerned with.

This type of story is called a **fable**, or **allegory**. *Animal Farm* is a **metaphor** for the USSR. It contains so many themes, characters or events that you can find in the book which represent the USSR.



A Communist military ceremony. Large banners showing the hammer and sickle symbol and Stalin can be seen in the background.

Active Learning
As a class or in groups, students can create a drama or play to convey the message of the book.

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Language

Orwell's purpose was to show his readers how an idealistic theory could be corrupted by totalitarianism. In order to communicate his message, he used unpretentious language. He hated the way language was used as a tool to confuse and deceive the workers of the Russian Revolution. He believed that 'language can corrupt thought'. Therefore, in *Animal Farm*, he used simple and powerful language and did away with elaborate metaphors that could confuse the reader. Unlike a metaphor or fable and, as it was the case in ancient fables or parables, the language is not a more complex idea.

One of the most common techniques found in *Animal Farm* is **irony**. There are several examples of irony mainly used to show how the pigs manipulate the other animals and betrayed the trust of the other animals. For example, Orwell writes 'It had come to be accepted that the pigs, who were manifestly the most intelligent of the animals, should decide all matters of importance for the farm policy'. At this point in the novel we see that the pigs are the only ones who are not happy. The quote suggests that this has happened naturally as the word 'accepted' and 'manifestly' suggest a sense of resignation amongst the other animals. Orwell uses irony to show that the revolution and Animalism were meant to empower all animals, not just the pigs. The acceptance and resignation mirrors what happened to the ordinary people as a result of the revolution.

Along with irony, Orwell used **doublespeak**. He first used this term in his novel *1984* to describe the language used by the government to explain how governments would lie to their people as if they were telling the truth. There are several examples of doublespeak in *Animal Farm*, especially when Squealer speaks. In Chapter Four, when the other animals start getting worried about Napoleon trading with humans, Squealer says 'The idea of trading with humans against engaging in trade and using money had never been passed, or even suggested, at the time of the revolution. It is probably traceable in the beginning to lies circulated by Snowball.' This is a blatant lie as earlier in the story the animals had agreed not to engage in trade. Squealer is also using his, by now much despised, name to be held responsible for anything that goes wrong. This is a source of uneasiness in the farm. Again, the reader knows that Snowball has nothing to do with the trade; he is just used as a scapegoat.

To show how totalitarian regimes abused language to manipulate the masses, Orwell uses Squealer, whose **rhetoric** manages to put the animals' minds at rest every time something goes wrong. Squealer is the voice of Napoleon. In Chapter Five for example, he says 'No one believes more firmly than I do that all animals are equal. He would be only too happy to let you make your decisions for yourselves. But sometimes you might make the wrong decisions, comrades, and then where should we be?' After the revolution, Squealer becomes the voice of Napoleon. His **rhetoric** seems to calm the other animals and turn every argument against Napoleon into something positive. This quote shows the **techniques** used by Squealer: the pronoun 'we', rhetorical questions and emotive language.

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Language-based Active Learning Tasks and Discussion Prompts

- **Chapter One:** Find examples of effective persuasive techniques used by Old Major.
- **Chapter Two:** Look at the descriptions of Napoleon, Snowball and Squealer at the end of the chapter. Make a list of adjectives used to describe each character. How do these descriptions fit in with their roles in the story? Could you relate each of these adjectives with these characters' actions?
- **Chapter Three:** At the beginning of the chapter, there is an atmosphere of success and achievement. Find phrases that Orwell has used to create a positive atmosphere.
- **Chapter Four:** Orwell describes vividly the events in the Battle of the Cowshed. Find phrases that the writer create this intense battle scene.
- **Chapter Five:** Squealer has become Napoleon's spokesman. He is very successful in convincing the animals that everything is perfectly fine. Why is he successful? What persuasive techniques does he use? Find quotations.
- **Chapter Six:** Napoleon has become more and more tyrannical. Find words or phrases that show his authoritarian nature.
- **Chapter Seven:** The beginning of this chapter points to a very gloomy atmosphere. Make a list of words or phrases that Orwell uses to create this mood. Try to identify any linguistic devices used by the author.
- **Chapter Eight:** There is a great example of Orwell's use of irony towards the end of the chapter. Find the quotation and discuss its effects.
- **Chapter Nine:** Boxer is sent to the slaughterhouse. When the other animals realise that they cannot get him out of the van, they realise that they can get out of the van. Make a list of words or phrases that Orwell has used to convey this desperate situation.
- **Chapter Ten:** To finish his story and convey his message, Orwell again makes use of irony. Find passages in this chapter and explore their effects.



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Form

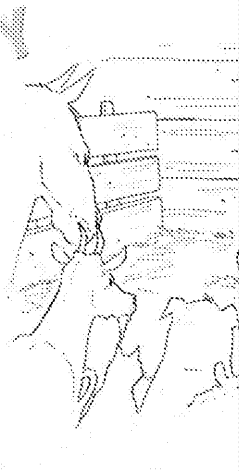
Form: type of writing, e.g. novel, poem, etc., within a particular genre

Animal Farm is an allegoric novella. It is an extended metaphor for the failings of the form of a small novel.

Point of view

The novella is written with a third-person, omniscient narrator. This allows Orwell to share his thoughts to the reader.

At several points in the story, the narrator uses the passive voice as a way of criticising the characters while remaining neutral. For example, in Chapter Five, when mentioning Napoleon's dogs, Orwell writes; 'It was noticed that the dogs wagged their tails to him in the same way as the circus dogs had been used to do to Mr Jones.' It is not clear who notices it. We assume it is the animals but they cannot quite put it into words.



Structure

Structure: the way the text is organised within a particular genre

Animal Farm, like most fables, has been written in chronological order. Orwell keeps it straightforward. His style of writing is matter-of-fact throughout the novella as he focuses on the actions and feelings. This structure and style allow him to expose the failings of Stalin's Russia.

It is interesting to notice that the story starts and ends with the animals being subjected to oppression. At the beginning, Jones mistreats the animals. However, at the end, it is the pigs that have taken over. Once again, Orwell cleverly manages to reveal his own opinions on the situation.



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Glossary of Useful Terms

In your exam you might be asked to comment on one of the following; make sure terms mean.



Theme:

A broad idea or topic explored in the text



Language:

Techniques such as similes, metaphors, imagery, etc. chosen by the writer for a particular effect



Viewpoint:

The way of view used in the novel; it could be first person or third person, usually known as omniscient narrator



Style:

The way the writer has organised the text



Symbolism:

Objects or sections in a novel that represent abstract ideas



Setting:

The place, time and circumstances in which a text is set



Author's purpose:

The message the writer wants to convey to the reader through the text

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Answers

Some suggested answers and content to some the discussion questions in the C

Chapter One

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- Most of the animals are not happy working for Mr Jones.
- Old Major's speech is very effective as he uses plenty of rhetorical devices such as emotive language and the use of the pronoun 'we'.
- Old Major represents Karl Marx.
- The rats represent the opposition.
- The song 'Beasts of England' also contains rhetorical devices; therefore, it is generating enthusiasm.

Chapter Two

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- Napoleon represents Stalin and Snowball, Trotsky.
- Communists believe that religion is only a distraction from hard work and religion.
- Boxer and Clover represent the faithful working class of Russia, always willing to work hard.
- Like Jones's farm, Russia had trouble keeping up with the other countries with wealth. The farm workers in Russia, like the animals in the story, had to deal with neglect.
- The destruction of Jones's elements of torture and discipline signifies the beginning of the new society and highlights the animals' victory and newfound power.

Chapter Three

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- For such a strong, hard worker, Boxer is treated incredibly unfairly. His story is a tragedy.
- Mollie represents the class of bourgeoisie nobles of Russia who left the country and were not there to spoil them anymore.
- The description of the flag of animal farm makes it sound very similar to the flag of the Soviet Union.
- The animals have more food than ever before and seem to be generally happy with their own hard work.
- The rivalry between Napoleon and Snowball and the pigs' supremacy can be seen as a reflection of the new society.
- The rivalry between Napoleon and Snowball is very similar to that of Stalin and Trotsky.

Chapter Four

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- The farm was not really wonderful; there were many things wrong with it.
- Mr Pilkington's farm represents the capitalists and Mr Frederick's farm represents the communists. Both are terrified of the success of Animal Farm (or communist Russia) as this could lead to the loss of their own territories.
- Orwell, through Boxer, that the real power of socialist Russia was not in the hands of the workers but in the hands of the leaders. However, the leaders worked hard to hide this and to have the workers believe that their leaders, they were nothing.
- Although Napoleon emerges as the ultimate leader, the truth is that he is not the cause of the animals' suffering.

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Chapter Five

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- Mollie came across as a traitor all along so neither the other animals nor the reader could feel sorry for her. This makes her decision to leave the farm more understandable.
- Mollie always knew what she liked and wanted so the reader could feel sorry for her. The animals would find it difficult to understand her decision.
- Snowball comes across as a more thoughtful character so maybe he would have been a better leader.
- The windmill could represent the struggle of Russia to become industrialised like the other countries that were already enjoying the benefits of industrialisation.
- Napoleon's dogs represent the feared KGB.
- The way the dogs respond to Napoleon can be easily likened to the way they respond to Stalin. This similarity clearly foreshadows the animals' fate; they swapped a villain for a more powerful one, only to be even more unhappy under the rule of this new leader.
- Old Major's skull is now used to make the animals believe that the pigs have no enemies. This is similar to the idea behind the use of Lenin's mausoleum in the USSR to make the people believe that the leader was infallible.
- Squealer cleverly and easily uses rhetoric to persuade the animals that any opposition to the new regime is unfounded; this echoes Stalin's use of propaganda to appease the masses.

Chapter Six

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- The word 'slaves' in the first paragraph contrasts with this idea that the animals were working for themselves. There is a hint of irony in the whole first paragraph.
- Boxer's story is probably the most tragic one as he is the most fervent supporter of the revolution, yet, like the Russian working class, he is later betrayed by the same revolution he worshipped.
- As the other animals are not as clever as the pigs and they are subjected to the same treatment, they are easily convinced that no commandment is broken.
- The other farms, just as other countries during the Cold War saw Russia, see Animal Farm and they respect it, but they are also terrified of a rebellion within their own borders.
- The commandments are beginning to change; for example, sleeping in beds is now forbidden to sleep in beds with sheets.
- The phrase 'surely none of you wishes to see Jones back?' always succeeds in convincing the animals that they always saw him as an evil figure. They would also remember how much Old Major had suffered under the animals' misery.
- Napoleon uses any opportunity he gets to blame Snowball, probably to create a sense of fear among the animals else the animals would fear in the same way they were terrified of Jones.

Chapter Seven

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- Like Stalin, Napoleon wanted the outside world to believe that his farm was a success.
- Napoleon ruled with terror to quieten his unhappy subjects. This mirrors the way Stalin ruled in Russia.
- Napoleon is made to look a hero when the reality was that he had not been in the battle and he let others fight in his place.
- Squealer's rhetoric is important here; he uses several persuasive techniques such as emotive language and rhetorical questions. With these techniques, he manages to convince the animals that the pigs are doing well for the farm.
- The abolition of 'Beast of England' signifies the end of the utopian animal world created by Old Major. The animals' tragic fate is revealed by the fact that not even those who were against their reality is a terrible one, can do anything about it. Once again, this feeling of helplessness is a common theme under Stalin's reign.

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Chapter Eight

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- The animals are easily persuaded by Squealer to think that the executions had to happen because they have become so used to being told what to think that they have lost themselves. They have become used to accepting truths and reality, just like Stalin's government.
- Napoleon is seen as a hero and a leader. However, Boxer probably deserves more credit.
- There is a clear link between the description of Frederick's farm and Nazi Germany. He treats his animals appallingly, flogging them, starving them or using them for his own purposes.
- Napoleon and Frederick strike an agreement similar to the one the Soviets had with the British. Therefore, it is not surprising that Frederick decides to attack Animal Farm as he did in 1941.
- Napoleon is just hangover.
- The reader would have, by now, expected the abolition of all the commandments.

Chapter Nine

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- The animals are like the people of the USSR, are hungry and tired; however, they are now a little better off than they had been before the rebellion. This is a tragic and sad reality.
- The irony in the comment 'there were more songs, more speeches, more propaganda' that seem to be the only things that the animals appreciate in their new lives is that they have put together propaganda plan. The animals have now more things that they can do for their necessities.
- The animals are not really their own masters but they believe wholeheartedly in the new system, sad and tragic.
- Like the industrious people of Russia, Boxer is disposed of in the most heartless way.

Chapter Ten

Ideas that might come up in answer to the discussion points:

- The farm is highly developed and clearly successful but the animals do not benefit from it as the pigs.
- Despite their hardship and hunger, the animals still feel pride when they see the results of their work.
- Old Major would probably be appalled if he saw what Animal Farm has become. It has been hijacked.
- Squealer walking on his hind legs and the motto 'four legs good, two legs even' show the equality that the animals (fuelled by Old Major's dream) had dreamed of.
- Orwell uses Pilkington's remarks to voice the failure of communism and highlight the corruption at Animal Farm.
- Napoleon says many things that conflict with the original ideas of Animal Farm: the change of the flag; the fact that the animals would no longer march in front of him; the change of the name Animal Farm to The Manor Farm.
- Orwell's thoughts seem to suggest that communism had solid ideas but they were corrupted and would easily lead to corruption. He also despised totalitarian regimes such as Stalin's.

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