

# **Animal Farm Study Guide**

## **Animal Farm by George Orwell**

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## Plot Summary

George Orwell's novel *Animal Farm*, published at the end of World War II, is a cautionary tale of the dangers of totalitarianism, and by extension, Communism's form of totalitarianism. It has been called a fairy tale for adults, and lives up to the name.

*Animal Farm* begins with the animals gathering together to listen to the vision and prophecies of Major, an old boar. He foretells of a time when human beings will not be present on the earth, and the animals will live in freedom and will control their own destiny. After he dies, the pigs –the cleverest animals on Manor Farm – codify his words into a system of thought called Animalism.

The pigs help spearhead a rebellion which takes over the farm, and help defend it against attempts to take it back. The other animals rally around the pigs as the pigs set out the Seven Commandments, forbidding human behavior and encouraging the animals never to harm themselves or one another. Napoleon, Snowball, and Squealer, the brightest of the pigs, assume leadership roles and set about tasks, including educating the young, bettering production, and improving the living conditions of the animals.

But Napoleon seizes power, drives Snowball from the farm, and takes away animal suffrage. Slowly, step by step, the pigs take power away from the animals, force them to do with less, and assume more wealth for themselves. The pigs even go so far as to begin living in the farmhouse. Napoleon capitalizes on the lack of education among the animals to take away more of the rights and freedoms.

By the end of the book, the pigs are walking on their hind legs, carrying whips, dressing in human clothing, fraternizing with humans, drinking alcohol, and carrying on in a similar manner as the farmers they drove out. But, Squealer assures the other animals, it is for their own good, and for the good of *Animal Farm*.

At the end of the book, the animals can no longer tell the difference between the pigs and the men they are fraternizing with.



# Chapter 1-2

## Summary

Chapter 1 – Mr. Jones, owner of Manor Farm, goes to bed drunk and forgets to close the popholes in the henhouse. When he has left the farmyard, word spreads among the animals that there is to be a meeting in the barn, because the Middle White Boar, Major, has had a vision he wanted to share. As he is old and respected, the other animals all dutifully assemble inside the barn, except Moses, a tame raven perched near the back door of the farmhouse.

Major informs the animals he does not expect to live much longer. He tells them the lives of animals are full of misery and slavery. The source of the problem is man, Major tells them. Remove man, and animals will be free to work and live as they choose, as well as enjoy the fruits of their own labor. While man may kill animals, no animals may kill other animals. Wild animals, such as rabbits and pigs, are voted to be fellow animals. And only rebellion can bring freedom.

Major then recounts his dream, in which he remembered a song from his youth called Beasts of England, which foretold a prophecy of the rise of animals. The entire assembly of animals begins singing it, which causes a commotion and wakes Mr. Jones. He fires a shotgun round toward the barn, believing a fox may be stirring things up, and then all the animals settle down and go to sleep.

Chapter 2 – Three nights later, in early March, Major dies. The other animals begin preparing and organizing for the rebellion he said must come, but none of the animals believes it will be in their own lifetime. Among the principal organizers are three clever pigs, Snowball, Napoleon, and Squealer. They have codified Major's thoughts and beliefs into a system of thought they call "Animalism".

Over time, the three pigs slowly begin converting the other animals. The pigs also work hard to counteract supposed myths carried on by Moses, Mr. Jones's favorite animal. Moses talks about a place called Sugarcandy Mountain in the sky where the animals go after they die. But Squealer and the other pigs work hard to convince the other animals no such place exists.

After a bout of drunkenness and carelessness, Mr. Jones and his farmhands forget to feed the animals, so the cows break into the feed bins. When the farmers try to stop the animals, the animals kick and rebel, and chase the men and Mrs. Jones off the farm. The animals then destroy any human evidence of occupation and celebrate. The pigs reveal they now have taught themselves to read and write, and change the name of Manor Farm to Animal Farm. They set out a rule of seven commandments upon which all other laws and activities shall be based. They then milk the cows, set out to harvest, and when they return from the fields discover the milk is gone.



## Analysis

Animal Farm takes place in the countryside of England, among rank and file animals on Manor Farm. The animals toil and work, but few give any thoughts to what they do. A hard life is all they know. But then the prophetic vision of Major (a stand-in for Karl Marx) changes everything, and he describes an idealized world without man and with freedom after a rebellion (metaphorical for the October Revolution). After he dies, his beliefs are consolidated and systematized into the philosophy of Animalism by the pigs, which they then seek to spread.

But old beliefs die hard. The pigs must struggle to counteract the words of Moses, a pet Raven (who can be likened to the Church or any organized religion) who talks about a world beyond the clouds where animals go when they die. Mr. Jones and his farmhands are careless and blunt in their overseeing of the farm and its activities, and they can be likened to an apathetic capitalist state which engages religious beliefs for its own purposes. But eventually the pigs succeed in overcoming the words of Moses, and they chase the humans off their farm (the overthrow of the State and the Church).

The changing of the name of Manor Farm to Animal Farm is also significant. The fall of the Russian Empire in 1917, and the successful conclusion of the subsequent Russian civil war, led to the renaming of the country as the Soviet Union. Like the Bolsheviks, the animals seek to change their world, where no animals kill any other animals, and where all animals are equal.

## Vocabulary

Ensnared, daintily, laborious, dissentients, enmity, rebellion, vivacious, disciples



# Chapters 3-4

## Summary

Chapter 3 – Because the pigs are the smartest animals, they direct the other animals as they work. All of the animals, even down as low in rank as the hens, scurry back and forth under the hot sun to harvest the fields. Boxer works the hardest, winning the admiration of all the other animals. Nearly all animals work as hard as they can, except for a few. Mollie, the pretty white mare, is reluctant to get up to work, and usually leaves early. The cat is only seen at mealtime. Benjamin, the old donkey, worked as he had before with no extra effort. But the other animals seem to get past these small divisions, for thievery is nonexistent.

On Sunday, farm-wide meetings are held in which all the animals come together, resolutions are put forward, and voted upon. The pigs are the only ones who put forward resolutions, and take it upon themselves to educate the young and better the lives of everyone. Napoleon personally takes it upon himself to educate the new puppies on the farm privately. They also begin taking the excess milk and apples to mix in their food, which disgruntles the others. This they claim they do keep themselves healthy, because if they should die, the Joneses would come back. The other animals reluctantly accept this explanation.

Chapter 4 – By the late summer, Snowball is sending out flocks of pigeons to spread news of the rebellion and to teach other animals Beasts of England. But the neighboring farmers, Mr. Pilkington of Foxwood, and Mr. Frederick of Pinchfield, worried the rebellion might spread to their own properties. Animals around the country grow restless and petulant. So Mr. Jones and a number of others return to Animal Farm with guns and weapons to attempt to recapture it.

Having studied the campaigns of Julius Caesar, the animals under the command of Snowball attack and brutalize the party led by Jones, driving them off. But Snowball is wounded and a sheep is killed. Even the cat participates in the attack, but Mollie is found hiding.

Meanwhile, the animals resolve to commemorate the day of the battle, and create medals for Snowball and Boxer, and a medal for the dead sheep.

## Analysis

In chapters 3 and 4, readers see the organization of the new Animal Farm, and learn there are differences among the animals already. The pigs do not work, but engage in studies and leadership, and put their knowledge to good use – such as in their first test of independence, when they defeat Jones and his men in battle. The attempts to get the other animals to read and write also fail to varying degrees, and the pigs simplify the Seven Commandments, turning them into easily-memorized slogans for the masses.



Beyond their role as leaders, the pigs also take all of the excess milk and the majority of the apple harvest for their own use. This they claim they do because they need the milk and apples to stay healthy. Without their health, they could not keep running the farm for the benefit of all of the animals. And if the pigs died, then the Joneses would return, and so would slavery. The other animals cannot argue with this logic, and so they accept it. Here, the pigs capitalize on the failures of the other animals to learn to read and think independently; and they gather the fruits of the labor of the other animals, just as the Joneses once did.

## Vocabulary

cryptic, resolutions, manipulation, windfalls, privilege, monstrous, tractable, contemptible, alighted, skirmishing, manoeuvre, ignominious, indefatigable, impromptu, unanimous



# Chapters 5-6

## Summary

Chapter 5 – Clover, a cart horse, begins to notice suspicious behavior in Mollie. She never works and disappears from time to time. Clover also confronts Mollie with the revelation Mollie has seen Clover being petted by a farmhand at Foxwood. Upon investigation of Mollie’s pen, Clover discovers a pile of sugar cubes and ribbons. Mollie then runs away, and the pigeons report she is now pulling a cart in town.

Throughout the winter, the animals gather together, have votes, and listen to the ideas of the pigs for the coming spring. But Snowball and Napoleon are constantly at one another’s throats in disagreement over policies. Snowball draws out plans to build a windmill, provide electricity, and modernize the farm. Rather than build a windmill, Napoleon wants to increase food production. They also disagree over defense: Snowball believes widespread revolution would mean widespread peace, while Napoleon wants to procure and learn to use firearms.

When building the windmill comes up for a vote, Napoleon calls in a pack of dogs –the puppies he privately educated –who chase Snowball off the farm. Napoleon then assumes control, organizing a committee of pigs who will make all the decisions from now on. Voting is abolished. Squealer becomes Napoleon’s spokesperson, and convinces the other animals of the good reason for forbidding debates. Major’s skull is mounted for viewing by the animals, and chores are now dictated. Napoleon also decides to build the windmill, saying the idea really had been his all along.

Chapter 6 – The chores and labor of the animals increases, but they do it happily because they know their work is not for the humans. Work on Sunday afternoons would now occur as well. Work was voluntary, but animals who do not work have their rations cut in half.

Building the windmill and farming simultaneously becomes a challenge. Supplies run short, and Napoleon decides to trade and sell for needed materials. All of these actions were against the Seven Commandments, but Squealer assured the other animals this was fanciful thinking, that it was a lie spread by Snowball. Because none of it had been written down, it could not possibly exist. Mr. Whympers acts as an intermediary between Animal Farm and the human world, selling and trading for Napoleon and the animals. Only Napoleon deals with Mr. Whympers. The pigs also move into the farmhouse, which was also against the Commandments. But the pigs explain this away by nitpicking over the term “bed”.

That winter, the windmill is blown up, and the pigs blame it on Snowball. They resolve to build the windmill once more, even through the snow and rain of winter. A death sentence is issued for Snowball.





## Analysis

As time goes on, readers discover the pigs, capitalizing on their cleverness, have created a new system of slavery. While the pigs move into the house, and enjoy the luxuries the Joneses once enjoyed –and the things the pigs and animals hated at first – the rest of the animals are required to work longer and harder to achieve the goals of the farm.

While Mollie grows disillusioned with the farm and escapes (this can be seen as symbolic of the flight of White Russians after their failure in the Russian civil war). Snowball, like other Soviet revolutionaries, is blamed for events to which he was never connected, and a death sentence is put out for him.

Napoleon, who took it upon himself to educate the young, has created a police force protecting himself and the pigs, and silences opposition. He also has done away with democracy, appointed Squealer as his minister of propaganda, and has set about revising history and law so it benefits the pigs as a ruling class –the replacement of the Joneses and men as the ruling class. Everything the rebellion was supposed to do away with is now coming back –but the animals, lacking any real education, can only accept the words of Squealer as truth.

In this systematic manner, Napoleon has achieved control for himself, in much the same way Lenin and later Stalin did. With a bevy of secret police, Napoleon has gained martial power as well as legal and economic supremacy.

## Vocabulary

dynamo, primitive, unintelligible, reverent, extravagant, perpendicularity, inscribed, compensated, simultaneously, malignity, indignation, traitor



## Chapter 7-8

### Summary

Chapter 7 – When food grows short and the outside world begins hearing rumors of starvation, Napoleon effects a false showing to Mr. Whymper, allowing him briefly to see bins appearing to be full of oats, but which are actually packed with sand and topped with a layer of oats. By January, Napoleon knows he needs to obtain grain by trading for it. Whenever Napoleon rarely appears in public now, he is surrounded by a cordon of guard dogs which protect him and keep others away. Napoleon announces more eggs are needed for trade from the hens, but the hens protest and lay their eggs in the rafters where they fall and shatter.

In response, Napoleon cuts out their rations and threatens death to anyone who feeds the hens. Eventually the hens give in, but several of them die before they do, and the deaths are attributed to sickness rather than Napoleon's actions. Meanwhile, every stroke of bad luck is blamed on Snowball. Squealer tells the animals Snowball is now working as an agent for Mr. Frederick, helping to plan an attack, and adds Snowball was in league with Mr. Jones all the time. Furthermore, it is reported Snowball has spies on Animal Farm.

Four pigs are found guilty of aiding and abetting Snowball, including the destruction of the windmill. The dogs kill them. Three hens, the ringleaders of their egg rebellion, are also killed. A number of other animals, including sheep, are executed as well. The animals lament, but do not say anything. Squealer then announces that Beasts of England, song of the rebellion, has been abolished, for the rebellion was complete. Minimus, a pig poet, pens a new anthem.

Chapter 8 – The commandment that no animal shall kill another animal has been changed to include the condition without cause. So the animals justify the killing of the others because they had been in league with Snowball. Napoleon disappears from public view, and his appearances are few and far between, but full of ceremony. Squealer becomes Napoleon's go-to man, poems and songs are written about Napoleon, and more executions take place.

Meanwhile, Napoleon carried on friendly relations with Mr. Pilkington, but horror stories abounded about Mr. Frederick's farm. By that autumn, the windmill was completed and Mr. Whymper was in negotiations to buy the machines for inside the structure. Napoleon stuns everyone when he breaks off relations with Pilkington and sells materials to Frederick instead. This was done, it was claimed, because Frederick agreed to a better price, and Snowball had not really been hiding out with Frederick.

But the money used to buy the materials was a forgery, Whymper says, and Frederick's men move in to take over Animal Farm. The men destroy the windmill, but are ultimately forced back by Napoleon and the animals. Many animals are killed, and many more are



wounded. After the battle, Napoleon consumes alcohol in celebration. Then Napoleon orders the drinking of alcohol punishable by death, and has a field plowed for barley crops. The commandment specifying no animal shall drink alcohol has been changed to include the phrase in excess.

## Analysis

In this episode, readers see the dangers of centralized planning and absolute control – totalitarianism in the form of Soviet Communism. Like Stalin's purges and starvation of the Ukrainians, Napoleon also sets out on his own purges, and starving those who oppose his ideas. Likewise, whenever anything goes wrong, the ruling apparatus around Napoleon blame the misfortune on circumstances completely beyond their control, or on illusory causes like Snowball. This galvanizes the animals to work harder and make do with less, all the while being assured by Squealer that the animals have never had so much freedom or material wealth.

The dangers of centralized planning become apparent. Because the centralized planning board –the pig commission –cannot guess or predict with any accuracy the rising and fall of the market, poor decisions are hard to undo and have adverse effects on the animals. The decision to build the windmill damages the ability to produce food, which in turn requires Napoleon to trade with other farms. Furthermore, the fruits of the animals' labor, which they were originally supposed to enjoy only for themselves, are nevertheless traded to men in exchange for other supplies and money.

When the windmill is destroyed, the animals blame themselves, and set to work once more. They have to do with even less, while managing to handle even more tasks. All the while, Napoleon assumes the role of an isolated elitist, ensconced in his own world. He becomes a mythological figure in the minds of the animals, and is feared because he controls a pack of security dogs he has brainwashed since their youth. We also see, as conditions dictate, the idealistic commandments once formed are being altered to adapt to changing circumstances –circumstances a central planning board cannot predict.

## Vocabulary

cannibalism, infanticide, hitherto, expulsion, abolished, skulking, treacherous, machinations, beatifically, hullabaloo, vengeance



# Chapters 9-10

## Summary

Chapter 9 – Boxer, who was injured in the battle with Frederick and his men, has much difficulty recovering, but eventually he does. He is now nearly the retirement age, and is injured once more while working. He is taken away to be slaughtered, but Squealer assures everyone he is being taken to a vet. Later, Squealer shares the news that Boxer has passed away. That night, the pigs receive a shipment of alcohol.

Moses, who had been absent for a few years, has returned to the farm. He is speaking once more of Sugarcandy Mountain in the sky, and announces animals who work hard shall go there when they die, and shall never have to work again. This heartens the animals, who strive to work even harder.

Chapter 10 – Years pass, and the farm prospers, though the animals do not see any of the wealth. All of the wealth is shared between the pigs and the dogs. For the animals, nothing has changed, though Squealer assures everyone they are better off than they ever were. Mr. Jones, Boxer, and many of the other animals who have died are already vague memories to some, and unremembered by the newer generations.

Suddenly one day, the pigs appear out in the yard, walking on two back legs, whips in hand, and wearing the clothes left behind by Farmer Jones and his wife. The animals discover only one commandment is now in effect: All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.

Sneaking up to the farmhouse one night, the animals look in to see the pigs engaging in a party with humans. They overhear the pigs are now calling Animal Farm “Manor Farm”, once more. As the animals study the faces of the pigs and the men, they can no longer see any differences between them.

## Analysis

As the generations come and go, and the older animals present at the rebellion die out, only the vague memories of some live on. They cannot remember a time they did not suffer, though the pigs assure them they have more now than they have ever had before. The pigs, which once persecuted the concept of Heaven when Jones was in control, have brought Moses back as an instrument of the pigs. Extrapolated, totalitarian regimes only employ religion when it is useful to their own ends.

Meanwhile, the pigs assume human attributes –such as walking on two legs, drinking, wearing human clothing – all the animals once revolted against, especially the pigs. As the animals look at the pigs through the window, they see just how similar to humans the pigs have become. In this too, historically, can be projected just how many of the frivolous luxuries the Bolsheviks and Communists once railed against, but in which they



are now indulging. The pigs have become the very thing they hated –but they have the power now.

## Vocabulary

pension, superannuated, stratagem, accumulated, lament, filial, invariably, tyrannical, majestic, diligent, eminent, witticism



# Characters

## Napoleon

Napoleon, one of the three pigs who originally helped spearhead the rebellion on Manor Farm, becomes the supreme leader of the animals over time. As he is a clever pig, beyond simple intelligence, he implements education programs for the young, drives Snowball from Animal Farm, has his enemies butchered, and engages in human behavior once forbidden.

## Snowball

Snowball is one of the three pigs who originally help spearhead the rebellion. Snowball is concerned with forming committees, improving the production and lives of the other animals, and is focused on bringing new technology in to help the farm. He and Napoleon never get along, and Napoleon unleashes his security dogs on Snowball, ultimately driving him from the farm.

## Squealer

Described as a brilliant talker, Squealer is one of the three pigs who originally spearheaded the rebellion against Mr. Jones. Squealer is cunning, scheming, and is Napoleon's right-hand man and minister of propaganda. All decisions made by Napoleon are communicated to the animals by Squealer, who minces words in such a way as to win over the hearts and minds of the other animals without question.

## Mr. Jones

The drunken and careless owner of Manor Farm, Mr. Jones precipitates a rebellion through his apathetic caretaking of his animals. He is driven from the farm by the animals, fails in an attempt to recapture it, succumbs into more drunkenness, and later dies in a recovery home for drunks.

## Mrs. Jones

The wife of Mr. Jones, Mrs. Jones packs her bags and flees when the rebellion begins.

## Major

A Middle White Boar, the elderly Major is highly respected, and foretells of the coming rebellion. He dreams of a song called The Beasts of England which he teaches to the



other animals. His beliefs and ideas are later formulated into a system of thought called “Animalism” which becomes the driving force for the early stages of the farm after the rebellion. Major dies before the rebellion, and his skull is mounted to be observed with reverence by the other animals.

## **Boxer**

A cart horse, Boxer is the strongest, biggest, and most dedicated member of the rebellion. He often takes on extra work voluntarily, and manages to do more work than the others can. When he is injured while working, he is sent away for slaughter. Napoleon and the other pigs use the money for his slaughter to buy alcohol.

## **Clover**

A motherly cart horse, she cares for Boxer when he is injured. She also becomes a respected animal to whom the others look for guidance, such as when she leads them to look into the windows of the farmhouse.

## **Mollie**

A pretty white mare, Mollie flees Animal Farm to become a cart horse in town.

## **Old Benjamin**

Benjamin is an old donkey, the oldest animal on the farm, and he is humorless and has a sarcastic streak. He could care less about the rebellion, understands the truth about things, but does not speak up. He simply goes about his work.

## **Minimus**

A member of the pig class, Minimus is a poet and writer, and he pens the new anthem of Animal Farm, as well as countless stories and poems recounting the heroism and justness of Napoleon.

## **Moses**

The especial pet of Mr. Jones, Moses is a tame raven who does not attend the first meeting with Major. Moses instead speaks of a place in the sky called Candysugar Mountain, to which the pigs must work hard to counteract. Moses disappears for a long while, but then returns at the whim of the pigs, telling the animals those who work hard will go to Candysugar Mountain after they die, where they will never have to work again.



## **Mr. Frederick**

Owner and operator of adjoining Pinchfield Farm, Mr. Frederick trades with, swindles, and attacks Animal Farm.

## **Mr. Pilkington**

Owner and operator of Foxwood Farm, Mr. Pilkington engages in diplomacy with Animal Farm and consorts with Napoleon to try to buy timber.





# Objects/Places

## Animal Farm

Animal Farm is the animal paradise conceived of by Major, and brought about by Napoleon, Snowball, Squealer, and the rebellion of the animals. Located in rural England, Animal Farm was formerly called “Manor Farm” before Mr. Jones, the owner, was driven out. Animal Farm is the main setting for the novel, as well as the site of two battles against the humans.

## Willingdon

A nearby town, Willingdon is where Mr. Jones flees, and where Mollie escapes to live outside Animal Farm.

## Pinchfield Farm

One of the adjoining farms, Pinchfield Farm, is owned and operated by Mr. Frederick, who later consorts in trade with the pigs at Animal Farm.

## Foxwood Farm

Foxwood Farm is the other adjoining farm, owned and operated by Mr. Pilkington. One of Foxwood’s farmhands is seen petting Mollie.

## The Farmhouse

Once seen as a human privilege and a sign of human oppression, the pigs later move into the farmhouse in order to study and learn peacefully. It soon becomes a palace for the pigs, as they grow in wealth and power. All other animals are kept away from it.

## The Barn

The barn is where the majority of the other animals live, and where the pigs do not go without sufficient need.

## Shotgun

Obtained from Mr. Jones when he flees, the shotgun becomes a symbol of celebration, fired for remembrance of battles and Napoleon’s birthday.

## **The Windmill**

The windmill is the source of much debate between Napoleon and Snowball. After Snowball flees, the windmill is constructed and destroyed, then re-constructed once more. Intended by Snowball to provide electricity to the barn, Napoleon uses the windmill instead to assist in food production. By the end of the novel, a second windmill is under construction, supposedly to bring electricity to the barn.

## **The Seven Commandments**

Written on a tarred wall on the day of the rebellion's victory, the seven commandments forbade animals from engaging in human behaviors. Over time, they are tweaked and changed as experiences change, and as the pigs grow in wealth and power and indulge in the actions they once excoriated.



# Themes

## Freedom and Soft Oppression

The dynamic between freedom and oppression is observed throughout *Animal Farm*. The idea of freedom is glorified by Major and the other pigs, and is described as being able to make one's own decisions and enjoy the fruits of one's own labors. Under Jones, the animals are assured, they are living under oppression, being forced to work and not enjoy the fruits of their own labor.

Over the course of the novel, the animals lose their freedom by degrees. They are never again as free as they were between the departure of Jones and the penning of the Seven Commandments. As events unfold, the commandments are changed, Napoleon issues new laws, and the freedoms of the animals are taken away by degrees. Take for example the law that says working on Sunday afternoons is voluntary. But if animals choose not to work, their rations will be cut in half.

While the animals have been forbidden to do certain things, such as living in the farmhouse and sleeping on beds, the pigs nevertheless engage in those activities themselves. They need the quiet to learn, to study, and to plan for the future of *Animal Farm*, says Squealer to the other animals. Thus, in soft ways are the freedoms and powers of the animals done away with.

## Education

Education is a theme explored throughout the novel. The pigs, who are intelligent enough to educate themselves, do so, and use their intelligence and education to cunningly erode the rights of the other animals. In the beginning, when they try to teach other animals certain things like literacy, the other animals either do not grasp the concepts or they simply don't care. The pigs capitalize on this lack of education, using it to their advantage.

The pigs also capitalize on education by indoctrinating the young, so the young grow up in blind obedience to them, rather than to the laws of the Seven Commandments. Hitler and Stalin did the same, placing themselves above the law and the state. Only an intelligent and informed citizen can make rational, intelligent choices and control his or her own future. The animals of *Animal Farm* were not educated, and so lost their freedom as a result.

## Friendship

Friendship is also a theme present throughout the book. The animals initially work together almost mindlessly for a greater cause. But when years pass and the animals

become disillusioned, they take comfort in each other, such as when Clover helps hear Boxer's hoofbeats, or when the animals band around Clover later on in the novel.



# Style

## Point of View

The novel is told by narration in the third person. This way, the reader has an overview of all activities going on, and is not limited to one group of animals or another. This also allows the narrator to distinguish for the reader the duplicitous nature of the ruling pigs, and the desperation and unhappiness among the rank and file animals. It also allows the reader to glimpse the world outside of Animal Farm, to see the rebellious attitude of other animals, and the fates of Mr. Jones and Mollie.

## Setting

The novel takes place mainly on Animal Farm in England in 1945. Animal Farm can be likened to an independent country, where the animals have formulated a new social contract and system of government. Other farms, such as Foxwood, may be seen as rival or friendly independent countries, and the relations between them double as international diplomacy.

The animals do not know of life outside Animal Farm, and are not given the opportunity to experience the outside world. Therefore, all they know is Animal Farm, and there is no greater service than to serve Animal Farm.

## Language and Meaning

The language of the book varies. For narration, the language is straightforward and not unnecessarily wordy. The pigs, and those believing in the idea of Animalism, all adapt Soviet style language and attitudes, e.g., calling one another “comrade”. Even the terms employed by the pigs in an official capacity (labeling forced public displays of affection as “Spontaneous Demonstrations”) harkens to the brutal tactics of the Communists and the force by which they compelled their people to participate in state activity.

## Structure

The novel is divided into ten chapters, with each chapter focusing around a particular set of circumstances or events. Rather than a fluid continuity, the chapters are windows into farm life as the years progress, and there the narrator recounts all the events in between the years not described in detail. For a cautionary tale, rather than literary fiction, the structure of the novel is suited perfectly.

## Quotes

No animal in England is free. The life of an animal is misery and slavery: that is the plain truth. (Chapter 1)

Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. (Chapter 1)

Now, as it turned out, the Rebellion was achieved much earlier and more easily than anyone had expected. (Chapter 2)

The pigs did not actually work. With their superior knowledge it was natural they should assume leadership. (Chapter 3)

Do not imagine, comrades, that leadership is a pleasure! (Chapter 5)

That was our mistake, comrade. For we know now –it is all written down in the secret documents we have found – in reality he was trying to lure us to our doom. (Chapter 7)

But when the animals saw the green flag flying, and heard the gun firing again –seven times it was fired in all –and heard the speech Napoleon made, congratulating them on their conduct, it did seem to them after all they had won a great victory. (Chapter 8)

But if there were hardships to be borne, they were partly offset by the fact that life nowadays had a greater dignity than it had had before. There were more songs, more speeches, more processions. (Chapter 9)

All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others. (Chapter 10)



# Topics for Discussion

## Topic 1

Discuss how greed surfaces throughout Animal Farm.

## Topic 2

What are Seven Commandments of Animalism? Discuss the irony of the pigs' actions in relation to following the Commandments of Animalism.

## Topic 3

How is different propaganda used throughout Animal Farm? Who uses it? Is it effective?