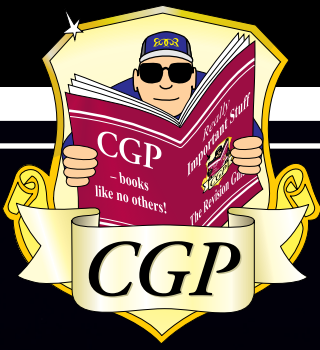


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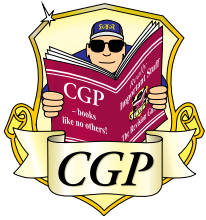


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Animal Farm

Animal Farm



The Text Guide



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GCSE English

Animal Farm

by George Orwell

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Editors:

Claire Boulter
Holly Corfield-Carr
Alex Fairer
Heather Gregson
Anthony Muller
Holly Poynton

Contributors:

Jane Harrison
Kevin Smith

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Page 5: *Figs Type, scene from the 1954 animated film of 'Animal Farm' adapted from the book by George Orwell (1903-50)*
by Halas & Batchelor (20th century) © Halas & Batchelor Collection Ltd./ The Bridgeman Art Library

Page 8: *Leon Trotsky (b/w photo)* by Russian Photographer, (20th century)
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Page 29: *To Our Dear Stalin, the Nation, 1949* (litho) by Russian School, (20th century)
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Page 40: *1st May, Stalin (1879-1953) Holds a Child in his Arms, 1952* (colour litho)
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Introduction to 'Animal Farm' and George Orwell

Animal Farm is about a revolution that went wrong

- *Animal Farm* is a novel about an animal uprising on a farm in England.
- Although it's fictional, it's based on real events — it's an allegory of the Russian Revolution.

The real events of the Russian Revolution

- 1) In October 1917, Vladimir Lenin led a revolution against the Russian government. He wanted the working classes to have more power.
- 2) After Lenin died, Stalin took power and became a dictator. Lenin's vision was completely destroyed.

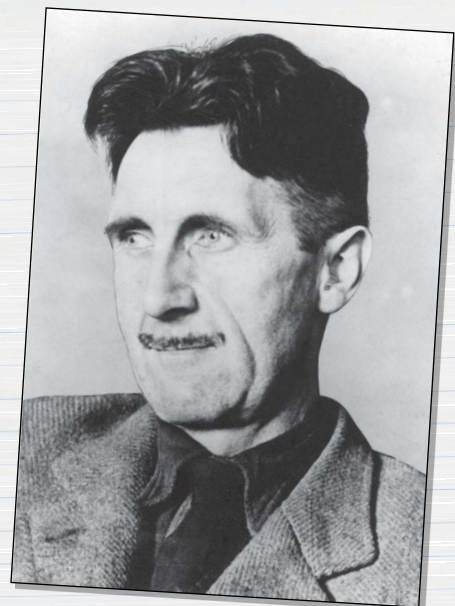
A picture showing the planning of the October Revolution, 1917



George Orwell believed in equality

- George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* in response to Stalin's corruption of communism. The Russian Revolution had failed and life in Russia wasn't equal.
- He wanted to show that a revolutionary leader could be corrupted by power and that this could happen in any country, not just in Russia.

1903	Born in India as <u>Eric Arthur Blair</u> .
1907	Moved to England.
1922	Joined the Indian Police in Burma.
1927	Returned to England.
1933	Published his <u>first book</u> , 'Down and Out in Paris and London' under the name <u>George Orwell</u> .
1945	Published ' <u>Animal Farm</u> '. Several publishers refused to print it because it was so <u>controversial</u> . After publication it became a <u>huge success</u> .
1949	Wrote '1984' — another <u>political novel</u> .
1950	Died, aged 46 from <u>tuberculosis</u> .

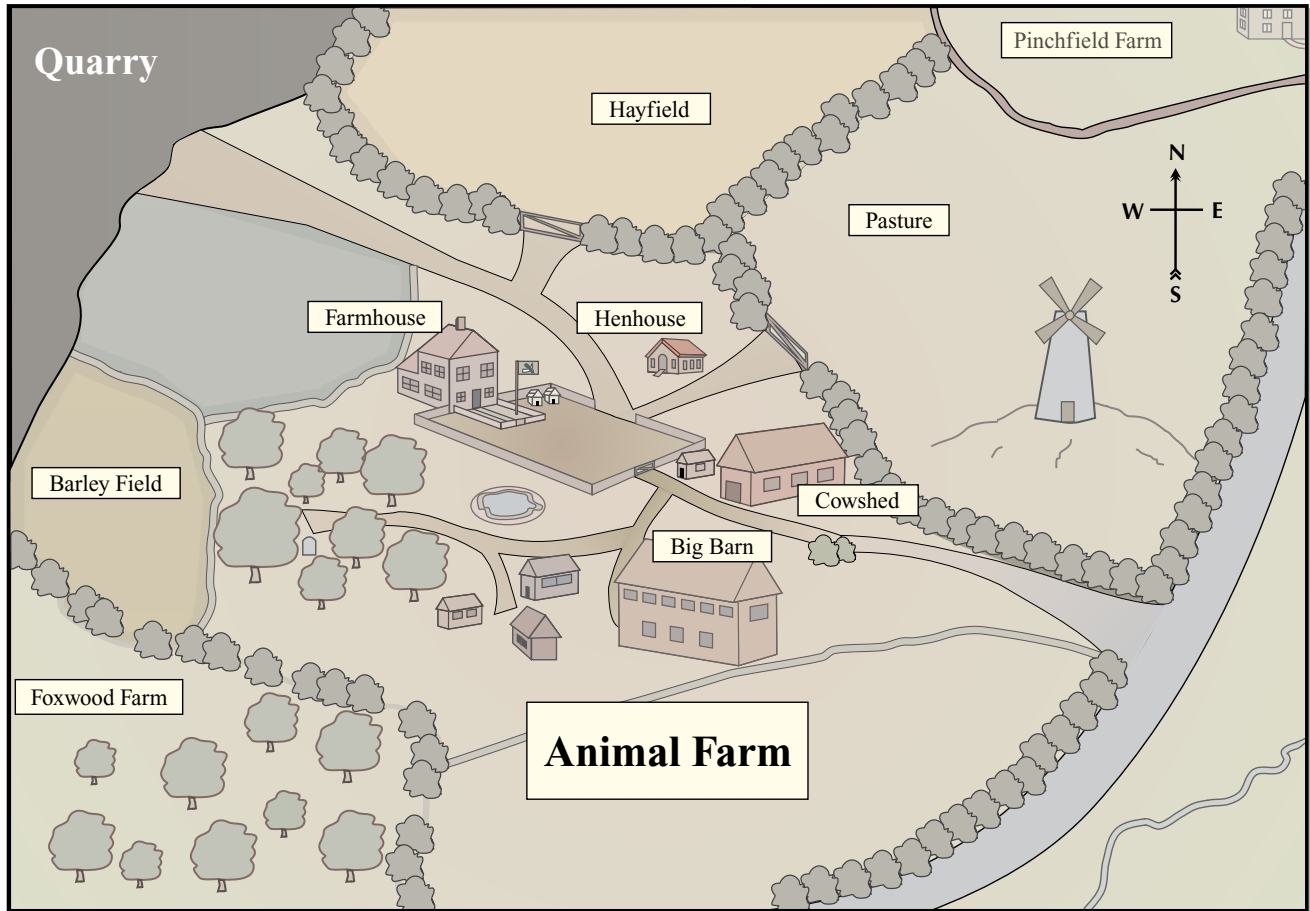


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Background Information

Animal Farm is set somewhere in England

Here are the key locations in the novel:



Life under Stalin was tough

- Stalin was a dictator — he ruled Russia alone and had absolute power over the Russian people.

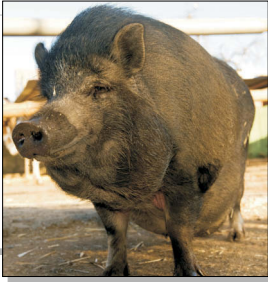


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Forced Labourers in Russia

- He used fear to stay in control — people were arrested, imprisoned or executed without warning.
- He used propaganda to develop a 'cult of personality' — this meant that he created an idealised public image to increase his popularity.
- The Russian people worked harder and suffered more under Stalin, but benefited less.

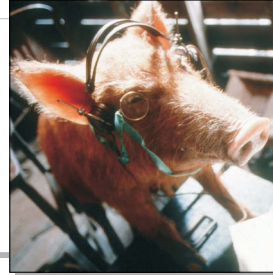
Who's Who in 'Animal Farm'



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Napoleon...

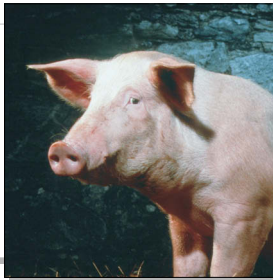
...is a fierce boar who always gets his own way. He leads the revolution, but the power goes to his head.



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COURTESY THE KOBAL COLLECTION

Squealer...

...is Napoleon's right-hand man and is in charge of propaganda. He's a very persuasive speaker.



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Snowball...

...is clever, brave and enthusiastic. Napoleon thinks Snowball is a threat and chases him off the farm.



© iStockphoto.com/Nancy Nehring

Old Major...

...is the principled old boar who starts the revolution.



© iStockphoto.com/Russell Du parcq

Boxer...

...is a hard worker but a slow thinker. He tries to solve problems by working harder, and never doubts Napoleon.



© iStockphoto.com/Ivonne Wierink-vanWetten

Benjamin...

...is a cynical donkey who does no more than he has to on the farm.

Mollie...

...is a vain, pretty horse who cares more about herself than the revolution.



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Moses...

...is a religious raven who tells the animals tales of 'Sugarcandy Mountain'. The pigs call him a liar but let him stay on the farm.



© iStockphoto.com/step2626

Clover...

...is a kind, motherly horse. She worries about the other animals on the farm.



© iStockphoto.com/Sylwia Kachel



Mr Jones...

...is a cruel, drunken farmer. His animals rebel against him, chasing him off his farm.

'Animal Farm' — Plot Summary



© Shelly Chen

'Animal Farm'... what happens when?

Here's a little recap of the main events of *Animal Farm*. It's a good idea to learn what happens when, so that you know exactly how the plot progresses and how all the important events fit together.

Chapters One to Three — the revolution



- **Old Major** calls the animals to a meeting. He tells them about his **dream** of the animals living in **harmony** and working **only for themselves**.
- Major **dies**, but when Jones forgets to feed the animals, the pigs lead a **rebellion** against him and **chase him away**.
- After the revolution, Snowball and Napoleon **take charge** and turn Major's vision into **Animalism**. They draw up **seven commandments** to guide the animals.

- The next harvest is **incredibly successful**. It's **hard going** but all the animals **work together**.
- The pigs **steal** the cows' **milk** and the **apples** to keep for **themselves**. They explain that they need the food because they're the **brains** on the farm.

Chapters Four to Five — conflict on the farm

- **News** of the animals' successful revolution **spreads** to neighbouring farms owned by Frederick and Pilkington. They **help Jones** try to recapture his farm.
- The humans attack and Snowball **bravely leads** the animals to a victory at the **Battle of the Cowshed**.
- Snowball and Napoleon **disagree over everything** and tensions run high. Snowball wants to **build a windmill**, but Napoleon urinates over the plans.
- At the final windmill debate, Napoleon **sets his dogs** on Snowball and he's **chased** from the farm.
- Napoleon announces that he's going to **build the windmill** after all.



Chapters Six to Eight — Napoleon's new regime

- The animals **work harder** and **eat less** under Napoleon.
- Napoleon starts **ignoring** the principles of Animalism, **trading with humans** and sleeping in the **farmhouse beds**.
- Squealer **changes the commandments** to suit the pigs' needs.
- When the completed windmill falls down in a storm, **Napoleon blames Snowball**.



- The farm has a bad harvest. Napoleon tells the hens that he's going to **sell their eggs** to raise some money — when they **refuse**, he **starves them** until they give in. To prevent further rebellion, Napoleon forces many animals to confess that they're working with Snowball, then **executes** them.
- Napoleon **sells timber** to Frederick, who pays him with **forged notes**. Frederick then **invades the farm** and **blows up the windmill**. After a great struggle, the animals win the **Battle of the Windmill**.

Chapters Nine to Ten — back to square one

- The animals continue to **work hard**, and rebuild the windmill. They're **starving**, while the pigs get **fatter** and **lazier**.
- Napoleon introduces **new rules** that **benefit the pigs**, but not the other animals.



- **Boxer**, the farm's **most loyal worker**, collapses from **overwork** and is **sold** to the knacker's yard.
- Napoleon becomes more like Jones — he walks on **two legs**, **wears clothes** and **carries a whip**.
- All the commandments are **removed** and replaced with just one — "**ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL, BUT SOME ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS.**"
- Napoleon **invites the humans** to the farm to **play cards**. At the end, the animals can't tell the **pigs** and **humans apart**.

'Animal Farm' — funny farm more like...

Animal Farm may be a smallish novel but there's so much juicy stuff in it. It's got something for everyone — dramatic battles, thieving and corruption, evil talking super-pigs, as well as a hidden political message. If you're still not 100% clear on the plot, turn to the back of the book for the cartoon. Read on, comrades!



Context: Russia before the Revolution

This section gives you a bit of context to *Animal Farm*. Orwell isn't just writing about an evil talking pig who starts wearing clothes, drinking whisky and playing cards. His message is much deeper than that...

***Animal Farm* is an allegory**

- 1) *Animal Farm* is an **allegory**, which means that the main characters and events of the story **represent real people** and **events** in Soviet Russia. Orwell **simplifies** events in *Animal Farm* to make his message **clearer**.
- 2) The story is based on **Russian history**, from around **1917 to 1943**, four years before the **Cold War**.

Farmer Jones represents the unpopular Tsar

- 1) Tsar Nicholas II had ruled Russia since 1894. He was **powerful**, **unpopular** and had **absolute authority**.
- 2) Most of the country's wealth and land was owned by a **small noble class**. Most of the rest of the population were **peasants**.

Farmer Jones

- Farmer Jones has **absolute control** over the animals. This represents the Tsar's **power** over the Russian people.
- Jones lives in **luxury** while the animals work hard for his **benefit**.



Lenin sweeping away the unpopular Tsar and the ruling classes.

Old Major represents Lenin's revolutionary ideas...

- 1) A **radical** party called the Bolsheviks wanted to **end** this **inequality**.
- 2) This group was led by Lenin (see p. 7). He wanted a **revolution** to **overthrow** the Tsar and called for an **end** to capitalism (see below). He wanted to take **power** on behalf of **the workers**.

Old Major

Old Major also tells the animals to **rise up** against their **human** masters.

...and Marx's view on capitalism

- 1) Capitalism is an economic system based on **business** — it's selling things to make a **profit**.
- 2) **Marx**, a political thinker, said this was **wrong** because those who did the work were poor while the business owners were getting rich. He said that a **workers' revolution** would end inequality. After the revolution, **production** would benefit everyone and everything would be **shared** — this is called **communism**.

Old Major

- Old Major also warns of the **dangers** of **trading** with humans.
- He's proven **right** in the end — when Napoleon decides to **trade** with Frederick, Frederick pays him in **forged** bank notes.



Think about the historical background...

I know you're probably thinking "but I didn't sign up for history..." — unfortunately, you need to know the context to understand the plot and Orwell's message. On the upside, Russian history is really juicy.

Context: Lenin and the Revolution

Lots of the characters in *Animal Farm* link to Russia in some way. In the novel, Major is a mixture of Marx and Lenin. Two parts, that's just greedy — but then, what else can you expect from a pig...

Like the Russian people, the animals rebel

- 1) The Tsar gave up the throne in February 1917 because the Russian people were rioting. A provisional government was set up to replace him.

The Rebellion

- Just like the Russian people, the animals rebel against their ruler.
- Jones is taken by surprise and the animals quickly defeat him.

- 2) Lenin thought the Bolsheviks were the best people to lead Russia. Later that year, they seized power and overthrew the ruling classes without much opposition.
- 3) An election was held for a new parliament, but when the Bolsheviks failed to win a majority vote they closed down the Assembly.
- 4) The Bolsheviks became the Communist Party, the only legal party in Russia.

Orwell simplifies events in Russia to make his message about revolutionary leaders clearer — remember it's an allegory, not a history book.

The Pigs

- The Bolsheviks quickly became the only political party. Soon after the rebellion, the pigs also take charge of running the farm.
- At first, the animals seem to be equal — but as time goes by, Napoleon gets rid of any opposition. It's the end of democracy.

Old Major shares lots of Lenin's key strengths

- 1) Lenin's organisation and leadership transformed the Bolshevik party. He had a sensible and realistic approach to problems.
- 2) When Lenin died in 1924, Stalin put Lenin's body on public display to associate himself with Lenin's ideas.
- 3) Lenin had a right-hand man called Trotsky, who seemed the obvious choice to be Lenin's successor, but Stalin pushed him out.

Old Major

- Old Major shares lots of Lenin's qualities — he encourages the animals to rebel and his memory comforts the animals.
- Like Stalin, Napoleon puts Major's skull on public display.
- Snowball represents Trotsky in *Animal Farm* — after Major's death, Snowball seems to be the likely leader of the farm.



©Stockphoto.com/Denis Dryashkin

A statue of Lenin



Make sure you closely link the context to the novel...

Don't just randomly write about things that happened in Russian history — leave that stuff to the historians. The examiner doesn't want to hear Lenin's biography — but the way he's mirrored in Old Major is important.

Context: Trotsky

Trotsky held many important roles in the Communist Party, but his most famous role was as leader of the army. Snowball represents Trotsky, and it's quite funny really, because he's got trotters. Hahahahaha... oh dear.

Trotsky was a brilliant leader and so is Snowball...

- 1) After the revolution, there was a **civil war** between the **Bolsheviks** and people still **loyal to the Tsar**.
- 2) Trotsky proved that he was a **good** leader by organising a **powerful** army. Under **Trotsky's leadership**, the Bolsheviks **won** the civil war.

Battle of the Cowshed

- This should ring some (cow) bells — it's the **Battle of the Cowshed**.
- When Jones returns to **seize** the farm, Snowball's strategies mean that the animals are **prepared**. Snowball is an **organised, resourceful** military leader.

...but they both have a ruthless streak

- 1) When a **mutiny** broke out on a Russian naval base, Trotsky sent in the **army**.
- 2) The army **attacked**, and **captured** the base in a brutal battle. Many rebels were **killed**.

A mutiny is a rebellion or uprising against people in authority, usually on a ship.

Snowball

- Snowball's **commitment** to Animalism means that he can be **coldhearted**.
- He tells Boxer that "War is war. The only good human being is a dead one."

There was a power struggle in Russia

- 1) **Trotsky** was capable and **popular** with the **army** and **Party members**. His **main rival** was Joseph **Stalin**, who had built a power base 'behind the scenes' in his work as **General Secretary** of the Party.
- 2) **Lenin** said **Trotsky** was **arrogant** but **good** at his job, and that **Stalin** should be **removed from office** because he was **too rude** and **ambitious**.



Trotsky at his desk

Napoleon and Snowball

The **power struggle** between Stalin and Trotsky is mirrored in the **leadership battle** between Napoleon and Snowball after Major dies. Snowball's **popular** campaign is no match for Napoleon's **violent tactics**.

- 3) After Lenin's death, Stalin went on to **seize power** from right under Trotsky's nose, simply through **clever organisation** and **planning**. Trotsky didn't even realise Stalin was a threat until it was **too late**.



"As usual, Snowball and Napoleon were in disagreement."

The constant disagreements between Snowball and Napoleon represent the power struggle between Trotsky and Stalin. For all Trotsky's merits, his arrogance was ultimately his downfall — he underestimated Stalin.

Context: Stalin

Stalin was the outsider in the leadership battle — Lenin didn't even like him. Yet he managed to seize control. This page will tell you how. If you hadn't guessed yet, Napoleon = Stalin. Yup, they're both big meanies...

Napoleon represents Stalin in the allegory

- 1) Stalin was an **organiser**. He was **General Secretary** of the Communist Party — he could **control** who was given government roles, and chose people **loyal** to him.
- 2) His **rivals** didn't have the same **support** and by the late 1920s, they **were all voted out** of power.

Napoleon

- It might not seem like Napoleon **does much** at first — but he's secretly **training** the puppies.
- He **surrounds himself** with **loyal followers** in a similar way to Stalin, leaving Snowball **isolated**.

Stalin used his position to remove Trotsky

- 1) Trotsky was **thrown out** of the Party and forced to **leave** Russia in 1929.

Napoleon **expels** Snowball from the farm.

- 2) Trotsky became a '**non-person**' — his name was **removed** from history books and his picture was rubbed out of photos.

Napoleon **blames** any problems on Snowball and **spreads rumours** that Snowball's been working for Jones.

- 3) Stalin created a '**cult of personality**'. Photographs were **altered** to show Stalin and Lenin as friends. Stalin spread **propaganda** about his own **great leadership** and banned **criticism** against him. He **rewrote** history so that he played a more **important part** in the **revolution**.

Squealer spreads **propaganda** about Napoleon's **great leadership** and **rewrites history**.



Lenin and Stalin sitting together on a bench. Stalin was keen to spread such images.

© Mary Evans Picture Library

Napoleon's regime symbolises Stalin's dictatorship

- 1) By 1929, Stalin was in **complete control** of the Communist Party and Russia. His policies were often completely different from **communist ideas**.
- 2) Even though he was **undisputed leader** of Russia, he became terrified that others wanted to overthrow him. However, most people lived in **fear** and were **unable** to speak out.

Napoleon

- Like Stalin, Napoleon becomes a **dictator**. He has **absolute power** on Animal Farm.
- He **undermines** the **commandments** one by one and changes them to suit him.
- The animals become increasingly **scared** but can't, or won't, **stand up** to him.



"Snowball was in league with Jones from the very start!"

Here's a prime example of Squealer spreading Napoleon's propaganda — Snowball is used as a scapegoat. Using propaganda and scapegoats are just some of the similarities between Napoleon and Stalin.

Context: Life Under Stalin

It's hard to say which would be worse — living under Stalin or Napoleon. They're both evil dictators, power mad, paranoid and pompous. But choosing which one I'd rather have in my sausages, that's a bit easier.

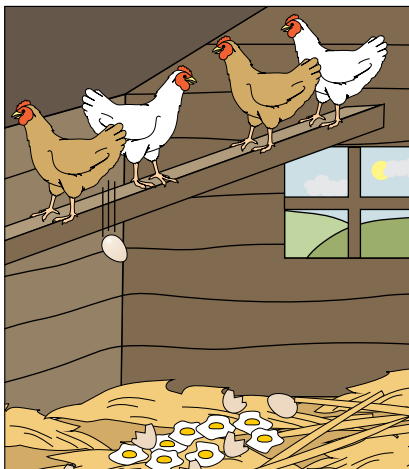
Orwell uses Napoleon to criticise Stalin's violence

- 1) Stalin ordered a purge of people he believed were part of a conspiracy against him.
- 2) Many 'old' communists were accused of plotting with the exiled Trotsky, and were arrested and charged in 'show trials'. They were forced by torture or threats to confess to betraying Stalin.
- 3) Anyone suspected of disloyalty to Stalin was taken away by the NKVD (the new secret police) and shot or sent to labour camps. As many as 10 million people died.

Napoleon and the Executions

- Napoleon holds similar trials when Snowball is said to be plotting against him in exile.
- He forces animals to admit to working with Snowball, then executes them in public.
- Even if Napoleon knows that the animals aren't conspiring against him, he wants to prove his power and scare anyone who might try to rebel.

Like the Russian peasants, the hens are treated badly



- 1) Russian peasants were forced to collectivise — everything was to be shared with the state.
- 2) They resisted, especially the kulaks (richer peasants).
- 3) Stalin sent troops to attack them. Many burned their own crops and killed livestock in protest. This led to a famine in the 1930s.

The Hens

- When the hens are told to sell their eggs to help the farm, they smash the eggs in protest.
- Napoleon starves the hens until they give in.

Like Napoleon, Stalin tried to create alliances

- 1) In 1939, Stalin signed a pact with Hitler to form an alliance between Russia and Germany, but Hitler betrayed Stalin and invaded Russia in 1941. Russia stopped the invasion but many Russians suffered.
- 2) After the war, Russia signed a pact with Britain and the US to protect their interests. The US and Britain also thought that such a deal would benefit their countries.

An alliance is an agreement of friendship between two countries.

The Pigs and the Humans

This reflects the relationship between the pigs and the farmers. They start as enemies — but they become friends. At the end of the book they fall out again over cheating at a card game...



Show how 'Animal Farm' reflects life under Stalin...

A good example to talk about is inequality. In Russia, communism was supposed to be all about equality, but those high up in the Party got the best goods and services. This inequality is echoed in *Animal Farm*.

Parallels — History and the Novel

Here's a handy summary for you to refer to when reading the novel. The things I do for you...

<p>Marxism</p> <p>1) The Communist Party believed in Marx's ideas. Marx said that the upper classes took advantage of the lower classes by paying them low wages, while the rich kept most of the money...</p>	<p>Chapter 1</p> <p>1) Major's ideas are similar to Marxism. He says that Man takes advantage of the animals who do all the work for no reward. This idea forms the basis of Animalism.</p>
<p>1917</p> <p>2) Lenin, leader of the Bolsheviks, seizes power and overthrows the Provisional Government.</p> <p>3) Lenin and Trotsky set up a Communist society. They want Russia to be fairer.</p>	<p>Chapter 2</p> <p>2) The animals rise up against Jones and chase him from the farm.</p> <p>3) The pigs try to create an equal society, in which "All animals are equal".</p>
<p>1918 - 1921</p> <p>4) There's a civil war in Russia between the Bolsheviks and people loyal to the Tsar. The Bolsheviks, led by Trotsky, win the war.</p>	<p>Chapter 4</p> <p>4) Farmer Jones and his men attack Animal Farm at the Battle of the Cowshed. Snowball leads the animals to victory.</p>
<p>1924 - 1927</p> <p>5) Lenin's death causes a leadership battle between Trotsky and Stalin. Stalin wins and forces Trotsky out of Russia.</p>	<p>Chapter 5</p> <p>5) Napoleon and Snowball fight over the way the farm should be run, then Napoleon drives Snowball from the farm.</p>
<p>1932 - 1936</p> <p>6) Stalin's collectivisation policy creates many famines. Peasants fight the changes, but conditions get worse.</p> <p>7) Stalin uses propaganda to become a powerful dictator. People are encouraged to idolise him.</p> <p>8) Stalin invents a conspiracy against him, and uses it as an excuse to torture and execute his enemies.</p>	<p>Chapters 6 - 7</p> <p>6) Napoleon tells the hens to sell their eggs for the collective good. The hens smash their eggs in protest.</p> <p>7) Napoleon uses fear and propaganda to make himself a popular dictator.</p> <p>8) Napoleon uses the windmill's destruction as an excuse to kill animals who he claims have been working for Snowball.</p>
<p>1941</p> <p>9) With Russia under threat, Stalin negotiates with Germany for protection. Germany betrays Russia by (unsuccessfully) invading.</p>	<p>Chapter 8</p> <p>9) Napoleon's business deals with Frederick backfire. The animals are paid in forged notes and Frederick attacks the farm.</p>
<p>1943</p> <p>10) Russia, Britain and the US become allies. The alliance is short — no one trusts each other, and four years later the Cold War begins.</p>	<p>Chapter 10</p> <p>10) The relationship between the pigs and the farmers becomes friendly. The friendship is short-lived when each side cheats at cards.</p>

Practice Questions

What is history? Well in this case his-story is 'Animal Farm'. Yes, that joke was so terrible I bet you almost groaned out loud. If you're not groaning already, you will be in about 5 seconds... that's right, it's time for some joyous questions.

Quick Questions

- 1) Briefly explain why the ruling classes were unpopular.
- 2) Briefly describe the main difference between capitalism and communism.
- 3) Why did Lenin not want Stalin to take charge? Give two reasons.
- 4) What was Stalin's role in the Communist Party before he took control?
- 5) Give three examples of how Stalin used propaganda to promote himself above his rivals.
- 6) Suggest one possible reason for Stalin's purges?
- 7) How did the peasants resist collectivisation?

In-depth Questions

- 1) How was Farmer Jones' control over Manor Farm similar to Tsar Nicholas II's rule over Russia?
- 2) In what ways is Animalism similar to Marxism?
- 3) Describe two characteristics that Trotsky and Snowball share.
- 4) Describe two characteristics that Stalin and Napoleon share.
- 5) Compare the types of propaganda used by Stalin and the types of propaganda used by Squealer.
- 6) Choose one conflict from the novel and explain how it mirrors a real-life event in Russia.
- 7) Based on what you've read, do you think *Animal Farm* was 'more equal' than Stalin's Russia? Give reasons for your answer.

Analysis of Chapter One — The Dream

By now you should know what happens in *Animal Farm*. If you don't, then go directly to the intro section. Do not pass go, do not collect £200. This section is all about analysing the chapters for deeper meaning...

Old Major has a dream...

- 1) Old Major calls a **meeting** of all the animals after Jones has gone to bed **drunk**.
- 2) The speech that Major gives has **five main purposes**:

- To show them that “**Man** is the only **real enemy**”, because he does **nothing** but takes the benefit from the animals’ **hard work**.
- To **warn** them against taking up the **evils** of **Man** e.g. alcohol.
- To **encourage rebellion** — “That is my message to you, comrades: Rebellion!” He tells the animals to **spread this message**.
- To call for “**perfect unity**” and **equality** among all animals.
- To teach them a revolutionary song — ‘**Beasts of England**’.

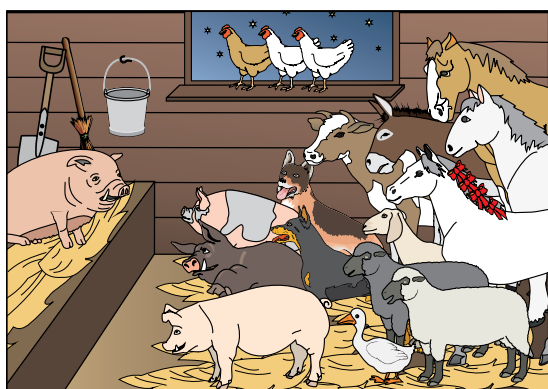


By showing how badly the animals are treated, Orwell makes the reader sympathise with them and their cause.

Allegory

Major's speech echoes **Marx's** ideas about **communism** (see p. 6).

...but there are already problems



Theme — Animalism

Even at the **birth of Animalism** there are already **problems of equality**.

- 1) When Major gives his speech, the dogs and pigs get the **best position** (in front of the platform), which suggests that they think they're **superior**.
- 2) They're also the only animals **clever enough** to learn 'Beasts of England' within a few minutes. This shows that they have an **advantage** over the others, even before the rebellion.
- 3) After Major talks about equality and unity, it's ironic that the dogs **chase** the **wild rats** that live in the barn.

Orwell introduces the characters' personalities

Orwell uses the meeting in the barn to describe the main characters' **personalities** and give the reader a glimpse of how the characters might **respond** to events **later in the novel**:

- 1) Boxer and Clover **take great care** entering the barn, in case they step on any small animals “concealed in the straw”. **Dishonest characters** could **take advantage** of this kindness.
- 2) Boxer is also described as “**not of first-rate intelligence**” — he's got a **steady character** and a tremendous **desire** and **ability to work**. This is ultimately his **downfall**.
- 3) Mollie and the cat are **selfish** and **don't care** about the idea of a **revolution**.



Show that you know Major's speech is important...

The old pig's ideas play a big part in the rest of the novel. You'll need to understand the differences between his vision and what actually ends up happening — many of the things he warns against come true.

Analysis of Chapter Two — The Revolution

The first two chapters set the scene for the rest of the novel. There's lots of hints about what's to come, but things haven't even begun to get bad yet... So much for a happy ending — there could at least be a happy beginning.

The animals prepare for rebellion

- 1) The pigs are “generally recognised as being the **cleverest**”. They take Major's ideas and turn them into **Animalism**.
- 2) When the rebellion comes, the animals attack “with **one accord**” and **chase Jones** from the farm. After the victory, they destroy the **symbols** of their **oppression**.
- 3) After the revolution, most of the animals are **happier** and the farm's more **successful**.
- 4) The initial **positive results** of the revolution show that **Orwell** thought that the uprising was a **good thing** — it's the way the pigs go about **taking control** which he's **criticising**.

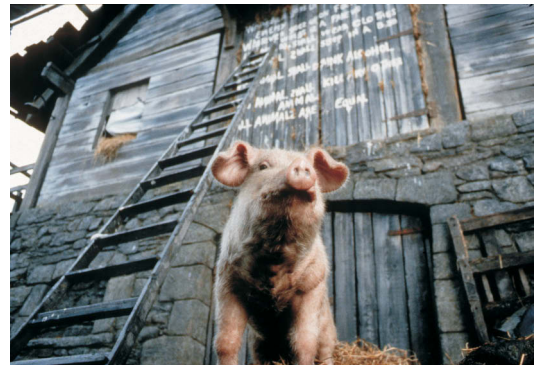
Theme — Education

The animals that **take charge** are the ones that are **educated** (see p. 38).

Not all the animals understand Old Major's ideas...

- 1) Some animals **resent** the new rules, feeling a “**duty of loyalty**” to Jones. Mollie is **reluctant** to lose her sugar, and is found admiring herself in a mirror with one of Mrs Jones' ribbons.
- 2) Some animals prefer to believe in **Moses' stories** about **Sugarcandy Mountain** than in Animalism (see p. 34).
- 3) Most of the animals **don't understand** the ideas behind Animalism and they **can't read** the **commandments** that the pigs write on the wall.

This **lack of understanding** threatens Animal Farm's future. If the animals don't understand the principles, they won't be able to **uphold them** — the **ruling pigs** will be able to **change Animalism** as they please.



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...and not everyone is equal

- 1) The pigs **take charge** after the rebellion — so there's already **inequality**.
- 2) When the milk goes missing, the reader suspects that the pigs are **responsible**.
- 3) This shows that the pigs are already putting **themselves** before the **others**. It also shows how **trusting** the other animals are because they don't **confront the pigs**.
- 4) Orwell hasn't said that Animalism is going to go **horribly wrong**, but he introduces enough **doubt** in the first two chapters to make us think it's **not going to be easy**.

Theme — Animalism

Once the rebellion's over, the pigs carry on **controlling** the animals instead of **encouraging equality**. Orwell said that revolutions **only worked** if the people knew to “**chuck out their leaders**” once they'd **done their job**.



“they met with much stupidity and apathy.”

When the pigs reveal the rules of Animalism, many of the other animals don't understand. There are already hints in this chapter that the pigs can't be trusted, so they're bound to take advantage of this “stupidity”.

Analysis of Chapter Three — Milk and Apples

Chapter Three, or as I like to call it — The Mystery of the Missing Milk. I think the butler did it. The problems of Animalism become clearer in this chapter and by the end of the novel they snowball (ha) out of control...

Even early on in the revolution, not everyone's happy

- 1) Most of the animals help with the farm work — it's tough going but the rewards are worth it.
- 2) Not all the animals put Animalism first — their selfishness goes against the principles of the revolution and shows that "perfect unity" isn't easy:

- Mollie wakes up late and leaves work early saying she has a "stone in her hoof".
- The cat is hardly ever seen doing work and only turns up at meal-times.

- 3) Napoleon and Snowball disagree on almost every issue, causing further problems:

- Snowball wants to educate all the animals, but Napoleon only wants to focus on the young.
- Napoleon has "no interest" in Snowball's committees and is clearly developing his own agenda.

The social classes become more obvious

- 1) The pigs are the only ones who suggest resolutions at the Sunday meetings.
- 2) They separate themselves from the other animals and set up their own "headquarters". They already behave as if they are superior and deserve to be treated better than the others.
- 3) It's revealed that the pigs did take the milk and the extra apples. Squealer justifies this using:

- **PROPAGANDA** — he says that the pigs did it for the benefit of the farm. They need the apples and milk for their "well-being" which is important because they're "brainworkers".
- **FEAR** — He threatens them with the farm's failure if the pigs can't work properly.

Milk and apples is a key turning point



- 1) This is the first time the pigs use their authority so openly.
- 2) It's also the first time Squealer uses propaganda as a way of controlling the animals' thoughts.
- 3) Nobody stands up and says that the pigs were wrong.

Orwell shows the pigs becoming more like their human masters — this time the pigs treat the animals worse than Jones did. Jones used to put some milk in the hens' mash, but the pigs keep it all.



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Explain why the theft of the milk and apples is important...

The examiner will be pleased if you explain why this theft is so important to the plot. The animals don't stand up to the pigs — if they had done so at this early stage, then the outcome could have been different.

Analysis of Chapter Four — The Cowshed

Chapter Four centres around the Battle of the Cowshed. If you like blood and guts then this is the chapter for you. The animals defeat the first wave of human forces, but if I know good storytelling, they'll be back...

The humans are worried that the rebellion will spread

- 1) News of the farm's success spreads despite [Pilkington](#) and [Frederick's](#) attempts to [stop it](#).
- 2) The pigeons [teach](#) neighbouring farms '[Beasts of England](#)' — animals on other farms carry out [small acts of disruption](#) against their masters.

The humans are presented as [cruel](#) and [hypocritical](#) — Man treats animals badly [everywhere](#). This backs up [Major's speech](#) and [justifies the revolution](#). This suggests that Orwell isn't [anti-revolution](#), but against [corruption of power](#).

Allegory

[Trotsky](#) wanted to [spread](#) the revolution as far as possible — and so does [Snowball](#).

The animals win the Battle of the Cowshed...

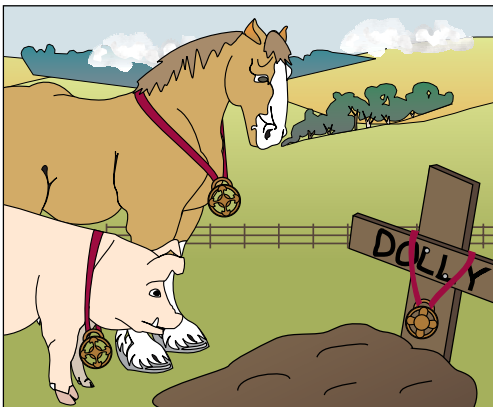
- 1) Snowball is an [excellent general](#) — he studies Caesar's campaigns, "was in charge of the defensive operations" and "gave his orders quickly". He also knocks Jones off his feet even when he's injured.
- 2) Snowball [leads the charge](#) and never falters — his [commitment](#) to Animalism is so great that he's willing to [sacrifice his life](#) for the cause. Napoleon's commitment is more [questionable](#) — Orwell doesn't describe Napoleon's [role](#) in the battle, which suggests he didn't [do much at all](#).

Allegory

[Trotsky](#) was a [great strategist](#), who led the Russian army to many [great victories](#) (see p. 8).

...but there are consequences

- 1) Boxer's kindness is shown by [his concern](#) for the stable boy. He wants to use as [little force as possible](#).
- 2) Snowball dismisses Boxer's "sentimentality", saying "[the only good human being is a dead one](#)". Boxer's feelings [contrast](#) with Napoleon's [use of violence](#) later in the novel.



- 3) Snowball and Boxer receive "[Animal Hero, First Class](#)" medals. The dead sheep gets "Animal Hero, Second Class".

The medals [establish an inequality](#) that didn't exist before — they're meant to [inspire](#) the animals, but they also [separate](#) them.

Rewarding Boxer's loyalty increases the [pigs' control](#) over him. It encourages other animals to be [more like him](#) — [obedient](#) and [unquestioning](#).

- 4) Snowball uses the sheep's death to remind the animals that they should be [loyal to the farm](#) and be prepared to [sacrifice themselves](#). This increases the [pigs' control](#).



"Snowball at the head of them, rushed forward"

It's clear that Snowball is in charge of the attack and fights bravely. This shows how powerful Squealer's propaganda is later in the novel — he convinces the others that Snowball tried to help Jones defeat them.

Analysis of Chapter Five — Snowball is Exiled

The pigs have now completely taken control of the decision making process, but their decisions must still be agreed by a majority vote. Snowball and Napoleon disagree every time “disagreement was possible”.

Snowball and Napoleon’s arguments come to a head

Snowball is Napoleon’s only **rival**. The windmill debate gives Napoleon an excuse to **drive** Snowball off the farm so that he can be **in charge**:



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Snowball wants to “stir up **rebellion**” on **other farms** and spread the message of **Animalism**. The humans would be **distracted** so the animals “would have no need to defend themselves”.

Napoleon has more **violent** ideas. He wants to protect the farm with **weapons**.

Snowball is **full of ideas** to improve farm life and is very **knowledgeable**. He’s an **intellectual** and is interested in making a “close study” of books. He’s also a very **persuasive speaker**.

Napoleon undermines Snowball’s ideas by **building support** among the sheep — they start bleating to **interrupt Snowball’s speeches** at **important points**.

Snowball is keen to **build a windmill**. It’ll be **hard work**, but could mean the animals only have to work **three-day weeks**.

Napoleon responds by **urinating over the windmill plans** — he calls them “nonsense”. At the final windmill debate Napoleon orders his “**enormous dogs**” to chase Snowball from the farm.

Napoleon uses **threats** (e.g. urinating on the windmill plans) and **violence** (e.g. unleashing his attack dogs) instead of taking part in a **fair debate**. Orwell shows the reader an **unpleasant** alternative to **democracy** through Napoleon’s actions, suggesting that it’s important to Orwell that democracy doesn’t ever **fail**.

Napoleon starts to take absolute control

- 1) Napoleon **cancels Sunday meetings** and sets up a **special committee of pigs** to make all the decisions **without a public vote**. This isn’t **democratic**.
- 2) The other animals aren’t **clever** enough to find “the right arguments” to **protest** and are scared into **silence**.
- 3) Squealer promotes the new regime using **propaganda**, saying that Napoleon has done everyone a favour by **taking on more work**.



Theme — Language

Language is power, and so Napoleon sets about ending freedom of speech (see p. 39).

This is the beginning of Napoleon’s **dictatorship** and a sharp **contrast** with the **harmony** that came after the rebellion. The **more** like Man Napoleon becomes, the **less likely** the society will be equal.



Write about Snowball and Napoleon’s rivalry...

You should be able to compare and contrast the characters of Snowball and Napoleon. You’ll also need to write about their rivalry in relation to the context — it mirrors the rivalry between Stalin and Trotsky.

Analysis of Chapter Six — Rules Change

Great Scott! The pigs are changing the past...

Napoleon decides to change the rules to suit his purposes — where we're going we don't need rules.

The pigs start changing the rules

1) Napoleon introduces work on Sunday afternoons, which was previously a day for rest. He says it's "strictly voluntary" but if anyone refuses, their rations are halved.

This threat is hidden by clever words — the work's compulsory, but Napoleon calls it "voluntary".

2) Napoleon decides to work with Mr Whymper, a local solicitor. Napoleon claims that it's not for commercial gain — but there are rumours of a deal with Pilkington or Frederick.

Napoleon breaks another of Major's rules by allowing humans on the farm. Capitalism is back.

3) The pigs move into the farmhouse and start sleeping in beds.

The pigs continue to live separately, and become more like Man.

4) They go on to change the original commandment to read "No animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets".

Animalism has been corrupted and the pigs start to abuse language.

5) The pigs also decide that they need more sleep and get up an hour later than the others. This is simply accepted by the other animals.

The pigs are lazy. This contrasts with Boxer's selfless hard work.

Squealer increases fear on the farm

1) When the pigs move into the farmhouse, Squealer says this was never against the rules — the animals must have imagined it.

2) He threatens the animals — saying Jones will come back if the pigs don't get enough rest. This stops them from protesting.

Threats of Jones' return make the animals think that conditions are better now than they were before — they can't rely on their memories.



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Snowball is used as a scapegoat

1) When the windmill collapses in the storm, Napoleon screams that Snowball sabotaged it because he's a "miserable traitor".

A scapegoat is someone who is singled out and punished for something they haven't done.

2) Napoleon passes the death sentence on Snowball, and promises a reward to whoever catches him.

Using Snowball as a scapegoat is a useful tactic. It's one that Napoleon uses many times as it makes the animals scared of an invisible enemy, rather than focusing on Napoleon's reign of terror.



"this traitor has crept here under cover of night"

Napoleon calls Snowball a traitor and uses him as a scapegoat for the windmill's collapse. Scapegoats — always blamed while scapegoats get off scot-free...stop cracking up, this is no laughing matter.

Analysis of Chapter Seven — The Hens Rebel

Squealer makes up more lies to make Snowball seem like an all-powerful, invisible enemy. Scary stuff. Forget about the monster in your closet, it's the league of evil super-pigs you should be worrying about.

More blame is placed on Snowball...

1) Conditions get **worse**. Napoleon **uses Snowball** as an **excuse** for the **worsening conditions**:

- Snowball apparently **returns each night** — the cows are so **paranoid** they claim that Snowball milks them in their sleep.
- **Squealer claims** that Snowball was “in **league with Jones**”.

Napoleon now **controls** the animals' **memories** — it's even **worse** than controlling their actions. Orwell shows how **scary** Stalin's regime was in Russia — and he's **warning** never to let it happen again **anywhere else**.

2) This imaginary threat **unites the farm** against Snowball and makes the animals question their **memory** of him. They are “thoroughly frightened” — Napoleon **takes advantage** of their **fear** to make himself more **popular**.

3) Squealer **rewrites history** by saying **Napoleon was behind** the Cowshed victory and it's described so **graphically** that the animals **start to remember it**.

...but Napoleon still has to deal with resistance

- 1) The hens are told to **give up their eggs** to be sold, but they rebel by laying their eggs from the rafters so they **smash on the floor**.
- 2) This is one of the **few times** the animals stand up to Napoleon. Napoleon is ruthless and **cuts off** all their **food**. Nine hens **die** before the others give in.

Allegory

The hens' **rebellion** echoes the **kulaks' resistance** to **collectivisation** (see p. 10).

Napoleon steps up his campaign of terror

1) Napoleon sets his dogs on anyone who **threatens him** — Boxer is attacked for not believing the lies about Snowball, and so are the pigs who **object to Napoleon's regime**.

Allegory

This satirises **Stalin's purges**.

2) Boxer defeats the dogs, but the pigs '**confess**' to working with Snowball. Napoleon **forces confessions** from many other 'traitors' and they're **executed** by the dogs.

- Orwell describes this part from **Clover's point of view**. She **doesn't understand** how they've got to this terrible situation, but she **says nothing** — “There was no thought of rebellion or disobedience in her mind.” This makes the executions seem **worse** because Clover stays **blindly loyal** to Napoleon.
- This **change of perspective** also reminds the reader of the **contrast** between Major's original **utopian vision** that Clover remembers and Napoleon's **cruel dictatorship**.

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Explain how Orwell shows that Napoleon's regime is scary...

There are plenty of examples you can use to show how scary it is — the animals not having control over their own memories is a good one. Even more scary is that all of this actually happened in Stalin's Russia.

Analysis of Chapter Eight — The Windmill

Major's speech in Chapter One made it clear that the "habits of Man" are a great evil, but the pigs have now completely embraced a human lifestyle. But, in fairness, I think I'd rather sleep in a bed than a sty...

Napoleon's regime is now in full flow...

- 1) After the executions, the sixth commandment is changed to "No animal shall kill another animal *without cause*" to *justify Napoleon's trials* and killings.
- 2) Squealer continues to *spread propaganda* presenting Napoleon as a good leader:

- He reads out *lists* telling of *increased productivity* and *profits*.
- Napoleon is called "*our Leader, Comrade Napoleon*" and he's given *credit for everything* — even for how good the water tastes.
- A poem celebrating Napoleon is written *opposite the commandments*.

Theme — Animalism

It's as if Napoleon has become as *important* as the *commandments*.

- 3) Squealer's propaganda is *ironic* — while he claims that things are *getting better*, the reader can see how quickly things are *getting worse*.

...but there's unrest on the farm

- 1) The animals start to think that the farm is *no better* than it was *under Jones*, and there are rumours of *plots* to kill Napoleon. This fuels his *paranoia*.
- 2) Napoleon decides to *sell timber to Frederick*. Frederick pays for it in *forged notes* and then *invades the farm*. This shows that the humans *can't be trusted* — it highlights the *problems* with *trade* and *capitalism*.
- 3) Frederick's men *destroy the windmill*, so the animals attack. It's the *first time* in ages that the animals *work together* but many are *wounded* or *die*. The animals are "weary and bleeding" after the battle and even Boxer's idealism starts to fail — it makes the reader *sympathise* with them and their *difficult struggle*.



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Alcohol just makes things worse

- 1) Even though the windmill's gone, Squealer claims it was a *victory* and the pigs celebrate with *whisky*.
- 2) Orwell links *alcohol* to *corruption* in the novel — only the pigs drink alcohol, so it's another *symbol* of *inequality* on the farm. It's also one of the *human habits* that Major warned against.
- 3) The commandment is *changed* to "No animal shall drink alcohol *to excess*". It's *ironic* that the animals catch Squealer changing it, but don't realise that he's *drunk*. It shows their *innocence*.



Give examples which show the pigs' corruption...

They change the commandments, drink alcohol and Napoleon even runs around wearing a bowler hat (these pigs sure know how to party). Show the examiner that you know why this goes against Animalism.

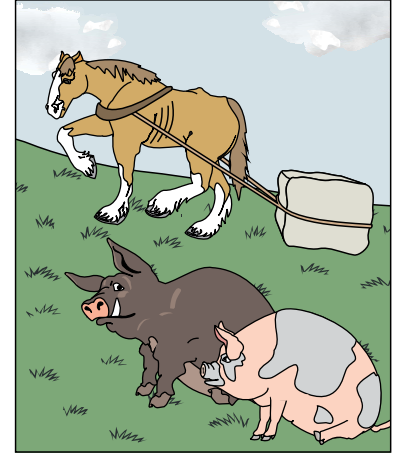
Analysis of Chapter Nine — Boxer Dies

By this point in the novel, the pigs feel so confident in their control, they feel as if they don't need to justify their actions. This is the chapter where we say goodbye to Boxer. The pages in my book are covered with tears...

Animalism is completely corrupted

- 1) Boxer's **hard work** and **suffering** contrasts with the pigs' **laziness**.
- 2) Squealer says a "**too-rigid equality in rations**" is "**contrary to the principles of Animalism**". This goes against Major's beliefs.
- 3) The pigs don't **justify** their actions — this shows how **deep** their **corruption** is because they don't feel the need to hide it:

- Pigs are allowed to wear **green ribbons on Sundays**.
- Animals are told to "**stand aside**" if they meet a pig on a path.



The pigs use new tactics to keep the farm happy

- 1) Once a week there's a "**Spontaneous Demonstration**" where the animals parade around with Napoleon at the front. **Poems** and **songs** are performed **in Napoleon's honour**.
- 2) The farm becomes a **Republic**, and it needs a President. There's only **one candidate** — Napoleon.
- 3) Moses returns, speaking about **Sugarcandy Mountain**. The animals **believe him**, hoping for a **better life**.
- 4) The animals' **innocent belief** in a better future helps to take their minds off the "harsh" farm conditions — **rumours** and **stories** promising future rewards make the farm seem more **tolerable**. The pigs are happy for Moses to stay on the farm because his stories keep the animals **quiet** and **obedient**.

Theme — Language

The pigs **abuse language** — the parades are called "Spontaneous", but they're **organised**, and the farm's declared a "Republic", but Napoleon's a **dictator**.

When Boxer dies, the pigs only care about money



- 1) When Boxer **collapses** and is taken to be slaughtered, the animals don't **react** until it's **too late**. This is a theme which underlies the **entire novel**.
- 2) Squealer says Boxer's been **sent to hospital** and the animals **happily accept** Squealer's lies.
- 3) Napoleon uses Boxer's death to make the other animals as **obedient** and **loyal as Boxer was**. Ironically, Boxer's **self sacrifice** and blind **commitment** to Animalism ultimately led to his death.
- 4) The pigs **buy more whisky** with the money from selling Boxer. They have become **drunks like Jones** and the fact that they **spend** the money from Boxer shows that they're just as **ruthless** too.

Turning point in the action

Boxer's the most loyal worker but the pigs kill him without a thought.



"Boxer was never seen again."

Although the pigs say that Boxer is being sent to hospital, the "Horse Slaughterer" sign on the van clearly shows that they're lying. They're completely corrupt and not even their loyal workers are rewarded.

Analysis of Chapter Ten — Animalism is Over

Chapter Ten is where you get an eerie sense of déjà vu. Orwell's point is that under Napoleon, and Stalin, the working class found themselves in the same, or worse situation that they had been in before.

Nobody remembers life before Napoleon

- 1) Napoleon's power becomes so great that he doesn't need to use scapegoats or fear — he's not even trying to hide his totalitarian regime.
- 2) New animals are brought up to obey Napoleon's changed commandments.
- 3) They just accept what they're told, having had no education. This doesn't bode well for the future, as there's even less chance that the pigs will be overthrown.

Theme — Education

An uneducated working class are unlikely to rise up against their leaders.

The pigs profit while the others suffer

- 1) The farm is rich, but the animals work harder than ever. Napoleon tells them that Animalism means "working hard" and "living frugally".
- 2) The farm may have more money, but only the pigs and dogs benefit.
- 3) The animals feel "honour and privilege" that the farm is run by animals. It's ironic because they truly believe that they work for themselves and hope that a "Republic of Animals" will still form. All the evidence suggests this isn't true, but the animals have been brainwashed into believing it.
- 4) The original commandments are rubbed out, and replaced with one commandment — "ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS". The fact that this statement doesn't even make sense shows how much Napoleon has corrupted language and how his power over the other animals is absolute.

Theme — Animalism

When Animalism was founded it meant equality and freedom. Napoleon completely changes it.

Pig or human — it's impossible to tell



Turning point in the action

The revolution has come full circle — the animals are back where they started.

- 1) The pigs carry whips and wear clothes — they're acting like humans.



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- 2) Napoleon removes anything related to Animalism:
 - He's going to stop the animals calling each other "Comrade" as it shows equality.
 - He tries to erase memories of Major and what he stood for by burying his skull.
 - He replaces the symbolic Animalism flag.

- 3) Animal Farm becomes Manor Farm again, in more than just name — pigs and men now look the same.
- 4) Napoleon is a tyrant like Jones — except that the pigs treat the animals even worse than Jones did. This shows that the revolution has ultimately achieved nothing.



"...SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS."

Well that doesn't even make sense. The tyrant Napoleon, with his vicious dogs in tow, has just created a more efficient, brutal version of Jones' Manor Farm. The only animals who benefit are the pigs. Ironic, eh?

Practice Questions

These questions are meant to help you learn. Makes sense. They don't call me Mr Sensible for nothing. Remember, these aren't exam questions, these are just helpful ways to remind yourself of the main plot points. Anyways — as soon as I've put on my sunglasses, tutu and flippers, I'm off for a tea break. Mr Sensible out.

Quick Questions

- 1) What does old Major teach the animals during his speech?
- 2) Give one example of an issue that Snowball and Napoleon disagree on.
- 3) At first how does Napoleon feel about Snowball's windmill plan?
How does he show this?
- 4) How do the animals react to Snowball's expulsion from the farm?
- 5) How does Squealer promote Napoleon's new regime?
- 6) How does Napoleon justify trading with humans?
- 7) How does Napoleon deal with the hens' resistance?
- 8) Give two examples of how the pigs start to be treated better under Napoleon's regime.
- 9) Briefly explain why the other animals can't tell the difference between the humans and the pigs at the end of the novel.

In-depth Questions

- 1) Briefly explain why the 'milk and apples' incident is a key turning point in the novel.
- 2) How do the medals awarded after the 'Battle of the Cowshed' undermine Animalism?
- 3) Briefly explain the purpose of Napoleon's trials and executions.
- 4) Why do the pigs allow Moses to stay on the farm?

Character Profile — Napoleon

Napoleon is the villain of the book. He doesn't have many redeeming qualities, so it's difficult to like or sympathise with him. Unless you're a totalitarian dictator...

Napoleon doesn't fight in the revolution

- 1) Napoleon **doesn't say much** in the early meetings, but he has a "reputation" for getting what he wants. This shows that he seems to care less about Animalism than the others, and hints that he's **ambitious** and **selfish**.
- 2) At the Battle of the Cowshed he disappears — he's a **coward**. This contrasts with Snowball who fights **bravely** to defend the farm.

Napoleon is...

cunning: "That, he said, was Comrade Napoleon's cunning"

ruthless: "a pile of corpses lying before Napoleon's feet"

corrupt: "There was only one candidate, Napoleon"

selfish: "reputation for getting his own way"



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He's a ruthless character

Napoleon doesn't care about the **welfare** of the other animals and just **uses** them for his own **benefit**:

- He adopts the puppies, but only so that he can train them to be his **army**.
- He forces the animals to work a **60-hour week** while he does **nothing**.
- He **steals** the apples and cows' milk for the pigs to have for themselves.

Allegory

Napoleon is based on **Joseph Stalin**, the **leader** of Soviet Russia (see p. 9).

Napoleon uses cunning and brutality to get his own way

- 1) Napoleon is **threatened** by Snowball, who is a military hero and a charismatic leader.
- 2) Napoleon **belittles** and **undermines** Snowball. He trains the sheep to **interrupt** Snowball's speeches and **urinates** on his plans for the windmill. He then uses his army of dogs to chase Snowball into **exile**.
- 3) After his exile, Napoleon uses Snowball as a **scapegoat** for any problems on the farm. The way that he turns the animals **against** Snowball is **cunning**.
- 4) He uses **terror** to **control** the farm. Animals are forced to make **false confessions** and are **executed** for being in league with Snowball.

Allegory

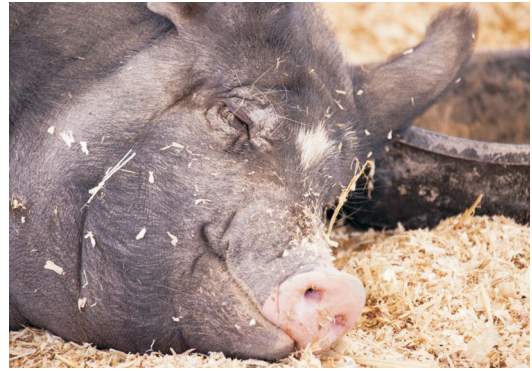
The executions and show trials (see p. 10) mimic the **brutality** of Stalin in the 1930s. Many Russians were **executed** or sent to **labour camps**.

Character Profile — Napoleon

Napoleon emerges as the leader of Animal Farm after using some filthy tactics. He's become a paranoid, brutal tyrant who's drunk on power (and probably whisky). It's time for the bacon to bite back...

Napoleon is a selfish leader...

- 1) Napoleon sees himself as **better** than the other animals and above the common herd.
- 2) He changes the principles of Animalism for his own **benefit**, e.g. "No animal shall drink alcohol to excess." It shows that he **quickly forgets** any ideals of Animalism that he may have believed in.
- 3) Although he **criticises** Snowball's plans for the windmill, he builds it after Snowball's exile. He's happy to take the **credit** for someone else's ideas.



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...and a corrupt ruler

Theme — Education

The animals have **doubts** about Napoleon but they don't question him — they have been brainwashed into thinking that "Napoleon is always right".

- 1) Napoleon rewrites history — he **distorts** the story of the Battle of the Cowshed to make himself seem like a hero. He awards himself a bravery medal and presents Snowball as a **traitor**.
- 2) The Sunday meetings are **abolished** to **suppress** debate and **criticism** towards him.
- 3) He is "unanimously" elected as the leader of the Republic but he is the **only** candidate.

Theme — Propaganda

Just like Napoleon, Stalin created a **cult of personality**, where propaganda and the media were used to **glorify** him as a kind, caring leader (see p.9).

He's just as bad as farmer Jones

- 1) Napoleon's transition from pig to '**human**' is complete by the end of the novel — he stands on two legs, drinks whisky, and wears clothes. When the animals look at the pigs and men, they can't say "**which was which**".
- 2) By the end, the commandments and principles of Animalism have been **forgotten** — the animals are **starving** and **overworked** and in a worse position than they were under Farmer Jones.

Theme — Class System

Animalism **failed** because one **tyrant**, Farmer Jones, was replaced with another, Napoleon. This reflects the way that the all-powerful Tsar was **replaced** by Stalin and his dictatorship.



Mention that Napoleon's corruption is a warning...

Although Napoleon is an allegory of Stalin, Orwell wanted the reader to realise that a lot of what happens in *Animal Farm*, especially the corruption of power, could happen anywhere. He makes a good point.

Character Profile — Snowball

Snowball isn't exactly villainous, but it doesn't mean he has a happy ending. He's a smart, idealistic character who wants Animalism to succeed and believes in the equality of animals.

Snowball is intelligent but not very cunning

- 1) Snowball is **lively** and a **quick thinker**, but he doesn't have "the same depth of character" as Napoleon.
- 2) Animal **equality** and the '**working class**' animals are important to him. He explains the principles of Animalism for the others so that they can improve life on Animal Farm.
- 3) He is an **original thinker** — he explains to the birds that a wing "is an organ of propulsion." He's got **good** intentions, but the birds don't **understand** Snowball's complicated explanations.
- 4) Snowball **isn't perfect** though:

Allegory

Snowball's character is based on **Leon Trotsky**, the Russian revolutionary leader and Stalin's greatest **rival** (see p. 8).

- He's **over-idealistic** — he forms animal committees but generally these end in failure.
- He's **dishonest** — when Napoleon steals the milk for the pigs, Snowball doesn't protest.

He's brave and a strong military leader

- 1) Snowball is a **strong leader** in battle. He's in charge of defensive operations on Animal Farm. When Jones and his allies attack, Snowball has **prepared** by studying the campaigns of Caesar.
- 2) He's **noble**. He leads the charge against the humans and is **injured**. He proves he's **willing to die** for Animalism.
- 3) For his bravery he is recognised as a **hero** by all the animals, and awarded the military **honour**, 'Animal Hero, First Class', for his role in the **Battle of the Cowshed**.

Snowball is...

intelligent: "full of plans for innovations and improvements"
brave: "He himself dashed straight for Jones"
eloquent: "won over the majority by his brilliant speeches"
idealistic: "Snowball conjured up pictures of fantastic machines"

He wants Animalism to succeed

A utopia is a perfect community or society.



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- 1) Snowball wants Major's utopian vision to become a **reality**.
- 2) He writes the seven commandments on the barn wall for all the animals to see, but most of the animals are **illiterate**.
- 3) He draws up **plans** for the windmill — a project designed to generate electricity for the farm to make the animals' lives **easier**.
- 4) His plan would require the animals to work hard but the windmill would benefit **everyone**.

Character Profile — Snowball

After the rebellion, Snowball and Napoleon become leaders of Animal Farm, but Napoleon isn't willing to share power. Snowball's intelligence and idealism prove no match for Napoleon's cunning and brutality.

Snowball is undermined by Napoleon

- 1) They can't [agree](#) — Snowball wants to encourage [all](#) animals on [all](#) farms to rebel, but Napoleon wants to build up [power](#) and [security](#) on Animal Farm.
- 2) Snowball is an [excellent speaker](#) but Napoleon is better at “canvassing support for himself” outside the debates.
- 3) Napoleon is threatened by Snowball's [heroism](#), [intelligence](#) and [influence](#) over the other animals, and so he begins to [bully](#) him:

Turning point in the action

Once Snowball has been exiled, Napoleon can start his campaign of terror.

- Napoleon trains the sheep to [disrupt](#) Snowball's speeches.
- When Snowball draws up the windmill plans, Napoleon shows his [contempt](#) by [urinating](#) all over them.
- Snowball is [chased](#) off the farm by Napoleon's dogs.

He becomes a scapegoat

- 1) After Snowball is exiled from Animal Farm, Napoleon begins to gain [power](#). He spreads vicious rumours and lies about the threat of Snowball to [safeguard](#) his own position.

A scapegoat is someone who is singled out and blamed for something they haven't done.



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- 2) Snowball is condemned as a [traitor](#), a [liar](#) and a friend of Farmer Jones.
- 3) He becomes a [scapegoat](#) — when the windmill is blown down in a storm, Snowball is [blamed](#). He becomes the “source of all evil” on the farm.
- 4) Napoleon denounces Snowball as a dangerous outside enemy, and puts himself forward as the [protector](#) of Animal Farm.

Allegory

When Stalin came to power, he ordered Trotsky and other political rivals to be [exiled](#). He then began to [persecute](#) people who supported or sympathised with Trotsky (see p. 10).



“Vote for Snowball and the three-day week”

Poor Snowball, he had such good intentions. He's very nearly the hero of the story, but unfortunately for him, he doesn't get the girl, the gold or the glory. It's true what they say — nice pigs always finish last.

Character Profile — Squealer

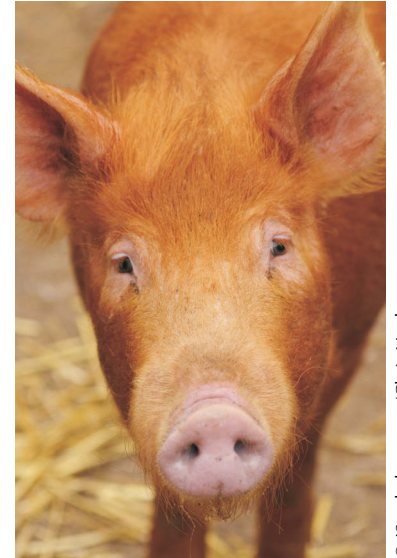
Squealer is a piggy spin doctor — he’s used by Napoleon to influence and persuade the other animals by any means. He rewrites history, distorts the facts and gives a whole new meaning to ‘telling a porkie’.

Squealer is a remorseless liar

- 1) Squealer is a small, fat porker with “twinkling eyes” and a “shrill voice”.
- 2) He spends the novel promoting Napoleon’s regime — distorting language and telling lies.
- 3) He’s protected by vicious dogs, who scare the other animals into silence.

Allegory

Squealer represents the use of communist propaganda in Russia — the working classes were controlled by persuasive slogans (see p. 40).



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Squealer is...

persuasive: “he had a way of skipping from side to side and whisking his tail which was somehow very persuasive”

manipulative: “he could turn black into white”

deceitful: Squealer says that “Snowball was in league with Jones”

He uses persuasive language to justify Napoleon’s actions

- 1) When Napoleon is the leader of Animal Farm, Squealer becomes his loyal spokesperson.
- 2) He uses convincing language to win over the other animals. He tells them that, “No one believes more firmly than Napoleon” in the equality of animals.
- 3) He manipulates the animals’ fear of Jones in order to increase Napoleon’s power. He asks them, “you do not want Jones back?” to make it seem like they only have a choice between the two.
- 4) Squealer has an answer for everything. When all the animals have their rations reduced except the pigs and dogs, Squealer explains that rigid equality is “contrary” to Animalism.

Theme — Education

Propaganda is used as a tool by the pigs to control the other animals and justify unequal living conditions. The use of statistics and jargon confuses the poorly educated animals (see p. 38).

Squealer controls the animals with lies

Squealer manipulates the animals through his clever use of language, distorting the truth to convince them that life is better on Animal Farm.

- He uses false statistics to claim that life is good on the farm: he “proved” to the animals in detail that they had more food than before the Rebellion.
- Squealer lies — he claims that the Battle of the Windmill was a great victory — even though the animals suffered terrible losses and the windmill was destroyed.
- He rewrites history. He turns Napoleon into the hero at the Battle of the Cowshed by saying things like “Comrade Napoleon sprang forward... and sank his teeth into Jones’s leg”.

Character Profile — Squealer

Not only is Squealer a master of persuasion, he's also a nasty piece of work. He makes false accusations against Snowball, ruining his reputation, and he lies about Boxer's death. He's just as vicious as Napoleon.

Squealer turns the animals against Snowball

- 1) Squealer plays an important role in destroying Snowball's reputation and turning the other animals against him.
- 2) When he suggests that Snowball's agents are "lurking among us at this moment", he's scaremongering.
- 3) He makes up evidence against Snowball. He says Snowball was "Jones's secret agent" and it's been "proved by documents".
- 4) He convinces the animals that Snowball was a traitor at the Battle of the Cowshed and that Snowball was never awarded 'Animal Hero, First Class'.

Theme — Language

Orwell uses Squealer to show how language can be used to influence people. Squealer's ability to twist language gives him great power — and this kind of subtle control is dangerous.

He lies about Boxer's death

- 1) The ageing Boxer is betrayed and sold to the knacker's yard to be killed.
- 2) Squealer's lies about the death of Boxer are more fanciful than ever.
- 3) He describes Boxer's death in great sentimental detail, even though it's completely made up. He claims that Boxer's last words were, "Napoleon is always right". This shows that he is completely remorseless, willing to abuse Boxer's unfailing loyalty to Napoleon to the end.
- 4) He says that Napoleon did all he could for Boxer, providing medicine "without a thought as to the cost". This is ironic because Napoleon's only real concern was how much money the pigs could make by selling Boxer.

Theme — Propaganda

Stalin was given the titles 'Papa Stalin' and 'Little Father of the Peoples'. He was often depicted embracing children in propaganda posters — in an attempt to show that he was a caring, loving leader (see p. 40).

Squealer helps to create and maintain the dictatorship

Squealer is a very important member of Napoleon's regime:

- He helps to build up Napoleon's oppressive, murderous dictatorship.
- With Squealer's help, Animal Farm becomes a more efficient state of terror.
- It's a new class-based hierarchy where the interests of the pigs are put first.



A Russian propaganda poster which says "To our beloved Stalin, the nation's happiness"



"Day and night we are watching over your welfare."

Squealer represents Stalin's use of Russian propaganda. Squealer influences the uneducated animals with memorable slogans, distorted facts and persuasive language. Revision is fun, comrades!

Character Profile — Old Major and Benjamin

Old Major dreams of a better future for the animals. He thinks that without Man, they'll all be as happy as pigs in muck. Benjamin thinks everything will stay the same. No guesses as to whose glass is half full then...

Old Major has a vision

- 1) Old Major is the oldest, wisest pig on the farm.
- 2) He dreams of a future where all animals live in a land of happiness and plenty, free from the exploitation of man.
- 3) He's aware that he's near death and has a clear mission to pass on his wisdom.

Old Major is...

kindly: "with a wise and benevolent appearance"

wise: "to pass on to you such wisdom as I have acquired"

idealistic: "let there be perfect unity, perfect comradeship"

Allegory

Old Major is the equivalent of Karl Marx and Russian revolutionary, Vladimir Lenin (see p. 28-7).



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His ideas for the future are clear

- 1) When old Major gives his speech, he talks about Man's terrible treatment of animals. He says, "our lives are miserable, laborious and short".
- 2) Old Major's vision becomes the foundation of Animalism:

- He insists that all animals are "comrades" — they are all equal.
- Man is the enemy and animals must never come to resemble him.
- Before his death he sets out a number of clear rules against adopting human vices such as living in houses, sleeping in beds, wearing clothes and drinking alcohol.

Even though old Major complains about Man, he's had a long, healthy life on Manor Farm.

Unlike Major, Benjamin is cynical

- 1) Benjamin is a grumpy, bad-tempered donkey who never laughs because "he saw nothing to laugh at". He's cynical about the rebellion and Animalism.
- 2) He's very intelligent, and one of the few literate animals but he sees little point in using his abilities.
- 3) Benjamin has a true understanding of life on Animal Farm. He's realistic when he sees "hardship and disappointment" all around him, but he doesn't do anything to stop the pigs. This could suggest that Orwell is disappointed that many people seem unwilling or unable to challenge a tyrannical leader.
- 4) When he realises what's happening to Boxer, he raises the alarm. This is an important turning point for Benjamin — it's the first time that he speaks out but he reacts too late.

Allegory

Benjamin represents the intellectual Russians (intelligentsia) who realise that communism will not solve the injustices of society.



Compare Old Major's vision with Napoleon's reality...

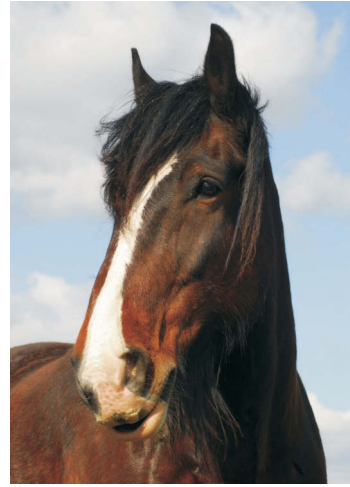
When he becomes leader, Napoleon puts Major's skull on display. It makes the animals think that he's been inspired by Major's ideas, but this is just an illusion — Napoleon breaks all of Major's rules.

Character Profile — Boxer

Boxer is a loyal, simple and hardworking cart-horse — his labour is important to the farm's initial success. He is devoted to Animalism but blindly follows the leaders without thinking for himself.

Boxer is brave and hardworking

- 1) Boxer is the **hardest worker** on the farm — all the farm's work seemed "to rest upon his mighty shoulders".
- 2) He is as **strong** "as any two horses put together".
- 3) At the Battle of the Cowshed he fights **bravely** and is awarded 'Animal Hero, First Class'.
- 4) The animals **respect** Boxer for his calm, stable manner and his tremendous ability to work.
- 5) Boxer gets **upset** when he thinks he's **killed** a human boy during the Battle of the Cowshed. This shows that he's **compassionate**.



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He trusts the pigs completely

Boxer is...

loyal: "Napoleon is always right"

hardworking: "I will work harder"

dim-witted: "not of first-rate intelligence"

- 1) Boxer isn't very **bright** and he's **easily manipulated** by the pigs.
- 2) After Napoleon's show trials and executions, Boxer has **misgivings** about the pigs' behaviour but he remains silent — continuing to believe in Napoleon.
- 3) He's a **useful tool** for the pigs — if Boxer's on their **side** then the other animals may **follow** more easily.

Boxer's **dedication** to the farm is ultimately his **downfall**. Every time he witnesses a terrible event on the farm, he just works **harder**. He overworks himself for the good of the farm.

Boxer is betrayed by Napoleon

- 1) After the Battle of the Windmill, Boxer is injured but he **refuses** to lighten his load. He's **determined** to build the windmill, however hard it is.
- 2) When he **collapses** and is taken ill, he believes that he will get a happy **retirement**.
- 3) He thinks he is being sent to the vet for treatment but Napoleon **sells** him to the **knacker's yard** so that the pigs can get money for whisky.

Allegory

Boxer represents the **Russian working class** who worked hard in appalling conditions to try to achieve the unattainable goals set by the government, for no reward.



"If Comrade Napoleon says it, it must be right."

Boxer is a staunch supporter of Animalism — he trusts what Napoleon says, and devotes his life to working hard for the cause. However, the pigs betray Boxer in a horrific way and nobody realises until it's too late.

Character Profile — Clover and Mollie

Clover is a loyal follower of Animalism, but Mollie couldn't care less. They're pretty much opposites — here are the details, straight from the horse's mouth...

Clover is a mother figure

- 1) She is a **compassionate**, **maternal** mare. When the animals were frightened, they "huddled about Clover".
- 2) She is a **loyal** and **faithful** disciple of Animalism, absorbing and passing on all that she is taught. When she grows suspicious of the pigs' behaviour, she **blames herself** for **misremembering** the commandments.
- 3) Even when Animalism **disappoints** her, "these scenes of terror and slaughter were not what they had looked forward to", she continues to be **obedient** and **accepts** Napoleon's leadership.



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Theme — Education

Like Boxer, Clover represents the **unquestioning** working classes. She sometimes doubts the motives of Napoleon, but she doesn't think she's **intelligent** enough to speak out.

Clover is...

loyal: "she would remain faithful"

maternal: "stout motherly mare"

dim: she "could not put words together"

Mollie is vain and silly

- 1) Mollie's a "pretty white mare" who's **vain** and "**foolish**".
- 2) She is **spoiled** and likes ribbons, sugar and being petted — things which are **banned** under Animalism.
- 3) She has no interest in **politics** or the **rebellion**. She's **cowardly** and unwilling to fight for Animal Farm. She hides in fear during the Battle of the Cowshed.

Mollie is...

vain: "foolishly gazing at her own reflection"

lazy: "She was late for work every morning"

cowardly: "she was found hiding in her stall"

She refuses to make sacrifices after the revolution

Allegory

Mollie could represent the **upper-class Russians** who had a **comfortable life** under the Tsar (see p. 28).

- 1) Mollie **struggles** to follow the principles of Animalism and hoards ribbons and lump sugar. In a selfish way she's not willing to make **sacrifices**.
- 2) When Snowball teaches the animals to read and write, Mollie has the capacity to become literate but she only learns the letters which spell her name. She isn't interested in what the rebellion can **teach** her.
- 3) Mollie can't adapt to life on Animal Farm — she's too **shallow** and devoted to her **luxuries**. She runs away to draw the cart of a man who pets her and feeds her sugar.



Don't just write about the main characters...

Although Mollie is not in *Animal Farm* much, you can make some quite good points about her and how she's selfish like the pigs. Mentioning relevant bits about minor characters will really impress the examiner.

Character Profile — The Humans

The animals think they're getting a fresh Tsar-t after they overthrow Farmer Jones, but those pesky humans keep meddling in the animals' affairs, attacking the farm, ripping them off and blowing up the windmill.

Jones' neglect causes the animals to rebel



- 1) Mr Jones is the owner of Manor Farm. He's a lazy drunkard.
- 2) His men are "idle", "dishonest" and they take advantage of Jones's slackness. Under Jones, the fields of Manor Farm are "full of weeds" and the animals are "underfed".
- 3) Jones' neglect and drunkenness allow the animals to meet and organise themselves in secret — he was "too drunk to remember" to lock them up properly.
- 4) When the animals rebel, it's a spontaneous event and even the animals are surprised by their success. This shows how little control Jones has over his farm.

Allegory

Jones represents the unpopular Tsar Nicholas II (see p. 28).

Pilkington and Frederick represent the West

- 1) Pilkington is an old-fashioned gentleman-farmer whose farm is shabby and neglected.
- 2) Frederick has a smaller, better kept farm. He's "tough", "shrewd" and always "involved in lawsuits." There are rumours about cruelty on his farm.

The Humans are...

cruel: Jones is a "hard master"

violent: "any animal caught singing it [Beasts of England] was given a flogging".

dishonest: Frederick's "bank-notes were forgeries"

Allegory

Pilkington represents the capitalist West. Frederick represents Hitler and Nazi Germany (see p. 10).

- 3) Frederick leads a surprise attack on Animal Farm which is sudden and vicious. He almost overthrows the animals and is only driven off after the animals suffer terrible losses and the windmill is blown up.

Whymper is in it for the money

Allegory

Whymper stands for those people who were happy to work for the communists in Soviet Russia or do business with them, if the price was right.

- 1) Whymper is Napoleon's solicitor and representative in his dealings with other humans.
- 2) Whymper is a "sharp" businessman who realises that Napoleon's business "would be worth having".
- 3) He only agrees to work for Animal Farm because Napoleon tricks him into thinking the farm is prosperous.



Explain how the humans are presented...

The humans aren't presented well — they're a bunch of money-grubbing drunkards. They all represent somebody in the allegory, and Orwell is clearly criticising them, so it's useful to include them in your essay.

Character Profile — The Sheep, Hens and Moses

Cute, cuddly sheep, loved by small children the world over. These sheep are baaaaaaa-d to the bone, but they'd still make a delicious lamb chop, with a side of Commumint sauce. Delicious.

The sheep can't think for themselves

© iStockphoto.com/Leslie Morris



- 1) The sheep live up to their traditional stereotype — the members of the **flock** are **unthinking** and **easily led**.
- 2) They can't think for themselves and blindly **follow** the pigs' orders. They start **chanting** whenever anyone threatens to voice an **opinion** — "their usual bleating... put an end to the discussion."
- 3) In the end, the sheep silence all **opposition** and announce the final **betrayal** of Animalism, chanting "**Four legs good, two legs better!**"

Allegory

The sheep are like the Communist party '**yes-men**' that Stalin packed meetings with, and who would **vote together** for whatever he asked.

The hens are oppressed by Napoleon

- 1) Once he's in power, Napoleon orders the hens to give up their eggs so they can be **sold**. Trading with humans was something Major **opposed** in his speech.
- 2) When they're told to supply **400 eggs** a week, they protest by telling Napoleon that it is "murder."
- 3) They're the only group of animals to really **oppose** Napoleon's regime. When they stage a protest, Napoleon **starves** them into **submission**.
- 4) When egg quotas are raised again, there's no outcry or protest this time — they're too **frightened** to even raise their voices.

Allegory

The hens are like the **peasants** of the Soviet Union who were **forced** to give up their produce. Millions of Soviet peasants **died** of famine in the 1930s (see p. 10).

Moses stands for religion

- 1) Moses is a raven who tells the animals stories of **Sugarcandy Mountain** — a paradise where animals go when they die.
- 2) He tells lies and is described as a "spy" but many of the animals **believe** him because they have nothing else to look forward to.
- 3) The pigs allow Moses to **stay** on Animal Farm because his stories give the animals **hope** and keep them **obedient**.

Allegory

Orwell uses Moses to introduce Karl Marx's idea that **religion** is the 'opium of the people' — he thought that religion deceived people into believing in a happy afterlife. Moses' name links the raven to the **Biblical prophet** who told of a faraway 'promised land'.



"When the hens heard this, they raised a terrible outcry."

In contrast to other animals, the hens take a stand — sadly, the pesky pigs come out on top. But you know what they say, you've got to break a few eggs if you want to make a totalitarian, exploitative dictatorship.

Practice Questions

'Animal Farm' is chock-a-block with ruthless, brutal, unscrupulous characters — all the nice ones get chased away by vicious dogs, sold to glue factories or live a life of toil and starvation. Doesn't it make you feel all warm and fuzzy inside? Regardless of whether the characters are heroes or villains, you still need to know what they're like, so here are some questions to warm you up for the main event.

Quick Questions

- 1) Which of the following best describes Farmer Jones at the beginning of the story?
a) drunken b) lazy c) neglectful d) all of these things?
- 2) Who calls the animals to a meeting in the big barn at the beginning of the novel? Describe his appearance and character in a few words.
- 3) Whose motto is "I will work harder"? What happens to him?
- 4) Who tricks Napoleon and nearly destroys Animal Farm in Chapter 8?
- 5) Which event in the novel is the only one to make Benjamin upset?

In-depth Questions

- 1) Describe Napoleon's personality up to the end of Chapter 3.
- 2) Snowball is portrayed as intelligent, inventive and popular, but he doesn't have the "same depth of character" as Napoleon. How does this impression of Snowball prepare you for what happens later?
- 3) Explain the animals' mixed feelings about Moses and why he is tolerated later on in *Animal Farm*?
- 4) Why doesn't Mollie work hard for the revolution?
- 5) Who do you think is the cleverest of the pigs? Use examples to back up your answer.
- 6) Why do you think Benjamin is so cynical and grumpy? Is his attitude justified?
- 7) Explain Whymper's role. How useful is he to Napoleon?

Practice Questions

Time to break out the big guns — a set of exam-style questions to test how well you really know the book. Don't try to answer all the exam-style questions in one go — it'll make your head explode. Instead pick one, do a plan and try to write a full essay under exam conditions. Then have a break and try the next one later. Try to answer them without flicking back through these pages for hints.

Exam-style Questions

1) How does Orwell use the idea of the 'scapegoat' in *Animal Farm*?

Remember — a scapegoat is someone who gets blamed and punished for something that isn't their fault.

2) In what ways does Napoleon exploit Boxer's loyalty throughout the novel?

3) How important is Benjamin's character in understanding the message of *Animal Farm*?

4) How does Orwell make you feel differently about Snowball and Napoleon in Chapters Three and Four?

5) How does Orwell present the different humans in *Animal Farm*?

6) How does Orwell portray the animals' idealism and hope in *Animal Farm*?

Animalism

Words ending in ‘ism’ often describe beliefs about how to live your life. Communists believe in communism and magnets believe in... er... magnetism. Animalism is how the animals believe they should live their lives.

Animalism is the idea that animals will only work for themselves

- 1) Animalism is a new “system of thought” inspired by [old Major’s ideas](#) — his beliefs are summarised in [seven commandments](#) after he dies.
- 2) Like [communism](#), equality is [essential](#) in Animalism. The commandment that “[All animals are equal](#)” means that every animal should be [treated the same](#).
- 3) Orwell uses the word ‘[commandments](#)’ to draw a comparison with the Ten Commandments of [Christianity](#). The seven commandments are an “unalterable law” — a set of rules that the animals could [follow religiously](#).
- 4) They also give the reader a [framework](#) to see Animalism’s decline as the commandments are [corrupted](#) one by one.

Orwell uses Animalism to [represent](#) communism so that he can criticise it [indirectly](#). This is why the [flags](#) of both beliefs are so [similar](#).



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This is the flag of the Soviet Union. The crossed horn and hoof on the Animalism flag (see p. 49) looks a bit like this.

The ideals of Animalism don’t last long

Not long after the revolution, there are already [serious problems](#) — and they only get [worse](#). As the pigs [corrupt](#) Animalism, [conflict](#) and [inequality](#) increase on the farm:

Conflict

- Like [Stalin](#), Napoleon gets rid of any [opposition](#) — he orders “nine enormous dogs” to attack Snowball and chase him from the farm. By preventing Snowball from having an [equal say](#), Napoleon turns his back on [equality](#) and Animalism.
- Napoleon holds [false trials](#) and [executes](#) any animals who “confess” to going against Animalism. This goes against the [commandment](#) that “No animal shall kill any other animal”. [Ironically](#) it’s Napoleon who is actually going against Animalism by [breaking](#) one of the seven rules.

Inequality

- Some of the animals learn to [read](#) (e.g. the pigs) and so the other animals are at a [disadvantage](#). Napoleon [refuses](#) to [educate](#) the other animals equally, so that he can maintain the pigs’ [authority](#).
- Animalism was [founded](#) on the idea that every animal worked for [each other](#), but in reality, only the pigs [benefit](#) — they take more for themselves while the other “[animals worked like slaves](#)”.

- 1) [Power corrupts](#) Animalism’s original ideals. Napoleon [changes](#) the commandments to suit [his needs](#).
- 2) Napoleon becomes so [similar](#) to the humans that the animals can’t tell them apart. Orwell’s point was that Russia had suffered the [same fate](#) — [Stalin’s](#) rule was [no better](#) than the [Tsar’s capitalist regime](#).
- 3) By making Animalism [fail](#), Orwell was arguing that Russia had also failed in being [fair](#) and [equal](#).



“there was a pile of corpses lying before Napoleon’s feet”

Despite killing the animals he claims have turned on Animalism, it’s actually Napoleon who’s most guilty. If only he’d met Miss Piggy before Kermit — all Napoleon needed was the love of a good woman.

Education and Social Class

After the revolution, different social classes start to emerge. The pigs become the ruling class, and the other animals become the working class — a lack of education means they have no power and do what they're told.

Education divides the animals into social classes

- 1) Two social classes form after the revolution, which **goes against** the commandment that "All animals are **equal**". The division is based on the animals' **intelligence**.
- 2) The pigs are the ruling class — they make **all the rules** because they can **write** them. The other animals accept that the pigs are "**cleverer**" and let them **take control**.
- 3) The pigs **reinforce** their status by taking up the symbols of **Man** — Napoleon appears "wearing an old bowler hat" and "with a pipe in his mouth".

Snowball and Napoleon disagree on education

- 1) The animals are supposed to be **equal**, but because the pigs **teach themselves to read**, they're **superior** from the start. By **controlling education**, they also control **who's** upper class.
- 2) Snowball and Napoleon have **different approaches** to education:

- Snowball wants to educate **all the animals** — he tries to teach them to read, write and **spread the ideas** of Animalism to everyone, so that there will be **true equality** among the animals.
- Napoleon is only interested in educating the **young**. He focuses on the **piglets** to continue the pigs' **superiority**, and the **puppies**, so that he can train them to be **loyal bodyguards**.

- 3) **Under Napoleon** the class system is likely to **stay the same** — he doesn't want to educate the other animals in case they use it to **rise up against him**. By only educating the pigs, they keep **all the power**.

The animals misuse their education

- 1) The **uneducated** animals **remain working class** because they don't **make the most** of the education that Snowball offers them:

- Mollie only wants to learn how to **write her name**.
- Benjamin learns to read, but **refuses to use his ability**.
- Boxer wants to read and write, but can only **learn four letters**, which he is "**content with**".

- 2) Because of this **lack of interest** in education they remain **ignorant** and they can't work out anything for themselves.
- 3) The animals **accept everything** they're told and **submit** to the pigs' authority — they don't have the **intellect** to **object**.



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Write about how knowledge leads to power in the novel...

In the novel, knowledge only seems to get misused — the pigs use it to keep control and manipulate the others. Use the knowledge on this page to give you the power to pass your English Literature exam.

Power and Language

Because the pigs are educated, they can use language to make the other animals do what they want. This is one of their main sources of power. You don't need brawn when you've got brains. I've got neither... *sigh*

Desire for power corrupts Napoleon

- 1) The whole point of Animalism (and communism) is equality — no one should have any more power than anyone else. When Napoleon seizes power on the farm, it shows how corrupt he is. The more power he has, the more corrupt he becomes and the more Animalism is undermined.
- 2) Napoleon increases his power over the farm by controlling:

Actions

- By controlling rations
- By using the dogs
- Through trials and executions

Thoughts

- Through language
- Using propaganda
- Removing democracy

Theme — Language

For Orwell, this was the most dangerous kind of control because it's so difficult to detect and challenge, especially by the uneducated.

Language is a powerful tool

- 1) Orwell was concerned about the power of language, and how it could be manipulated to change its purpose and meaning.
- 2) Squealer's persuasive language is a powerful form of propaganda (see p. 40). It reinforces Napoleon's power: "He was always referred to... as 'our leader, Comrade Napoleon'".
- 3) Boxer has no power because he can't express his feelings properly — when Snowball is exiled he can't "think of anything to say".
- 4) By simplifying the commandments to "Four legs good, two legs bad", Snowball causes the words to lose their meaning.



ПОД ВОДИТЕЛЬСТВОМ ВЕЛИКОГО СТАЛИНА—ВПЕРЕД К КОММУНИЗМУ!

An example of Stalin's propaganda: 'Under the Leadership of the Great Stalin — Forward to Communism!'

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There's no freedom of speech

- 1) Freedom of speech is necessary in an equal, democratic society — everyone has the right to a fair say.
- 2) However, when Snowball disagrees with Napoleon, he's attacked by the dogs and banished — there's no freedom of speech on Animal Farm.
- 3) Napoleon knows that language is power. By ending the Sunday meetings and freedom of speech, Napoleon takes away the other animals' power.
- 4) Even if an animal has a rebellious thought, they can't express it. Napoleon controls their thoughts by restricting what they hear and say.

Allegory

Trying to control peoples' thoughts is a feature of many totalitarian states.



A totalitarian state is where the leaders have absolute power and control over the country.



"there would be no more debates."

Napoleon is not even going to pretend to listen to the other animals' opinions any more. When he ends the Sunday meetings and takes away free speech, he puts a stop to any resistance. Cunning little piggy.

Propaganda

The pigs use propaganda to control the other animals and maintain power. It's a further abuse of language and it's very dangerous in Squealer's hands. Or trotters.

The pigs use propaganda to justify their actions

- 1) Propaganda is when an individual or group **spreads information** to make themselves **look good**. Often the information is **exaggerated** or **made up**. Napoleon uses it to **gain power** and **keep control**.
- 2) Squealer uses propaganda in **speeches** — he speaks “so persuasively” that the animals accept his words. He takes them aside and **convinces them** that the pigs' actions are **good** — this makes them **believe him**.
- 3) The pigs keep the animals loyal by **spreading** stories about how **cruelly** animals are treated on **other farms**. This means they **forget** the farm's own problems and are less likely to **rebel** against their masters.

Squealer uses propaganda to twist the truth

Dictators spread **propaganda** to make themselves look **better**. Squealer uses **propaganda** to:

Glorify Napoleon

- 1) When anything good happens, Napoleon **takes credit** for it. He claims that the **windmill** was his idea, and the hens are **brainwashed** into giving him **credit** for how many eggs they've laid.
- 2) A weekly parade is held so that Napoleon can show off his **power** and **support**.

Blame Snowball

- 1) Squealer tells the animals that Snowball is their **real enemy** — this is a **clever lie** as it **unites them** against Snowball and makes them think that the other pigs are on their side.
- 2) The pigs use Snowball as a **scapegoat** and blame him for everything — “Whenever anything went wrong it became usual to attribute it to Snowball”.
- 3) Even the animals' **memories** of Snowball aren't enough to **stop them believing** Squealer's **lies**.

The other animals spread it too



Soviet propaganda that shows Stalin hugging a child.

- 1) The pigs' propaganda is so **effective**, the animals not only **believe it**, they also **spread it themselves**:

- Boxer unwittingly **spreads propaganda** every time he says “**Napoleon is always right**”.
- The pigeons **spread messages** like “**Death to Humanity**” and “**Death to Frederick**”.
- The sheep drown out **opposition** to Napoleon by chanting “**Four legs good two legs bad**”.

Theme — Education

Boxer's **lack of education** means he doesn't realise he's been **brainwashed**.

- 2) By spreading **propaganda** themselves, the animals **seal their own fate**. They have become part of Napoleon's regime.



Explain why the pigs' propaganda is so successful...

Make sure you comment on the use of language in the pigs' propaganda — they use short, snappy slogans and are very persuasive. The effectiveness of this propaganda shows how powerful language can be.

Practice Questions

I love themes, they're so happy and catchy. It's the best bit about a lot of old TV shows. Everyone remembers the Batman theme, the A-Team theme, the — oh wait. That's theme tunes isn't it... Themes are the fun things that examiners like. Well they're not quite as fun as theme tunes, but these questions are. Honest.

Quick Questions

- 1) Who originally inspired Animalism:
a) Old Major b) Snowball c) Napoleon d) Squealer?
- 2) How many rules of Animalism are there?
- 3) Which flag is the Animalism flag based on?
- 4) Which two pigs are the strongest leaders after the rebellion?
- 5) Why don't the other animals argue with the pigs?
- 6) List two ways that Squealer makes the other animals agree with him.
- 7) Give an example of what happens to one of the animals who speaks out against Napoleon?
- 8) What is propaganda?
- 9) Why do the pigs spread stories about how animals are treated on other farms?

In-depth Questions

- 1) Explain why you think Napoleon decides to stop freedom of speech on *Animal Farm*.
- 2) How does the pigs' education make them more powerful than the other animals?
- 3) Do you think the animals realise that the pigs are mistreating them, or are they unaware of it? Explain your answer, with examples from the text.
- 4) Why is it important that most of the working animals can't read and write?
- 5) Why do you think Snowball and Napoleon have different views on education?
- 6) How does Napoleon control the animals' thoughts in the novel?
- 7) In what ways do the working animals spread Napoleon's propaganda themselves?

Practice Questions

The further into the section you get, the more serious I get. The last page was quite serious, so I'm really going to have to go overboard on this one to make it even more serious. Here are some exam questions that you should answer in preparation for your examination. Try to answer them as if you really were in the exam — that means full answers. No peeking. Eyes down, pens up and silence please... (I think that was serious enough).

Exam-style Questions

- 1) How does Orwell present Napoleon's changing attitudes to Animalism in two different chapters?

- 2) Read the passage that begins "Napoleon stood up" (midway through Chapter Five) and ends with "crept back into the barn". With reference to this passage explore the importance of power in *Animal Farm*.

- 3) Think about two events in the novel that reflect the problems of a social class system. Write about:
 - what happens in the events.
 - how Orwell presents social class in these events through the way he writes.

- 4) How does Orwell present the importance of education in *Animal Farm*?

- 5) How does Orwell vividly portray the dangers of propaganda in *Animal Farm*?

The Structure of 'Animal Farm'

The animals start off being oppressed by a drunk, neglectful master — they end up being oppressed by a drunk, neglectful master. You've got to wonder if it was all worthwhile...

Animal Farm has a chronological structure

- 1) *Animal Farm* has a simple [structure](#), like most [fairy stories](#) (see p. 45). The events are described in [chronological](#) order (the order they happen) so the story is [easy to follow](#).
- 2) The chronological structure lets the reader see the [gradual decline](#) of Animalism. It shows Napoleon taking control by [slowly undermining](#) each commandment in turn.

The events of the novel are cyclical

- 1) The story is [cyclical](#) — the end the novel is very [similar](#) to the beginning. Orwell [hints](#) at this ending throughout the book, so there's a sense of [inevitability](#) about the revolution's [failure](#).
- 2) Orwell uses the farm's [name](#) to show the revolution's [progress](#). Under Jones, the farm is called 'Manor Farm'. When the animals are free from Jones it becomes 'Animal Farm'. When Napoleon renames it 'The Manor Farm', it shows that the revolution has [failed](#).
- 3) The final chapter shows the pigs "[melting](#)" and changing into men. The animals can barely [distinguish](#) between the [two](#).

The message is loud and clear — [watch your leaders](#) because too much power can [corrupt](#) people (and pigs).

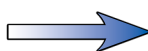


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History starts to repeat itself

There's lots of [repetition](#) — it [links](#) the events together and shows that the new regime is [mirroring](#) the old:

Jones is a [drunk](#) — "drinking more than was good for him". The book [starts](#) with him returning from the pub, drunk.



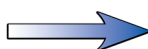
Napoleon becomes a [drunk](#). The book [ends](#) with him drinking, telling his guests to fill their "glasses to the brim".

Old Major teaches the animals 'Beasts of England'. It's a [revolutionary](#) song that's meant to [inspire](#) the animals.



After 'Beasts of England' is banned, it's still "hummed secretly" by the animals as a [private](#) act of [rebellion](#) and hope.

Old Major warns Boxer that when he is old, Mr Jones will [sell](#) him to the knacker's yard where he will be killed.



When Boxer becomes ill, Napoleon [sells](#) him to the knacker's yard and buys whisky for the pigs with the money.



Comment on why the story is cyclical...

Orwell uses a cyclical structure to show how history repeated itself in Russia — the peasants and workers suffered under the Tsar and overthrew him, only to suffer under Stalin too. No fairytale endings here, folks.

Allegory and Fable

Animal Farm isn't just a story about some mean pigs — Orwell is trying to teach the reader about corrupt communism using a variety of literary techniques.

Animal Farm is an allegory

- 1) An **allegory** is a story that uses its **characters** and **events** as symbols for **something else**.
- 2) It's **easier** for readers of all ages to **understand** an allegory, rather than a complicated political novel.
- 3) *Animal Farm* is an allegory for **corrupt communism**, particularly the Soviet Union under Stalin. However the story's location is general — it could've happened **anywhere** so it has universal **appeal**.
- 4) The **repetitive events** of the novel **symbolise** the way that one regime was **replaced** by another in Russia.

Jones and Napoleon symbolise all dictators

A dictator is someone who has complete control of a country.

The **parallels** between Napoleon and Jones show how far Napoleon has **betrayed** Animalism.

- Mr Jones and Napoleon are both **cruel** and **evil**. They **represent** all tyrannical **dictators** in history.
- Mr Jones has a **common name** and **no real character** — he could be **anyone**.
- Napoleon turns into Mr Jones despite old Major's warning that they "must not come to resemble" Man. This suggests that all dictators are essentially the **same** — greedy, selfish and cruel.

The animals symbolise inequality

- 1) The working animals are symbolic of the **peasants** and **workers** of Soviet Russia who thought their lives would **improve** after the revolution.
- 2) In a more general way, they also symbolise any community who have **no power** against their leader.
- 3) They symbolise **inequality** in a totalitarian society.



© Mary Evans Picture Library/Rue des Archives

Russian peasants go to work in the fields during collectivisation (see p.10).

The novel is a beast fable

- 1) *Animal Farm* is a **beast fable** — a short story that uses **animals** to teach a **moral lesson**.
- 2) By using animals instead of real people, the story appeals to a **wider audience**, whilst still passing on a **political** message.
- 3) The animals are **symbols** and most aren't fully **rounded** characters.
- 4) Most beast fables end with a clear moral but the animals learn **nothing** in *Animal Farm*. The novel comes **full-circle**, it's **uncertain** whether the animals realise this or not.

By using **animals** as the main characters, Orwell increases the **effectiveness** of the novel. It makes the politicians that he's **satirising** look **ridiculous**.



Make sure you write about allegory...

As *Animal Farm* is one big, massive allegory for Russia, you will almost certainly have to write about it. Even if they try to disguise it by asking you to write about 'society' or 'history', alarm bells should go off.

Narrative Style

Animal Farm isn't narrated by a specific character — this stops it from being a personal account. It's more like a business account with a platinum card of evil and high interest rates of death.

The narrator doesn't directly influence the reader

The narrator uses [simple](#), [unemotional language](#), and only describes what the working animals see. As a result, the reader's view of the farm is [restricted](#), and you're left to make up your [own mind](#) about what's happening.

The narrator is:

- [Detached](#) — the anonymous narrator's thoughts are [controlled](#) and [detached](#) so that the reader isn't directly influenced. This is [important](#) since one of the book's themes is the [twisting of language](#).
- [Limited](#) — the narrator usually says [no more](#) than what the animals [see](#) and [hear](#). The reader [relies](#) on the narrator for information — just as the animals rely on the pigs.

The narrator just gives the reader the facts

- 1) The story is told from the [working animals'](#) point of view — occasionally Orwell shifts the narration to an animal's perspective e.g. Clover. This suggests that Orwell's [sympathies](#) lie with the [working classes](#).
- 2) Telling the story more from the working animal's perspective shows how [naive](#) they are. The reader [understands](#) things that the animals don't.
- 3) Whereas the reader draws [conclusions](#) from what the narrator does (or doesn't) say, the animals [fail](#) to learn anything from the events of the novel.

Although Orwell criticises the way that the pigs manipulate language, his own language choices can manipulate the reader.

Orwell describes things matter-of-factly

- 1) Orwell describes things [briefly](#). This [simple](#) writing style makes the narrator seem more [trustworthy](#).
- 2) The narrative is [detached](#) rather than emotional, e.g. the slaughtered animals are described simply as a "pile of corpses".
- 3) The lack of [reaction](#) from the narrator makes the terrifying events being described seem even more [shocking](#).
- 4) The simplistic language [contrasts](#) with the horrific events, e.g. the betrayal of Boxer.
- 5) It also gives the novel a [broader appeal](#) — the language is more [entertaining](#) and less [challenging](#) than a historical explanation.



The full title of the book is *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story*. The [simple](#) language [suits](#) the fairy tale genre but it [contrasts](#) greatly with the brutal treatment and suffering of the animals.



“It was mixed every day into the pigs’ mash.”

Even shocking revelations such as the milk and apples incident are repeated in simple language without suggesting any opinions. The reader can come to their own conclusion about the pigs' corruption, though.

Satire and Irony

How would you describe the taste of iron filings? Irony. What instrument do mechanics play? A satire. What do you call jokes about literary techniques? Rubbish.

Irony can make a serious point

- 1) **Irony** is when you say one thing but mean the **opposite**.
- 2) The subtitle of the book, "A Fairy Story", is ironic. In fairy stories the 'good' characters usually live happily ever after, but there's **no happy ending** for the animals — there's a sense of **inevitability** that the revolution will fail.
- 3) Squealer's language is often **ironic**, e.g. "you do not imagine, I hope, that we pigs are doing this in the spirit of selfishness". Orwell uses irony to show how words can **lose their meaning**.



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Orwell uses dramatic irony

Dramatic irony is when the reader realises the significance of what a character says or does before any of the characters in the novel.

Dramatic irony emphasises the animals' **ignorance** of how much Napoleon takes advantage of them.

- The pigs start to **resemble** the humans they rebelled against. The reader sees this from the **beginning** when the pigs steal the milk and apples.
- The pigs pretend that they haven't broken any of the (changed) commandments — but the reader **remembers** exactly what the original commandments were.

Satire makes things seem ridiculous

- 1) **Satire** makes fun of **people** or **ideas**. It does this by exaggerating them or making them seem ridiculous. Satire is often **funny**, but makes a **serious point**.
- 2) It often has a **political motivation**. *Animal Farm* is a **satirical attack** on the Soviet Union. Comparing political figures to pigs is satirical because it makes them seem **absurd**.
- 3) In *Animal Farm* it's not just the leaders being **satirised** — the workers also seem **foolish**. For example the Russian people who failed to speak out against the corruption are satirised as **sheep**.
- 4) Satire makes some events in *Animal Farm* **darkly humorous** because they seem so ridiculous, e.g. when the pigs dress in human clothes. It allows Orwell to **disguise** his criticisms rather than condemning communism **directly** — it sounds less **preachy** and more **appealing**.

Context

The book's **satirical attack** on the Soviet Union meant Orwell struggled to find a publisher who would **risk** publishing something so **controversial**.



Mention why Orwell uses certain techniques...

Animal Farm isn't a laugh-a-minute, rib-tickling tale because that would've weakened Orwell's themes and messages. Instead, he uses dark humour, which helps to make the satire even stronger. Funny, but not.

How the Characters Speak

The language the animals use is symbolic of their place in the social hierarchy. The better educated the animal, the more sophisticated their language use. My hamster went to Oxford and talks like the Queen.

Simple characters use repetitive language



- 1) The sheep are **manipulated** by the pigs and have no ideas of their own. They simply repeat “Four legs good, two legs bad” to **drown out debate**.
- 2) Boxer repeats “I will work harder”, showing he is **unable** to think for himself.
- 3) The **repetitive** language shows how easily the **uneducated** characters are **brainwashed** by **slogans** and **propaganda**.

Repetitive language is often used in **fairy stories**. Orwell uses it here to show how far the animals have been **manipulated**.

Powerful characters use persuasive language

- 1) Old Major uses **political** and **rhetorical** language. He uses **emotional** appeals, e.g. “I feel it my duty”, **lists of three** and **rhetorical questions**. The animals **listen** to him “attentively”.
- 2) Snowball uses **emotional language** — he makes a “passionate appeal” about the windmill. He’s a **skilled speaker**, which makes him a **threat** to Napoleon.
- 3) Squealer is the master of **persuasive language**. He’s able to make the other animals believe anything by **distorting facts**, **rewriting history** and **twisting words** (see p. 28).

As Napoleon gains more authority, so does his language

- 1) At first Napoleon is “not much of a talker”. As the novel progresses, he makes increasingly **political** speeches using **persuasive techniques** that the animals can’t argue with.
- 2) His language also becomes more **creative** as he **blames** Snowball, e.g. saying that the destruction of the windmill was revenge for his “expulsion” by Napoleon.
- 3) Napoleon and Squealer **patronise** the others. They call the other animals “comrades”, which makes the animals feel equal but the reader recognises the **irony** — they are **never** treated as equals.
- 4) Napoleon’s made up titles **reinforce** his **leadership**, e.g. “father of all animals”. These are **ironic** because they’re based on **lies**.

Theme — Language

Orwell uses the characters to show how **powerful** and **influential** language can be.



“Snowball’s eloquence had carried them away.”

Snowball’s intelligence, along with his passion for Animalism, makes him an effective and persuasive speaker. But this isn’t enough to defeat Napoleon — especially with Squealer the propaganda pig in tow.

The Setting of 'Animal Farm'

Life on the farm isn't all straw chewin', barn dances and hoedowns. It's actually an allegory for Soviet Russia — only with more whisky-drinking pigs.

The setting symbolises the Soviet Union...

Theme — Social Class

The ruling class (the pigs) use **intelligence** to create a **social divide** between themselves and the working classes (the other animals).

- 1) The events of the book reflect what happened in **Russia** in the early twentieth century (see Section One).
- 2) The farmhouse is where the **ruling class** live — it's full of "**unbelievable luxury**" to represent the palaces of wealthy Russians. When the pigs move into the farmhouse, it shows that old Major's **warning** about becoming human has been **ignored**.
- 3) The working animals live in much **worse conditions** — there's **less food** and **little comfort**. This represents the quality of life for many Russians under Stalin.

Context

Orwell never condemns the pigs' actions **outright**, he's careful to **protect** himself as an author — he didn't want to risk a **Russian backlash**.

...but it could apply to any country

- 1) The setting of the farm is **symbolic** and the location is **general** — it could be **anywhere**. Orwell suggests that the novel's events could, and did, happen **all over the world**.
- 2) The realistic descriptions of everyday farm life **contrast** with Napoleon's terrifying behaviour. It shows that dictators can affect **ordinary workers**.
- 3) The chapters near the beginning are set in the summer — this represents the initial **optimism** of the rebellion. Towards the end, several chapters are set in the "bitter winter". This reflects the animals' **suffering** and the increasingly **bad** outlook for the rebellion.

The windmill is part of the animals' struggle

- 1) At first, the windmill is part of a **wonderful vision** of the **future**. It will "light the stalls and warm them in winter".
- 2) Snowball and Napoleon **disagree** about building the windmill. Napoleon's lies about the windmill **damage** what it stood for.
- 3) The windmill is "slow" and "laborious" to build. It is also **pointless** — it's repeatedly **destroyed** and **rebuilt**. It symbolises the increasing **failure** of old Major's dream, and the **impossibility** of Animalism.
- 4) When the windmill is rebuilt after the Battle of the Windmill, it's used to mill corn because it's more **profitable** than generating electricity — the pigs care more about **capitalism** than **equality**.



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Explain why Orwell chose an everyday location...

Write about how Orwell was deliberately general about the setting so that his message could be applied to any totalitarian state. Although it was pretty obvious that he'd taken his inspiration from events in Russia.

Symbolism in ‘Animal Farm’

Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* in a plain style, but that doesn't mean he didn't use clever literary techniques like symbolism. Here are a few to start you off, but there are plenty of other examples that you can discuss in the exam.

Symbols of slavery are used by pigs and humans

- 1) The song ‘Beasts of England’ lists the symbols of **slavery** — rings, harnesses, bits, spurs and whips.
- 2) After the revolution, these symbols of oppression are “flung down the well”. This symbolises the animals **breaking free** from slavery. It makes them feel free even though they are still **following orders**.
- 3) By the end of the novel Napoleon is carrying a **whip**. This symbolises that things have **returned** to how they used to be.

Symbolism is when an object is used to represent a theme or idea without mentioning it directly.

The guns symbolise violence

- 1) At the start of the book, humans use **guns** to **control** the animals. After the revolution the animals **destroy** them because the guns were part of the animals' **oppression**.
- 2) After the Battle of the Cowshed, the gun Mr Jones leaves becomes **symbolic** — it's set up by the flagpole to represent the animal's **victory** over the old regime. It's fired twice a year to mark the anniversary of the battle and the rebellion.
- 3) When Napoleon takes up **weapons** again it's a sign that he has become more **humanised**. He also wants to use guns to **control** the animals.
- 4) The animals initially use **violence** to achieve **change**, but even after they **succeed** in overthrowing Jones it remains in their **society**. Orwell uses Napoleon's violent behaviour to show that this is **dangerous**.

The flag symbolises the animals' freedom



The crossed horn and hoof on the Animalism flag.

- 1) The flag is a symbol of the animals' **freedom**.
- 2) The green symbolises “the green fields”, and the **hoof** and **horn** represent the **unity** of the animals.
- 3) In the final chapter the hoof and horn are **removed** from the flag — “It would be a plain green flag from now onwards”. This symbolises that the working animals no longer have any **power**.

Allegory

The **hammer** and **sickle** on the flag of the Soviet Union (see p. 37 for this flag) represents the **workers** and **peasants**. It became a **meaningless** symbol of workers' power.



“Cruel whips no more shall crack.”

Major sings these words in the “Beasts of England” song, but Napoleon contradicts them when he carries a whip in the last chapter — the whip symbolises how far the animals have strayed from Major's vision.

Symbolism in ‘Animal Farm’

The songs and chants in *Animal Farm* are also symbolic. They’re used at the start of the book to unite the animals and spread the message of Animalism. By the end of the book, they’re used to control and brainwash.

‘Beasts of England’ is the anthem for the revolution

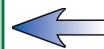


- 1) Old Major’s ideals are **summarised** and **passed on** through the “stirring” song ‘Beasts of England’.
- 2) At the start, it represents the revolution — it’s **patriotic** and **inspiring**. It reflects the hope that the animals will be **free**.
- 3) As Napoleon becomes more tyrannical, singing the song **unites** the animals and gives them **hope**.
- 4) Towards the end, Napoleon **bans** ‘Beasts of England’, claiming it no longer had “any purpose” since the rebellion had finished — this shows that he has completely **discarded** the ideals of Animalism.

Napoleon uses songs as propaganda

Theme — Education

The **less-educated** characters such as Boxer and the sheep are the ones who are most **influenced** by the slogans and the propaganda.



- 1) Napoleon has **poems** written to remind the animals that he’s in **charge** and to make himself sound good. In one poem he’s described as “giver of / All that thy creatures love”.
- 2) Using songs and chants is an effective way of **reinforcing** his power, especially to the **less-educated** animals who may not **understand** speeches or be able to read.
- 3) Spreading propaganda through song is **subtle** — the songs are taken up by the animals, who sing without **thinking** about the meaning.

The rituals become meaningless

At the start, the animals introduce rituals to celebrate their **achievements**. By the end, these are **worthless**.

At the start of the book, **medals** are given to animals who have been hurt or killed in battle. They show recognition for **bravery**.



Later, Napoleon simply awards himself the ‘Order of the Green Banner’ for nothing — it has become **worthless**.

Rituals such as firing the gun on the anniversary of the rebellion are established to create a sense of **honour** and **pride**.



The animals take part in weekly “Spontaneous Demonstrations” where poems are read in honour of Napoleon. Rituals have become a way for Napoleon to **celebrate himself**.

Titles and rituals are used to **unite** the animals and **reward** them for their **commitment** to Animalism.



Titles and rituals become **worthless**, a way for Napoleon to **elevate** himself above the other animals and maintain **control**.



Try to write about less obvious symbols...

If you get a question on symbolism, it’s a good idea to include some less obvious examples — like the songs and rituals. This will make your answer really stand out and impress the examiner.

Practice Questions

These questions shouldn't prove too tricky, unless you want them to be tricky. In which case may I suggest translating them into Swahili and answering them through the medium of interpretative dance.

Quick Questions

- 1) What does 'chronological structure' mean?
- 2) List three things at the end of the book that echo how they were at the beginning.
- 3) Summarise the message of the book in less than five words.
- 4) A story that is written to represent something else is called: a) an allegory, or b) an allegedly?
- 5) Give two examples of how *Animal Farm* is similar to a fairy story.
- 6) Whose perspective is the story told from?
- 7) What is irony?
- 8) What do the whips symbolise?

In-depth Questions

- 1) How does Napoleon's language change over the course of *Animal Farm*?
- 2) How do you think Orwell uses language to make you sympathise with the working animals? Include at least three examples in your answer.
- 3) Give three examples of repetitive language in the novel.
- 4) Give two examples of irony in *Animal Farm* and explain how they are effective.
- 5) What reasons might Orwell have for setting the novel in a commonplace farm?

Practice Questions

You should know the drill by now. Pick a question, set a timer then plan, scribble, check. Make sure you write full answers and include quotes and analysis to prepare you properly for the exam. On your marks, get set, GO...

Exam-style Questions

- 1) How does Orwell present the changed attitudes and behaviour of the pigs in Chapter 10 in comparison to Chapter 2?
- 2) How does Orwell use allegory to explore the meaning of real historical events in *Animal Farm*?
- 3) What techniques does Orwell use to make his satire effective?
- 4) Read the last two paragraphs of Chapter 3 from “‘Comrades!’ he cried. ‘You do not imagine...’”. How does Orwell present the relationship between Squealer and the other animals in this extract?
- 5) How does Orwell use *Animal Farm*’s narrative style to explore the importance of language?
- 6) How important do you think the windmill is in highlighting the problems of Animalism?
- 7) How does Orwell use symbolism in *Animal Farm* to explore ideas about power?

Exam Preparation

Getting to know the text will put you at a massive advantage in the exam. It's not enough just to read it though — you've got to get to grips with the nitty-gritty bits. It's all about gathering evidence...

The exam questions will test four main skills

You will need to show the examiner that you can:

- 1) Write about the text in a **thoughtful way** — **picking out** appropriate **examples** and **quotations** to back up your opinions.
- 2) **Identify** and **explain** features of the text's **form, structure** and **language**. Show how the author uses these to create **meanings** and **effects**.
- 3) For some exam boards you might have to think about the play's **cultural, social and historical background**. Ask your teacher if you're not sure.
- 4) Write in a **clear, well-structured** way. **5%** of the marks in your English Literature exams are for **spelling, punctuation** and **grammar**. Make sure that your writing is as **accurate** as possible.

Preparation is important

- 1) It's **important** to cover **all** the **different sections** of this book in your **revision**. You need to make sure you **understand** the text's **context, plot, characters, themes** and **writer's techniques**.
- 2) In the **exam**, you'll need to **bring together** your **ideas** about these topics to answer the question **quickly**.
- 3) Think about the different **characters** and **themes** in the text, and write down some **key points** and **ideas** about each one. Then, find some **evidence** to support each point — this could be something from **any** of the **sections** in this book. You could set out your evidence in a **table** like this:

Theme: Animalism	
Religious language	Seven commandments of Animalism to follow religiously. Comparison with Ten Commandments.
Allegory	Animalism represents communism. Similar beliefs and flags. Orwell criticising communism.
Corruption	Pigs corrupt Animalism for own gain. Inequality — “some animals are more equal than others.”
Conflict	Napoleon gets rid of opposition and kills those he (falsely) accuses of going against Animalism.
Symbolism	Animalism flag represents freedom. When hoof and horn are removed, this symbolises loss of freedom.

Preparing to succeed — a cunning plot indeed...

Knowing the plot inside out will be unbelievably helpful in the exam. It'll help you to stay calm and make sure you write a brilliant answer that positively glitters with little gems of evidence. The exam's just a chance for you to show off...

The Exam Question

This page deals with how to approach an exam question. The stuff below will help you get started on a scorching exam answer, more scorching than, say, a phoenix cooking fiery fajitas in a flaming furnace.

Read the question carefully and underline key words

- 1) The style of question you'll get depends on which exam board you're taking.
- 2) Read all the instructions carefully. Make sure you know how many questions you need to answer and how much time you should spend answering each one.
- 3) If the question has more than one part, look at the total number of marks for each bit. This should help you to plan your time in the exam.
- 4) Read the question at least twice so you completely understand it. Underline the key words. If you're given an extract, underline important words or phrases in that too.



Henry didn't read the weather report carefully enough when planning his weekend activities.

Here's an exam-style question

Think about the way he speaks, his actions and how he's described.

Make sure you concentrate on Napoleon — don't write too much about any of the other characters.

This is a big hint — you've got to explain how Napoleon's character develops.

You've got to include points from the very beginning right through to the end.

Q1 How does the character of Napoleon change over the course of Animal Farm?

Don't forget to write about the social background of the novel — an important part of *Animal Farm* is the fact that it's an allegory based on real events.

Some exam boards will ask you to write about an extract — check with your teacher if you're not sure.

Get to know exam language

Some words come up time and again in exam questions. Have a look at some sample questions, pick out words that are often used in questions and make sure that you understand what they mean. You could write a few down whilst you're revising. For example:

Question Word	You need to...
Explore / Explain	Show <u>how</u> the writer deals with a <u>theme</u> , <u>character</u> or <u>idea</u> . Make several <u>different</u> points to answer the question.
How does	Think about the <u>techniques</u> or <u>literary features</u> that the author uses to get their point across.
Give examples	Use <u>direct quotes</u> and describe <u>events</u> from the text in your own words.
Refer to	Read the question so that you know if you need to write about just an <u>extract</u> , or an extract and the <u>rest of the text</u> .

The advice squad — the best cops in the NYPD...

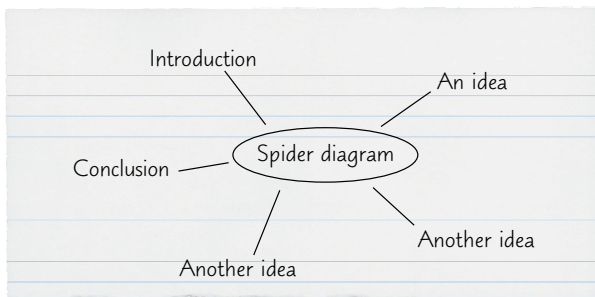
Whatever question you're asked in the exam, your answer should touch on the main characters, themes, structure and language of the text. All the stuff we've covered in the rest of the book in fact. It's so neat, it's almost like we planned it.

Planning Your Answer

I'll say this once — and then I'll probably repeat it several times — it is absolutely, completely, totally and utterly essential that you make a plan before you start writing. Only a fool jumps right in without a plan...

Plan your answer before you start

- 1) If you plan, you're less likely to forget something **important**.
- 2) A good plan will help you **organise** your ideas — and write a good, **well-structured** essay.
- 3) Write your plan at the **top of your answer booklet** and draw a **neat line** through it when you've finished.
- 4) **Don't** spend **too long** on your plan. It's only **rough work**, so you don't need to write in full sentences. Here are a few **examples** of different ways you can plan your answer:



Bullet points...	
•	Introduction...
•	An idea...
•	The next idea...
•	Another idea...
•	Yet another idea...
•	Conclusion...

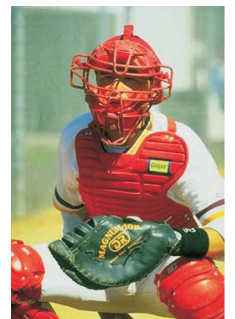
Include examples and quotes in your plan

- 1) **Writing** your essay will be much **easier** if you include **important quotes** and **examples** in your plan.
- 2) You could include them in a **table** like this one:
- 3) **Don't** spend **too long** writing out quotes though. It's just to make sure you **don't forget** anything when you write your answer.

A point...	Quote to back this up...
Another point...	Quote...
A different point...	Example...
A brand new point...	Quote...

Structure your answer

- | | |
|--|---|
| Introduction | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Your introduction should give a brief answer to the question you're writing about. Make it clear how you're going to tackle the topic. 2) The middle section of your essay should explain your answer in detail and give evidence to back it up. Write a paragraph for each point you make. Make sure you comment on your evidence and explain how it helps to prove your point. 3) Remember to write a conclusion — a paragraph at the end which sums up your main points. There's more about introductions and conclusions on the next page. |
| ↓ | |
| Middle Section | |
| — paragraphs
expanding
your
argument. | |
| ↓ | |
| Conclusion | |



Dirk finally felt ready to tackle the topic.

To plan or not to plan, that is the question...

The answer is yes, yes, a thousand times yes. Often students dive right in, worried that planning will take up valuable time. But 5 minutes spent organising a well-structured answer is loads better than pages of waffle. Mmm waffles.

Writing Introductions and Conclusions

Now you've made that plan that I was banging on about on the last page, you'll know what your main points are. This is going to make writing your introduction and conclusion as easy as pie.

Get to the point straight away in your introduction

- 1) First, you need to **work out** what the question is **asking you** to do:

How is the character of Squealer important to the novel?

The question is **asking you** to think about the **role** of **Squealer** in the text. Plan your essay by thinking about **how** Squealer **links** to the novel's **key themes**.

- 2) When you've **planned** your essay, you should **begin** by giving a **clear answer** to the **question** in a sentence or two. Use the **rest** of the **introduction** to **develop** this idea. Try to include the **main paragraph ideas** that you have listed in your plan, but **save** the **evidence** for later.
- 3) You could also use the **introduction** to give your **opinion**. Whatever you do, make sure your introduction makes it **clear** how your answer **fits the question**.

Your conclusion must answer the question

- 1) The **most important** thing you have to do at the **end** of your writing is to **summarise** your **answer** to the question.
- 2) It's your **last chance** to persuade the examiner, so make your **main point** again.
- 3) Use your **last sentence** to really **impress** the **examiner** — it will make your essay **stand out**. You could **develop** your own **opinion** of the text or **highlight** which of your **points** you thought was the most **interesting**.



The examiner was struggling to see the answer clearly.

Use the question words in your introduction and conclusion

- 1) Try to use **words** or **phrases** from the **question** in your introduction and conclusion.

How does Orwell use setting in the novel?

- 2) This will show the examiner that you're **answering the question**.

Orwell uses setting in 'Animal Farm' to create symbolic meaning. The novel is an allegory for corrupt communism and the farm represents the Soviet Union.

The first line of the introduction gives a clear answer, which will lead on to the rest of the essay.

- 3) This will also help you keep the question **fresh in your mind** so your answer doesn't **wander off-topic**.

I've come to the conclusion that I really like pie...

To conclude, the introduction eases the examiner in gently, whilst the conclusion is your last chance to impress. But remember — the examiner doesn't want to see any new points lurking in those closing sentences.

Writing Main Paragraphs

So we've covered the beginning and the end, now it's time for the meaty bit. The roast beef in between the prawn cocktail and the treacle tart. This page is about how to structure your paragraphs. It's quite simple...

P.E.E.D. is how to put your argument together

Remember to start a new paragraph every time you make a new point.

- 1) **P.E.E.D.** stands for: **P**oint, **E**xample, **E**xplain, **D**evelop.
- 2) Begin each paragraph by making a **point**. Then give an **example** from the text (either a quote or a description). Next, **explain** how your example backs up your point.
- 3) Finally, try to **develop** your point by writing about its effect on the reader, how it links to another part of the text or what the writer's intention is in including it.

Use short quotes to support your ideas

- 1) Don't just use words from the novel to show what **happens** in the **plot**...

Boxer is a hard worker. He asks one of the cockerels "to call him in the mornings half an hour earlier than anyone else".

This just gives an example from the text without offering any explanation or analysis.

- 2) Instead, it's much better to use **short** quotes as **evidence** to support a **point** you're making.
- 3) It makes the essay structure **clearer** and **smoother** if most quotes are **embedded** in your sentences.

It's better to use short, embedded quotes as evidence. Then you can go on to explain them.

Boxer starts work "half an hour earlier" than the other animals, which shows his commitment to Animalism. This hard work is instrumental to the successes of the farm, which makes it even more shocking when the pigs betray him.

Get to know some literary language

- 1) Using **literary terms** in your answer will make your essay stand out — as long as you use them correctly.
- 2) When you're **revising**, think about literary terms that are **relevant** to the text and how you might **include** them in an essay. Take a look at the table below for some examples.

Literary Term	Definition	Example
Allegory	When characters and events represent real people and events.	Napoleon represents Stalin.
Irony	Saying the opposite of what you mean for dramatic or comic effect.	"Day and night we are watching over your welfare."
Satire	Makes fun of people or ideas by making them seem ridiculous.	"Fountain of happiness! / Lord of the swill-bucket!"

This page is so exciting — I nearly...

Now now, let's all be grown-ups and avoid the obvious joke. It's a good way of remembering how to structure your paragraphs though. Point, Example, Explain, Develop. Simple. Maybe we could make a rap or something... anyone?

In the Exam

Keeping cool in the exam can be tricky. But if you take in all the stuff on this page, you'll soon have it down to a fine art. Then you can stroll out of that exam hall with the swagger of an essay-writing master.

Don't panic if you make a mistake

- 1) Okay, so say you've timed the exam beautifully. Instead of putting your feet up on the desk for the last 5 minutes, it's a good idea to **read through** your **answers** and **correct any mistakes**...
- 2) If you want to get rid of a mistake, **cross it out**. **Don't scribble** it out as this can look messy. Make any corrections **neatly** and **clearly** instead of writing on top of the words you've already written.

The author uses various literary ~~techniques~~ ^{techniques} to explore this theme.

This is the clearest way to correct a mistake. Don't be tempted to try writing on top of the original word.

- 3) If you've **left out** a **word** or a **phrase** and you've got space to add it in **above** the line it's missing from, write the missing bit above the line with a '^' to show exactly where it should go.

Re-read the sentence carefully to work out where the '^' symbol needs to go.

The writer uses ^{and hyperbole} imagery to draw attention to this point.

- 4) If you've left out whole **sentences** or **paragraphs**, write them in a **separate section** at the **end** of the essay. Put a **star** (*) next to both the **extra writing** and the **place** you want it to go.

Always keep an eye on the time

- 1) It's surprisingly **easy** to **run out of time** in exams. You've got to leave **enough time** to answer **all** the questions you're asked to do. You've also got to leave enough time to **finish** each essay properly — with a **clear ending**.
- 2) Here are some **tips** on how to **avoid** running out of time:

- Work out **how much time** you have for each part of your answer **before** you **start**.
- Take off a few minutes at the beginning to **plan**, and a **few minutes** at the end for your **conclusion**.
- Make sure you have a **watch** to **time yourself** — and keep checking it.
- Be **strict** with yourself — if you spend **too long** on one part of your answer, you may run out of time.
- If you're **running out of time**, keep **calm**, **finish** the **point** you're on and move on to your **conclusion**.



Stephanie never had a problem with keeping cool.

Treat an exam like a spa day — just relax...

Some people actually do lose the plot when they get into the exam. The trick is to keep calm and well... carry on. If you make sure you get your exam technique sorted, you'll be as relaxed as a sloth in a room full of easy chairs.

Sample Exam Question

And now the bit you've all been waiting for — a sample exam question and a lovely little plan. Go make yourself a cup of tea, settle down and enjoy.

Here's a sample exam question

Read this feisty exam question. That's the best way to start...

Read the question carefully. Underline the [important bits](#).

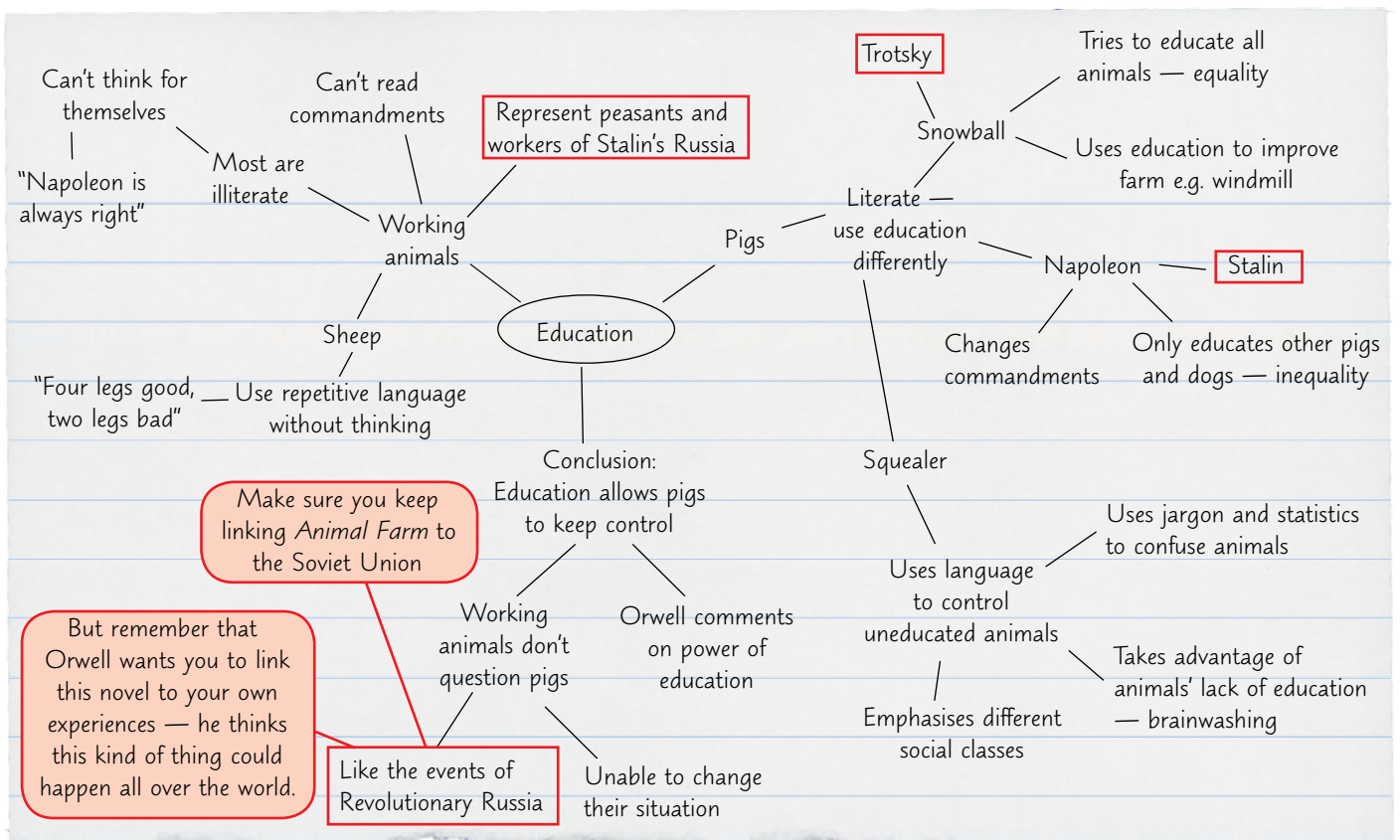
How is education represented through [different characters](#)?

Q1 How does Orwell explore the theme of education in *Animal Farm*?

Don't forget to keep referring back to the allegory to get the [top marks](#).

[Stick to the question](#) in your answer. General comments won't impress the examiner.

Here's how you could plan your answer...



What do examiners eat? Why, egg-sam-wiches of course...

The most important thing to remember is DON'T PANIC. Take a deep breath, read the questions, pick a good 'un, write a plan... take another deep breath... and you're ready to start writing. Leave 5 minutes at the end to check too.

Worked Answer

These pages will show you how to take an okay answer and turn it into a really good one.

Use your introduction to get off to a good start

These pages are all about how to word your sentences to impress the examiner, so we haven't included everything from the plan on page 59.

You might start with something like...

One of the key themes of *Animal Farm* is education. The pigs end up taking control of the farm because they are educated while the uneducated animals suffer.

- 1) This intro is **okay**. It mentions the **division** in power between the educated and uneducated animals.
- 2) It's also a good idea to use the **key words** in the question to give your essay **focus** and show the examiner you're on **track** and that you're thinking about the question from the start.
- 3) But there's still room for **improvement**...

This intro talks about the author's message and the historical context.

Orwell uses the theme of education to explore how it is used to divide and control the working animals. He does this by creating an allegory of the events of the Soviet Union to show how Stalin oppressed the peasants and workers by controlling the information they received. Orwell uses key characters to show how education and language can be used to overpower an uneducated working class.

This tells the examiner what the essay's about and shows that you've thought about your essay structure.

Make your first paragraph about the most important point

Snowball is an intelligent pig and wants to improve life on the farm. He tries to teach the other animals to read and write and he makes plans to build a windmill to make the animals' lives easier. Snowball is based on Leon Trotsky who was a political figure in Soviet Russia.

- 1) This paragraph gives some **examples** of how Snowball uses his education and refers to the **Soviet Union**.
- 2) But... it doesn't **develop** the examples **fully** and it doesn't mention Orwell's overall message.
- 3) To improve the paragraph it should have a clearer **structure**, more **detail** and an analysis of what Orwell was saying about the importance of **education**.

This is a good start — it tells the examiner which characters you're going to talk about.

Snowball, Napoleon and Squealer are generally considered to be "cleverest of the animals". Snowball is academic and uses his intelligence to try to improve life on the farm. For example he tries to teach the working class animals to read and write. Because the educated animals were the most powerful on *Animal Farm*, the fact that Snowball is willing to share power shows how devoted he is to Animalism and animal equality. Snowball's efforts to educate the working animals are unsuccessful as they don't understand his complicated explanations. Snowball is presented as a sympathetic character which suggests that Orwell believed in the importance of literacy in a fair society.

This bit makes a good point about education and power.

Make sure you keep referring to Orwell — he was trying to make some important points about the power of education and language.

Worked Answer

You need to make a variety of points

After you've talked about the pigs you might start your next point like this:

The working animals represent the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia. They are uneducated and are easily manipulated by the clever pigs.

- 1) It introduces the working animals and shows the **similarities** between them and the Russian workers.
- 2) You can make this paragraph better by giving more **detailed examples** and backing up points with **quotes**.

Linking words show you're changing topics and makes the structure clearer.

However, the other animals are less educated and represent the working classes of the Soviet Union. They have no power and believe what they are told without questioning it, for example Boxer repeats "Napoleon is always right". His repetitive language shows that he can't think for himself and has been manipulated by the pigs so that he won't oppose them.

Make sure you use a range of quotes, but don't quote huge chunks. Keep them snappy and relevant.

- 3) You could develop it by describing how Orwell uses some of the **minor characters** to explore education:

Not all the working animals on the farm are uneducated. Benjamin can read and write but he refuses to "meddle in such matters" because he doesn't want to get involved or cause trouble. He seems to have accepted that Animalism will fail. When Benjamin does finally use his education to read the side of the knacker's van, it's too late because he can't do anything to help Boxer.

Including a bit about minor characters makes you stand out because it shows how well you know the novel.

Finish your essay in style

You could say:

In conclusion, *Animal Farm* deals with the theme of education by showing that the educated pigs have control over the uneducated animals at the end of the novel. This shows the reader how important education is.

- 1) This conclusion is okay, but it doesn't summarise **how** Orwell **explores** the theme or social setting.
- 2) So to make it really **impressive** you could say something like...

Animal Farm is an allegory of the events of Soviet Russia. It shows the reader how important education is in a democratic society. Napoleon only allows the pigs and the dogs to learn to read and write leaving the other animals uneducated and powerless. Only Snowball tries to educate the other animals but this soon stops when he is chased off the farm. Orwell shows how an educated elite can control others, but also how the uneducated workers allow themselves to be controlled because of their inability to think for themselves.

This summarises how Orwell uses the characters to explore the theme.

Make your last sentence really stand out — it's your last opportunity to impress the examiner.

Why do alligators write good essays? Their quotes are snappy...

It seems like there's a lot to remember on these two pages, but there's not really. To summarise — write a good intro and conclusion, make a good range of points (one per paragraph) and put your most important point in paragraph one. Easy.

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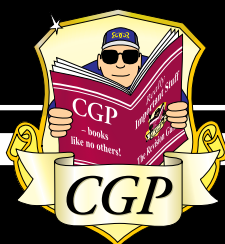
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