

Animal Farm – Knowledge Organiser

Plot summary:

1 Old Major's speech- Mr Jones, the owner of Manor Farm falls asleep in a drunken stupor. All the animals of Manor Farm meet in the big barn where Old Major delivers a speech arguing for a rebellion against the men. The Animals sing 'Beasts of England', a song from Old Major's dream.

2 The rebellion- Old Major dies and the pigs adapt his speech, forming the principles of Animalism. The pigs plan the rebellion even though some animals (like Mollie) are concerned. The rebellion happens faster than expected after Mr. Jones forgets to feed the animals. The animals of Mr. Jones house and leave it as a museum. Napoleon steals milk.

3 The pigs emerge as leaders- The animals complete the harvest faster than ever. Snowball sets up the Sunday assemblies where Napoleon and Snowball often argue. Snowball's committees fail, yet he is able to bring literacy to the animals with minor success. Napoleon teaches the sheep 'four legs good two legs bad' and takes the dogs for 'education'. Cow's milk and windfall apples are given to pigs, Squealer convinces the animals that this is a good idea.

4 Battle of the Cowshed- News of the rebellion spreads, Frederick, Jones and Pilkington complain about Animal Farm's success. In October, a group of men try to seize the farm. Led by Snowball's brilliance, the animals repel the attack, which is names 'The Battle of the Cowshed'.

5 Snowball's expulsion- Mollie deserts the farm. The pigs grow in influence, suggesting ideas on which the animals must vote. Snowball and Napoleon continue to disagree, especially over the construction of a windmill. When the Windmill is put to vote, Snowball is expelled from animal farm. Later, Napoleon announces that the Windmill will be built.

6 Building the windmill- The animals work harder than ever, Boxer proves himself to be an inspiration. Napoleon begins trading with humans and hires Mr Whymper. Jones gives up trying to reclaim the farm. The animals begin sleeping with beds, and Muriel and Clover notice a change in the commandments 'with sheets'. Squealer persuades the animals that this is acceptable. In November, a storm topples the half complete windmill. Napoleon blames this on Snowball.

7 Rebuilding the windmill and the executions- The animals struggle against starvation. After learning that they must sacrifice their eggs, the hens stage a demonstration. Napoleon denies their rations and 9 hens starve as a result. The animals are led to believe Snowball has been returning to the farm – his role at the battle of the Cowshed is adapted by Squealer. In spring, Napoleon calls a meeting and several 'traitors', who confess to being in league with Snowball, are executed, including protesting hens and pigs. Beasts of England is outlawed.

8 Trading with humans and the destruction of the windmill- Clover and Benjamin notice a change in the commandments: 'killing without cause'. The next year brings more work and less food, despite Squealer's figures and statistics to the contrary. More executions occur. Napoleon's is seen in public less often. Napoleon trades Frederick and Pilkington off against each other, and sells a pile of timber to Frederick, who tricks Napoleon with forged banknotes. Napoleon pronounces the death sentence on him. Frederick, with 14 other men, attack the farm and blow up the windmill, which rallies the animals to fight back. Several animals die, Boxer is injured but Squealer convinces the animals of their victory. The pigs find a crate of whiskey, Napoleon fears he is dying and proclaims that drinking alcohol is punishable by death. He then recovers and orders the retirement paddock to be planted with barley.

9 Boxer's fate- Once again, the animals are faced with rebuilding the windmill. 31 pigs are born, and Napoleon orders for a schoolhouse to be built for their education. Rations are yet again reduced. Animal Farm is proclaimed a republic with Napoleon as president. Boxer is injured working and Napoleon sends for a vet. A van arrives, Boxer is taken away but Benjamin reads the its side and learns that Boxer is being slaughtered. Squealer manages to convince the animals otherwise. Boxer is never seen again.

10 Pigs and humans come together- ears pass. Muriel, Jessie, Pincher are dead. Clover is 14. No animal has ever retired. The farm has grown in size and population. Two windmills are complete. Clover notices the pigs walk on two legs. The commandments are delated and replaced with "All animals are equal but some are more equal than others." The pigs start carrying whips and wearing Mr Jones' clothes. In the final scene, human farmers visit the farm and meet the other pigs. Toasts are exchanged and Napoleon changes the farm's name back to Manor farm. The pigs and humans play cards. A quarrel brakes out. On looking animals cannot discriminate between pigs and humans.

Key characters		Key themes	Context and Literary Tradition	Stylistic features & relevant terms
Mr Jones	<i>Drunken owner of Animal Farm. Embodies the tyranny of man.</i>	Leadership and Corruption Control over the intellectually inferior Lies and deceit Foolishness and naivety Violence Pride and Ceremony Dreams, hopes and future plans	An allegorical tale with direct links to the history of the Soviet Union in the early 20 th century.	Dystopia Propaganda Scapegoat Tyrant Allegory Moral Symbolism Omniscient narrator Fairy Tale Tragedy
Old Major	<i>Wise, old pig. Inspires the rebellion with his rhetoric.</i>		The book charts the corruptions of Communist ideals of equality, where workers are promised equality and freedom and are eventually repressed and treated as bad, if not worse, as under the previous rule of the capitalist 'Tsar' .	
Boxer	Devoted citizen and immensely strong. Innocent and naïve.		Old Major represents Karl Marx , putting forward the communist ideals which will free them from the tyranny of capitalism (represented by Jones).	
Napoleon	<i>Expels Snowball. Executes animals. Establishes himself as dictator. Controls with fear. Becomes Jones.</i>		Snowball represents Trotsky , a passionate component of Animalism (Communism) who is expelled by Napoleon (Stalin) .	
Snowball	<i>Devoted to animalism and the education of lesser animals. Hero at the battle of the cowshed.</i>		Napoleon follows a similar rise to power as Stalin , using fear and propaganda to control the masses, including show trials and executions.	
Squealer	<i>Mouthpiece of Napoleon. Uses propaganda to control the animals.</i>		By the end of the novel, the ideals of communism have been so far abused and forgotten, that Napoleon meets and forms agreements with former oppressors.	
Clover	<i>Maternal, caring and loyal. Senses hypocrisy but cannot articulate it.</i>		Orwell was a British journalist and author, who wrote two of the most famous political novels of the 20th century 'Animal Farm' and 'Nineteen Eighty-Four'. When Orwell saw a kid whipping a horse, he had an idea: "It struck me that if only such animals became aware of their strength we should have no power over them, and that men exploit animals in much the same way as the rich exploit the working class". This inspired him to write the novel.	
Dogs and Sheep	<i>Instruments of fear and control, educated by Napoleon.</i>			

Key quotations	Useful vocabulary	SPaG Focus			
<p>“Four legs good, two legs bad.”</p> <p>“All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others”</p> <p>“If you have your lower animals to contend with,” he said, “we have our lower classes!”</p> <p>“The pigs did not actually work, but directed and supervised the others. With their superior knowledge it was natural that they should assume the leadership.”</p> <p>“At this there was a terrible baying sound outside, and nine enormous dogs wearing brass-studded collars came bounding into the barn. They dashed straight for Snowball, who only sprang from his place just in time to escape their snapping jaws.”</p> <p>“The pigs now revealed that during the past three months they had taught themselves to read and write”</p> <p>“The birds did not understand Snowball's long words, but they accepted his explanation, and all the humbler animals set to work to learn the new maxim by heart.”</p> <p>““Is it not crystal clear, then, comrades, that all the evils of this life of ours spring from the tyranny of human beings?”</p> <p>“The flag was green, Snowball explained, to represent the green fields of England, while the hoof and horn signified the future Republic of the Animals which would arise when the human race had been finally overthrown.”</p> <p>“All that year the animals worked like slaves. But they were happy in their work; they grudged no effort or sacrifice, well aware that everything that they did was for the benefit of themselves and those of their kind who would come after them, and not for a pack of idle, thieving human beings.”</p>	<p>Stout Tremendous Rebellion Prosperity Vivacious Comrade Elementary Tyranny Communist Consume Cynical Benevolent Majestic Capable Control Victorious Overthrow Slaughter Seize Cruelty Overwhelm Succession Unity Conquer Resolution</p>	<p>Capital Letter Parenthetic Comma Parenthesis for brackets Semi-colon Ellipsis Speech Marks Continuous Verb</p>	<p>Adverb and Adverbial Phrase Article Antonym Compound Words Modifier Suffix Prefix</p>	<p>Singular and Plural Preposition Pronoun Synonym Transitive Verb Future Tense Present Tense Past Tense</p>	<p>Compound Sentence Complex Sentence Subject Object Subordinate Clause Homophone Homonym</p>
Responding to the (extract, question, etc)					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can I interpret the key ideas that the George Orwell is communicating through his text? (<i>What?</i>) • Can I explore and develop explicit and implicit techniques that create meaning for the reader? (<i>How? For what effect?!</i>) • Can I identify George Orwell’s techniques such as foreshadowing and non-standard English, and explore their effect on the reader? • Can I explore and comment on George Orwell’s intention within the text? • Can I respond personally to the text and suggest alternative interpretations? • Can I use evidence selectively to support/justify my ideas? • Can I explore and explain the use of techniques/conventions? • Can I explore how George Orwell uses language to develop/create point of view and tone and atmosphere? • Can I focus on individual words to suggest how they create meaning for the reader and might influence them? • Can I explode quotations and refine my skills for writing a lot about a little. • Can I develop my ideas fully and fluently? • Can I link my comments to the context of the text when appropriate? 					