

# ‘Animal Farm’

by

George Orwell



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# 'Animal Farm'

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## Texts Studied

Book/text title	Written by	Written when (years ago/period in history)	Main characters	Moral or message?
'Oliver Twist'				
'A Midsummer Night's Dream'				
'The Daydreamer'				
'The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes'				
'The Tempest'				

## George Orwell

George Orwell was the pen name of a man called Eric Blair. A pen name is a name used by a writer instead of their own name. Even though his real name was Eric Blair, he is known as his pen name, George Orwell.

### **Early Life**

George Orwell was born in India in 1903. At the time, India was still one of Britain's colonies. You may remember from *The Tempest* that a colony is a country that is controlled by a different country. At the time, India was a British colony, so many British people lived and worked in India.

Orwell's father worked as a civil servant in India. Even though he was helping to run India, he was employed by the British government as India was a part of the British Empire. When he was one, Orwell moved back to live in England with his mother. He did not see his father again until 1912, as his father had to stay in India for work.

The young Orwell was very intelligent. He went to exclusive boarding schools as he was growing up. He only had to pay half the fees for his education because he was so smart. At these exclusive schools, Orwell spent a lot of time around the richest people in the country. But when he read the newspapers he saw that the majority of people around the world were not rich. He wanted to find out more about these people and their lives. After he left school, he spent some years living as a homeless person on the streets of London and Paris. In 1933, he wrote a book about his experiences called 'Down and Out in Paris and London'. He decided to publish the book using the pen name George Orwell as he did not want to embarrass his family. **George Orwell would spend the rest of his life writing about how life was unfair for poor and ordinary working people. He wanted to tell the world that the rich world leaders were taking advantage of the workers for their own benefit.**

### **A man of action**

Orwell was also prepared to fight for what he believed in. He learned that the leaders of Spain were executing people who disagreed with their rule. In 1937, George Orwell left England to join the people of Spain fight against their cruel leaders. He fought in Spain until he was shot in the throat. He returned to England and wrote about his experiences in his novel 'Homage to Catalonia'. Orwell's time in Spain made him more determined than ever to point out and bring down harsh rulers.

### **'Animal Farm'**

At this time, events around Europe were leading up to World War II. George Orwell had a number of health issues that meant he was not able to fight in the war, but he still wanted to help out. He wrote a number of articles for soldiers that helped them in battle, and he also wrote articles for people living in Britain that helped to build morale during the blitz.

Orwell remained very interested in politics. He was fascinated by how leaders gained more and more power and wealth, while the ordinary people worked harder, got poorer and led worse lives. Orwell was on the side of the people and wanted to fight this injustice. In a famous essay, he wrote that he had a 'natural hatred of authority' and wanted to fight for 'the working classes'. Even though he wasn't able to fight in World War II, he knew that he could show how imbalanced the world was in his writing.

George Orwell studied the cruel leaders in Europe very carefully. He saw how treacherous they were, and how they were responsible for millions of deaths during the war. Orwell knew that these leaders weren't to be trusted, and how the people living in a country were manipulated into obeying their rule, even though it made their lives miserable and difficult.

Orwell drew upon this real-life knowledge to write his novel 'Animal Farm'. The novel shows how a powerful leader can control and harm his people. We will find out more about the real events that inspired 'Animal Farm' this term.

Today, 'Animal Farm' is seen as a classic work of literature. But at the time, nobody wanted to print it. After the war, the UK needed to work together with the cruel leaders across Europe to sustain peace. Publishers were afraid to print the book because Orwell criticised these leaders. The publishers did not want to ruin the relationships the UK was trying to build.

Eventually, after two years of searching, Orwell found a publisher for 'Animal Farm'. It was printed in 1945, the year World War II ended. In the years that followed, Orwell's criticisms were proved to be correct as more people learned about the harsh, violent rulers in other parts of Europe.

### **George Orwell: Nineteen Eighty-Four**

'Animal Farm' wasn't the only book Orwell wrote about violent and unfair rulers. In 1949, he published what is probably known today as his best-known work: 'Nineteen Eighty-Four'. This book came up with many ideas that are prevalent in society today. Here are some of them:

#### **Surveillance society:**

In 'Nineteen Eighty-Four', the people of Britain are watched and monitored constantly by CCTV cameras and secret police. Britain today has over 2 million CCTV cameras, tracking people night and day.

#### **'Big Brother is watching you'**

Big Brother is the leader of Britain in 'Nineteen Eighty-Four'. It is said that he watches you all the time, night and day. This idea was turned into the reality TV show 'Big Brother'. In the show, a group of people live together in a large house, isolated from the outside world but continuously watched by television cameras.

#### **Room 101**

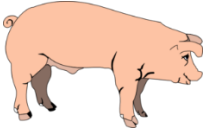
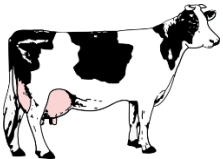


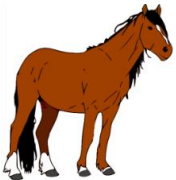

In 'Nineteen Eighty-Four', Room 101 is a torture chamber. Prisoners are shown their greatest fear. The room is meant to break prisoners' spirit. Today, Room 101 is a comedy TV series where people talk about things that annoy them.

### **Legacy and death**

Today, Orwell is known as one of the best British writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His novels were so explosive and controversial they were banned in a number of countries. 'Animal Farm' was banned in Soviet Russia when it was written, and it continues to be banned in North Korea, whose leader treats his people in a cruel and unfair way.

Even today, people are scared by the incredible power of Orwell's work. He was a writer that fought for what he believed in, and was desperate to warn the world of the dangers of evil leaders. He died in 1950 of tuberculosis, shortly after the publication of 'Nineteen Eighty-Four'.

## Farm animals

<p><b>Pigs</b></p> 	Characteristics		
	Male	Female	Child
	Types of meat		
	Uses on the farm		<b>Character names</b>
<p><b>Cows</b></p> 	Characteristics		
	Male	Female	Child
	Types of meat		
	Uses on the farm		
<p><b>Chickens</b></p> 	Characteristics		
	Male	Female	Child
	Types of meat		
	Uses on the farm		
<p><b>Dogs</b></p> 	Characteristics		
	Male	Female	Child
	Uses on the farm		<b>Character names</b>
	Characteristics		
<p><b>Horses</b></p> 	Characteristics		
	Male	Female	Child
	Uses on the farm		<b>Character names</b>
	Characteristics		
<p><b>Donkeys</b></p> 	Characteristics		
	Male	Female	Child
	Uses on the farm		<b>Character names</b>
	Characteristics		

# ANIMAL FARM



Old Major, a boar



Napoleon, a pig



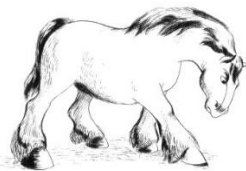
Snowball, a pig



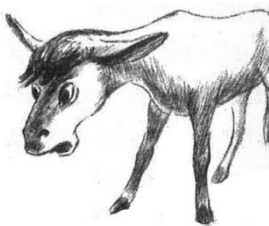
Squealer, a pig



Mr Jones, a farmer



Boxer, a horse



Benjamin, a donkey

## THE SEVEN COMMANDMENTS

1. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.

2. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.

3. No animal shall wear clothes.

4. No animal shall sleep in a bed.

5. No animal shall drink alcohol.

6. No animal shall kill any other animal.

7. All animals are equal.



## The Russian Revolution

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia was a very unequal country. Most of the people who lived there were very poor and had little education. They had tough lives and were bossed around by their rulers. The main Russian ruler was known as the Tsar. The Tsar had all the power in Russia. There were no elections, no parliament, and no democracy. The Tsar could do what he wanted.



*Tsar Nicholas II of Russia*

Many of the Russian people disliked this. They were treated terribly, some of them hardly any better than slaves. They had to work hard but all the product of their hard work was taken by the rich upper-class Russians who did no work at all.

The ordinary Russian people started to protest against this system of government. They said that instead of being run by the Tsar, they wanted to be run by a system called communism.

Communism was a system of government that had been invented by a German man called Karl Marx. Under communism, everyone would be equal. Everyone would work the same amount and everyone would get the same amount of money and food. Marx said it would be much fairer than being ruled by someone like the Tsar.



*Lenin led the Russian Revolution in 1917*

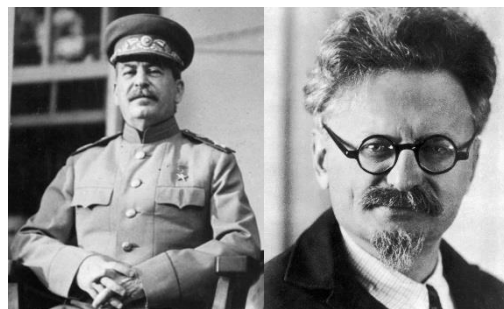
In 1917 the Russian people rebelled against their leader, Tsar Nicholas II. This event was known as the Russian Revolution. The leaders of the Revolution were the communists. The Russian Revolution was led by a man called Lenin. Lenin died about ten years after the revolution.

During the Russian Revolution, the Tsar was killed and all of the other rich people were either killed or had to leave Russia. After Lenin died, the two leaders of communist Russia were called Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky. Trotsky had led the Russian army when it defeated the rich Russians in 1918. However, Stalin was in control of the secret police.

The communists were now the established rulers of Russia. But the communist rulers soon began arguing amongst themselves. Stalin and Trotsky disagreed with how the country should be run.

To make things worse, the communists did not give the ordinary people any more freedom than they had under the Tsar. They didn't allow people to vote on who the ruler should be, and they didn't allow people to speak their minds.

George Orwell had watched developments in Russia with a keen eye. To begin with, he liked the general idea of communism because he thought it was much fairer than any other system of government. But he was upset by what he saw happening in Russia. He felt that Stalin had betrayed the true meaning of communism, and that he had become just as bad as the Tsars who he had replaced.










*Joseph Stalin*

*Leon Trotsky*

# Allegory: 'Animal Farm' and the Russian Revolution

'Animal Farm' is an allegory. The literal meaning is the story of a group of animals on a farm. But it also has a deeper meaning. The deeper meaning is about a group of Russians from the start of the 20th century.

Here are some features from the Russian Revolution and from 'Animal Farm'. You need to complete the blank sections to show how 'Animal Farm' is an allegory for the Russian Revolution.

Events from the Russian Revolution	Events from 'Animal Farm'
<p><b>Location:</b> Russia</p> 	<p><b>Location:</b> Manor Farm, later renamed Animal Farm.</p> 
<p><b>Event:</b> The Russian Revolution</p> 	<p><b>Event:</b></p>
<p><b>Person:</b></p>	<p><b>Character:</b> Farmer Jones</p> 
<p><b>Person:</b> Joseph Stalin</p> 	<p><b>Character:</b></p>
<p><b>Person:</b> Leon Trotsky</p> 	<p><b>Character:</b></p>
<p><b>Person/s:</b></p>	<p><b>Character:</b> Old Major</p> 
<p><b>Idea:</b> Communism</p>	<p><b>Idea:</b></p>

## **Animal Farm, the Windmill and Stalin's Five-Year Plans**

**Hannah:** Hello. My name is Hannah Lake, and I'm teaching Animal Farm to Year 8 at the moment, and my class have been wondering about the windmill that the animals are building, and what the windmill might mean for the novel as a whole. I'm really lucky because I'm joined today by someone who can hopefully give us an answer to these questions. Alice Tribe is a specialist in novels of the twentieth century and has also spent some time working on the relationship between Orwell's writing and Stalinist Russia so, first of all, Alice, thank you for being here today.

**Alice:** It's a pleasure to be here.

**Hannah:** So, why is the windmill such an important part of 'Animal Farm'?

**Alice:** That's a very good question. The windmill has been used by Snowball and, later, Napoleon, to promise an easier and more comfortable life for the animals on Animal Farm. In Soviet Russia, the Russian people were not asked to build a windmill, exactly, but it was quite similar. Stalin wanted the people to build power stations and railway stations and dams. The idea was that the more energy that could be produced, the more modern Russia would be and that, this way, it would be able to catch up with countries such as Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

**Hannah:** That sounds like a great idea. The Russian people must have been excited.

**Alice:** Just like with the windmill, right?

**Hannah:** ... am I guessing that it didn't work out so well?

**Alice:** Well, just like with the windmill, the people worked incredibly hard but, I mean, they worked *incredibly* hard to meet the targets. And Stalin had these Five-Year Plans with huge targets for productivity that it was impossible to meet.

**Hannah:** So, did it work?

**Alice:** Well, that's the complicated part. Russia became much more productive as a result of the Five-Year Plan, but the people themselves didn't really benefit.

**Hannah:** Just like with the windmill, right?

**Alice:** So, people worked so hard, for such low wages, that it was practically slavery. Just as the animals are described at one point as working like slaves, that is basically what was happening in the Soviet Union. Thousands of people died in these jobs, from starvation, exhaustion and unsafe working conditions. If they protested then they were severely punished. The rest of the world could see that the USSR was becoming a more modern economy but, inside the country it was a very different story.

**Hannah:** So, what is happening when the first windmill collapses and Napoleon gives the order to build a second windmill?

**Alice:** Well, the first windmill collapsing is probably a reference to the very poor quality of what was being produced in the USSR. If you rush production, then what you produce is unlikely to be very good. The construction of the second windmill is a reference to the second Five Year Plan – the Five Year Plans lasted until 1991, with the end of the Soviet Union.

**Hannah:** Thank you so much, Alice. You've really helped us to understand what the windmill means in the novel.

**Alice:** You're very welcome. Good luck with your studies of 'Animal Farm'!

## The pigs' lies

In the first part of Chapter 7, the pigs lie to a number of different people. This is an example of **propaganda**. Propaganda is information, which is often false, which a political organization publishes to make people agree with what it is saying.

Find some examples of the pigs lying in the first half of Chapter 7.

1. Write who the pigs are lying to
2. What they lie about
3. Why they are lying

Who are the pigs lying to?	
What are they lying about?	
Why are the pigs lying?	
Who are the pigs lying to?	
What are they lying about?	
Why are the pigs lying?	
Who are the pigs lying to?	
What are they lying about?	
Why are the pigs lying?	

## **Stalin's cult of personality**

A **cult of personality** is where a leader uses propaganda to convince people to worship him or her, and treat them like a god.

Joseph Stalin developed a cult of personality after December 1929, following a celebration of his 50th birthday. For the rest of Stalin's rule, the Soviet press presented Stalin as an all-powerful, all-knowing leader. From 1936 the Soviet journalism started to refer to Joseph Stalin as 'the Father of Nations'.

## **Stalin's image in propaganda and the mass media**

The Soviet press constantly praised Stalin, describing him as "Great", "Beloved", "Bold", "Wise", "Inspirer", and "Genius". It portrayed him as a caring yet strong father figure, with the Soviet people as his "children". Stalin often took part in public gift giving exchanges with Soviet children from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. Beginning in 1935, the phrase, "Thank You Dear Comrade Stalin for a Happy Childhood!" appeared above doorways at nurseries, orphanages, and schools. Children even chanted this slogan at festivals.

Stalin also became the focus of literature, poetry, music, paintings and film that exhibited fawning devotion. An example was A. V. Avidenko's "Hymn to Stalin":

Thank you, Stalin. Thank you because I am joyful. Thank you because I am well. Everything belongs to thee, chief of our great country. And when the woman I love presents me with a child the first word it shall utter will be :  
Stalin

Numerous pictures and statues of Stalin were hung in public places. Statues of Stalin depicted him as tall and strong, but photographic evidence suggests he was between 5 ft 5 in and 5 ft 6 in (165–168 cm).

## **Rewriting of early Soviet history**

Stalin rewrote Soviet history to give himself a more significant role in the overthrow of Tsar Nicholas II. According to this revised history, Stalin, not Leon Trotsky, had been Lenin's second-in-command during the October Revolution. To help change the facts of the past, Stalin concealed and destroyed historical documents, claiming that they were incomplete or inaccurate. Instead, Stalin presented himself as the leading authority in Party history and philosophy.



## George Orwell's letter to TS Eliot

<p style="text-align: right;">28 June 1944 10a Mortimer Crescent NW 6</p> <p>Dear Eliot,</p> <p>This manuscript has been blitzed which explains my delay in delivering it &amp; its slightly crumpled condition, but it is not damaged in any way.</p> <p>I wonder if you could be kind enough to let me have a decision fairly soon?</p> <p>If you read this manuscript yourself you will see its meaning, which is not an acceptable one at this moment, but I could not agree to make any changes except a small one at the end which I intended to make any way. The Ministry of Information made the imbecile suggestion that some other animal than the pigs might be made to represent the political leaders. I could not of course make any change of that description.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yours sincerely Geo. Orwell</p>	<p>5</p> <p><b>manuscript</b> – the typewritten novel</p> <p><b>blitzed</b> – Orwell's house, at this time, was bombed during the Blitz</p> <p>10</p> <p><b>Ministry of Information</b> – government department for publicity and propaganda during the Second World War</p> <p><b>imbecile</b> – stupid, idiotic</p> <p>15</p>
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## TS Eliot's reply to George Orwell

<p>13 July 1944</p> <p>Dear Orwell,</p> <p>I know that you wanted a quick decision about "Animal Farm". The other director agrees with me on the main points. We agree that it is a distinguished piece of writing and that the allegory is very skilfully handled.</p> <p>On the other hand, we do not believe that this is the right point of view from which to criticise the political situation at the present time. I can't see any reason to prevent anybody from publishing this book—if he believed in what it stands for.</p> <p>Now I think my own dissatisfaction with this allegory is that I basically don't believe in it. A good allegory should say what the author wants, as well as what he wants to criticise. The points that you do make, which I take to be generally anti-Stalinist, are not convincing. And after all, your pigs are far more intelligent than the other animals, and therefore the best qualified to run the farm—in fact, there couldn't have been an Animal Farm at all without them: so that what was needed, (someone might argue), was not more equality between the animals but more public-spirited pigs.</p> <p>I am very sorry, because whoever publishes this will naturally have the opportunity of publishing your future work: and I have a very high opinion of your work, because it is good writing of fundamental integrity.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yours sincerely, T. S. Eliot</p>	<p>5</p> <p><b>distinguished</b> - impressive</p> <p>10</p> <p><b>the political situation</b> – Russia and Stalin</p> <p>15</p> <p>20</p> <p><b>of fundamental integrity</b> – which really says what you believe</p>
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## **Beasts of England**

1. Re-read Old Major's anthem for Animalism, 'Beasts of England'.
2. Explain where Old Major's vision was corrupted on Animal Farm.

<b>Old Major's vision for Animalism</b>	<b>The truth on Animal Farm</b>
<p>Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, Beasts of every land and clime, Hearken to my joyful tidings Of the golden future time.</p> <p>Soon or late the day is coming, Tyrant Man shall be o'erthrown, And the fruitful fields of England Shall be trod by beasts alone.</p> <p>Rings shall vanish from our noses, And the harness from our back, Bit and spur shall rust forever, Cruel whips no more shall crack.</p> <p>Riches more than mind can picture, Wheat and barley, oats and hay, Clover, beans, and mangel-wurzels Shall be ours upon that day.</p> <p>Bright will shine the fields of England, Purer shall its waters be, Sweeter yet shall blow its breezes On the day that sets us free.</p> <p>For that day we all must labour, Though we die before it break; Cows and horses, geese and turkeys, All must toil for freedom's sake.</p> <p>Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, Beasts of every land and clime, Hearken well and spread my tidings Of the golden future time.</p>	