

Student Packet

Grades 9–12

Animal Farm

George Orwell

The background of the lower half of the cover is a complex, abstract graphic. It features a large, stylized profile of a human head facing right, filled with a dense, colorful pattern of overlapping circles, spheres, and organic shapes in shades of blue, orange, red, and yellow. The overall effect is vibrant and artistic.

**NEW WAYS TO LEARN READING,
WRITING, & CRITICAL THINKING**



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ANIMAL FARM

by
George Orwell

Student Packet

Written by
Maureen Kirchhoefer, M.A.
Mary Lovejoy Dennis

Contains masters for:	1	Pre-reading Activities
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PLUS

Note

The text used to prepare this guide was the Signet Classic softcover. The page references may differ in the hardcover or other paperback editions.

Please note: Please assess the appropriateness of this book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with your class.

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Novel Units, Inc.
P.O. Box 97
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Pre-reading Activities

The Political Novel

As you read and study *Animal Farm*, it is very important to have an understanding of the political events which Orwell was satirizing. Without such an understanding, the novel can be read as little more than a sad children's story about animals. As *Animal Farm* concerns revolutions in general, it is wise to study the reasons people revolt against their governments. Since the specific parallels in *Animal Farm* have to do with the Russian Revolution of 1917, it is necessary to have a basic understanding of the events and the most important political figures in those events.

Why Revolution?

Regarding revolutions in general, you might begin the unit by researching the reasons for revolutions and writing an impromptu essay in class. The important thing to grasp here is that revolutions occur when people are dissatisfied with the current conditions and when there is a leader to unite them against a real or imagined "enemy." The expectations of those who revolt are always that conditions will improve for them after the revolution. It was Orwell's opinion that revolutions were pointless because they only resulted in turning one tyrant for another due to the corrupting nature of power. What do you already know about life under Communist rule? The atrocities in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev provide a good basis for study, as do the bad events in Beijing, China.

The Nature of Power

This is also a good opportunity to write about the concept of power. What has power over you? What could cause you to behave in an uncharacteristic way? The need to acquire social acceptance is a powerful influence on young people. It is the desire for expensive clothing, stereos, cars, and other material goods. Alcohol and drugs can also exert power. Discuss the extent to which you feel these cultural aspects have power over young people. Then you can move on to a consideration of who holds political power in the school, the community, and the state and federal governments.

Write Your Own Fable

Orwell used animal characters to represent real people, and events in *Animal Farm* to stand for real events to which he was opposed. You have probably watched shows on television which satirize current events and people in much the same way. Now is your chance to make your own subtle statements about a situation or event you would like to satirize. This worksheet will help you to organize your thoughts, plan your characters, and outline your plot.

1. First, think of a situation or event you would like to satirize:

2. Think carefully about the people you will include in your fable. Then decide what animals you will use to represent them.

Characters	
<u>Real People</u>	<u>Represented by What Animals?</u>
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3. Orwell used Manor Farm/Animal Farm as his setting. Describe the setting you will use.

4. On the back of this page, make a brief plot outline. Be sure to include the following: Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Dénouement (or ending).
5. You're now ready to write your fable.

Chapter 7

1. Why is the windmill rebuilt with walls three feet thick?
2. Who never loses heart in spite of worsening conditions?
3. Food falls short in January and starvation seems near, but it is important to whom not to let the outside world know?
4. What tricks are used to fool Mr. Whymper?
5. Give some examples of how Napoleon is becoming a dictator?
6. The chickens must surrender their eggs now. While the rebellion takes place, nine hens die. What are the other animals told about the nine hens?
7. Where is Snowball said to be living now?
8. What tactics does Napoleon use when negotiating the sale of the pig's number?
9. What animals disagreed with the explanation that Snowball was Jones' secret agent from the very beginning?
10. What explanation does Boxer accept?
11. Describe the confessions and executions.
12. What is Boxer's answer to the slaughter of other animals?
13. Give an example of Clover's blind acceptance.
14. What explanation is given for banning "Beasts of England"? What replaced it?
15. What always drowned out any animals who protested?

Matching: Write the letter of the correct character next to his/her description.

- _____ 16. One of the next-door neighbors.
- _____ 17. Lured away from the farm by a human.
- _____ 18. A broker hired to arrange trade with humans.
- _____ 19. Originator of the windmill plan.
- _____ 20. "I will work harder."
- _____ 21. A goat who can read quite well.
- _____ 22. Cynical and non-committal.
- _____ 23. Showed signs of rebellion.
- _____ 24. Pronounces death sentence on Snowball.
- _____ 25. Enforcers of Napoleon's rules.

- | | |
|----|---------------------|
| a. | Whymper |
| b. | Muriel |
| c. | neighboring animals |
| d. | Boxer |
| e. | Mollie |
| f. | Napoleon |
| g. | Snowball |
| h. | Frederick |
| i. | Benjamin |
| j. | the nine dogs |

True-False: Write "true" next to true statements and "false" next to statements which are false. Remember to read each statement carefully.

- _____ 26. Neighboring farmers were not bothered by the Rebellion at Animal Farm.
- _____ 27. Snowball had studied an old book of Julius Caesar's war campaigns.
- _____ 28. Boxer was disappointed he hadn't killed the stable boy.
- _____ 29. Snowball had a flair for making brilliant speeches.
- _____ 30. The purpose of the windmill was to mechanize the farm.

Short Answer: Answer each question briefly.

- 31. How were the animals able to break the pieces of stone into manageable pieces?
- 32. How did the pigs change the Fourth Commandment, "No animal shall sleep in a bed"?
- 33. What "evidence" was offered to support Napoleon's opinion of who had destroyed the windmill?