

EXTENSIVE READING ACTIVITY FOR DEPARTMENT STUDENTS 9/12/2019

Introduction to Animal Farm

'Animal Farm' is a novel. It is a famous story. 'Animal Farm' was written by George Orwell in 1945. Mr Orwell went to a farm.

He saw a boy walking with a horse. Orwell thought if animals could talk what would they think about human beings? He also thought that humans have all the power and treat animals badly. If animals had power and could talk what would they do?

'Animal Farm' is an interesting story. In the novel the animals can talk. 'Animal Farm' is a metaphor¹ for Russia from 1917 to 1991. During this time, Russia was called the Soviet Union or the USSR.

From 1917 to 1991 Communism existed in Russia (the Soviet Union). This means everyone is equal. There are no rich people and there are no poor people. However, there were many problems in the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1991. 'Animal Farm' is about these problems.

¹ A **metaphor** is when we use one thing to describe something else.

Chapter 1

It is evening. Mr Jones is a farmer. He lives at Manor Farm. Mr Jones is not a nice man. Mr Jones is very cruel to his

animals. When he falls asleep all the animals at Manor Farm have a meeting.



Major is an old pig. All the animals like him. He is intelligent.



Major wants to tell all the animals

about a dream he had. All the animals are quiet. They want to listen to Major. He tells the animals that he is

old. Major thinks he is going to die soon. Before he dies, Major wants to tell the animals about humans.

Major tells the animals that they have a difficult life. All the animals have to work very hard. They do not get any rewards. Humans eat eggs. They come from animals.

Humans eat cheese. That comes from animals. Humans drink milk and that also comes from animals. When animals die humans eat them. Major said that no animal is happy. Humans are the enemy of animals.

Animals are strong. Humans are weak. Why are animals so sad?



It is because humans are so cruel. Major wants the animals to chase Mr Jones away. If he goes away, all the animals will be happy.

Major talks about his dream. In his dream only animals live on a farm. There are no human beings. All the

animals are happy.

They are all equal. All animals have a lot to eat. They are never hungry. They do not have to work for humans.

When Major has finished talking about his dream all the animals are happy. They like his dream. The animals want his dream to come true. Major tells the animals:

- What walks on four legs is a friend.



- What has wings is a friend.



- What walks on two legs is an enemy.
Major makes three rules. They are:



1. No animal can live in a house.

2. No animal can sleep in a bed.

3. No animal must kill another animal.

All the animals are excited. They want Major to carry on talking. Mr Jones wakes up. He goes to the window. He fires his gun. Major has to stop the meeting. All the animals quickly go back to their places.

Mr Jones does not know that the animals can talk. He also does not know that they have meetings.

Chapter 2

Major died on Wednesday. All the animals were very sad. They all remembered

Major's dream. Snowball and Napoleon are two pigs. They are intelligent. Snowball and Napoleon make a plan to chase Mr Jones away from Manor Farm.



Every night the animals have a meeting. Some animals like Mr Jones. They do not want to chase him away.

Mollie is a pretty horse. She likes Mr Jones because he gives her sugar. Moses is a bird. He does not like the pigs. He tells the animals not to believe them.



Mr Jones has become very cruel. He does not feed his animals. One day in June Mr Jones goes to the pub. He comes back to Manor Farm and falls asleep. The animals are hungry. They are also angry. The animals decide to chase Mr Jones away.

Suddenly the animals run into the house. The dogs chase Mr Jones away.

The farm now belongs to the animals. Major's dream has come true. All the animals are happy. They eat a lot of food. The animals are going to turn Mr Jones's house into a museum. No animal will ever live in the house.



The next morning the animals have a meeting. The pigs can read and write. They change the name of Manor Farm. It is now called Animal Farm. There are going to be seven rules in Animal Farm. They are based on Major's ideas.

The seven rules are:

1. What has got two legs is an enemy.
2. What has got four legs or a wing is a friend.
3. Animals cannot wear clothes.
4. Animals cannot sleep in beds.
5. Animals cannot drink alcohol.
6. No animal can kill another animal.
7. All animals are equal.



These seven rules are never going to change.

Chapter 3

The animals are very happy. They work very hard. No animals fight. No animals steal anything. There is a lot of food to eat. The pigs do not work. They tell the other animals what to do. The pigs become the leaders of Animal Farm. On Sundays the animals do not work. They have a meeting every Sunday. All the animals get together. All animals are taught how to read and write. The pigs are the most intelligent animals. Some animals cannot remember the seven rules. They are told to remember, "Four legs are good and two legs are bad."

Napoleon tells the animals that education is very important. He takes nine new puppies away from their mothers. Napoleon said he was going to educate them.



Boxer and Clover are two horses. All the animals really like them. Boxer works very hard. If there is a problem he says, "I will work harder."

Not all the animals work as hard as Boxer. Mollie, the pretty horse, gets up late. She does not work hard. The cats disappear when it is time to work and come back at meal times.

At the meetings on Sundays the pigs tell the other animals what to do. Snowball and Napoleon are intelligent pigs but they did not agree with each other.

Things began to change.

Something strange happens. Some milk is missing. It is given to the pigs. Also, all the apples were eaten by the

pigs. They tell the other animals that they have to drink the milk and eat the apples because they are intelligent. If the pigs left then Mr Jones would come back. The animals hated Mr Jones. They agreed that the pigs could have all the apples and drink more milk.

Chapter 4

Napoleon and Snowball tell the birds to go to other farms. They would tell the animals to copy what the animals have done at Animal Farm. Mr Jones is angry. He wants some help. Mr Jones wants to go back to his farm. A lot of farmers do not like him. They do not help Mr Jones. However, the farmers do not want their animals to chase them away.

The world heard about Animal Farm. Some stories were good. For example, Animal Farm was a wonderful place. All of the animals were happy. They do not need human beings. Some stories about Animal Farm were bad. For example, some animals ate each other. They were very cruel.

In October Mr Jones planned to come back to Animal Farm. The animals were all prepared for this attack. As the humans approached, Snowball ran towards them. The animals followed him. They attacked Mr Jones and all the other humans. The humans had guns. They shot a few sheep. The animals were angry. They attacked the humans. They ran away.

All the animals were very excited. They had defeated² the humans. There was a big celebration. All the animals sang a song. It was called 'Animals of the World.' The animals were also sad because some sheep had been killed.

² **defeat** means when you win a victory over someone else.

Where was Mollie, the pretty horse? The animals were worried. They thought the humans had taken her away. Mollie was in fact hiding in the stable. She said she was frightened and did not like to fight.

Snowball gave a speech. He said that animals should always protect Animal Farm. The pigs made a medal. It was called 'Animal Hero, First Class.' Boxer and Snowball were given a medal. This was because they were brave. The animals called this day 'The Battle of the Cowshed.' It was a very important day for Animal Farm.

Chapter 5

It is December. Mollie began to change. She would not work. Mollie said she was ill. Clover thought she was doing something bad. He asked Mollie if she was talking to human beings.

Animals were not allowed to talk to humans. Mollie said this was not true. She was not telling the truth. In fact, humans had been giving Mollie gifts.



Three days later Mollie disappeared. She ran away. Mollie did not like living at Animal Farm. No animal ever spoke about her again.

In January it was very cold. There was a meeting. The pigs told the animals they were in charge of Animal Farm. They would make all the decisions. They decided to do this because the pigs said they were the most intelligent animals. However, Snowball and Napoleon did not like each other. They could not agree on any decision. Snowball was a good speaker. All the animals liked him. Napoleon was crafty and cunning³. He was secretly planning to get rid of Snowball.

³ crafty and cunning means intelligent but not nice

Snowball had a plan. He wanted to build a windmill. Snowball told the animals that it was a good idea. It would make Animal Farm a better place. Snowball said the windmill could be built in one year. Napoleon was against Snowball's plan.



The animals were divided. Half agreed with Snowball. Half agreed with Napoleon. There was a meeting. All the animals came. Snowball told the animals that the windmill would improve their lives. The animals liked what he said. Only Napoleon was angry.

Suddenly there was a frightening noise. Nine big fierce dogs ran towards Snowball. He managed to



escape. All the animals watched in horror. The nine big fierce dogs were chasing Snowball. He ran away. Snowball was never seen again. All the animals were sad because he had been chased away.

The animals were terrified. Where did the nine big fierce dogs come from? Napoleon had taken them from their mothers when they were babies. He trained them to become fighting dogs.

The fierce dogs liked Napoleon. They became his guard dogs.

Napoleon spoke to all the animals. He was surrounded by his dogs. Napoleon said that all animals would receive orders from the pigs. He would make all the important decisions at Animal Farm. No animal disagreed with Napoleon because they were frightened of him. All the animals thought that Napoleon reminded them of Mr Jones.

Three weeks later, Napoleon had a meeting. He said that the windmill was going to be built. Napoleon said that the windmill plan was his idea. He said that Snowball stole it from him. The animals were confused⁴. They did not ask any questions.

⁴ **confused** means when you do not understand

Chapter 6

The animals worked very hard to build the windmill. The pigs told the other animals what to do. They gave orders and did not do any work. Boxer and Clover worked the hardest. They never complained. Boxer and Clover would say two things. They were “Napoleon is always right” and “I will work harder.”

Napoleon said that only pigs could talk to humans. Some animals were not happy. They thought all humans were the enemy. Did not Major tell them that what walks on two legs is an enemy?

No animal complained. If they did complain Napoleon’s fierce dogs would either bark at them or bite them.

The pigs moved into the house that belonged to Mr Jones. They said that they needed a quiet place to work. Again Major said that no animal should live in a house. The pigs ignored this rule. The animals were too frightened to complain. The pigs said this because they ran Animal Farm and they needed a quiet place to stay.

The pigs began to sleep in beds. This was another rule that the pigs broke. Rule Four said that no animal can sleep in a bed. The pigs changed this rule. It now said,

‘No animal can sleep in a bed *with sheets*.’



The other animals said nothing. They were frightened.

The windmill was nearly complete. One night there was a storm. The windmill was destroyed. All the animals were very sad.

They had worked so hard to build the windmill. In the morning all the animals went to the windmill. It was in ruins⁵. Napoleon said, “Snowball did this. He destroyed the windmill.” The animals were shocked. They could not believe Snowball would destroy the windmill.



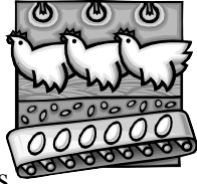
When anything went wrong at Animal Farm Napoleon blamed Snowball. Napoleon told the animals that Snowball was a friend of Mr Jones. Even though Snowball had left Animal Farm he was blamed for everything that went wrong. This was Napoleon’s plan. He wanted all the animals to hate Snowball.

⁵ **ruin** means when something is destroyed or broken

Chapter 7

There was another very cold winter. The animals were rebuilding the windmill. In January, there was no food for the animals. Only Boxer and Clover worked happily. All the other animals thought that they had a difficult life.

The pigs had a plan. Animal Farm would sell eggs to humans. The hens were unhappy. They did not want to give their eggs to humans. The hens were angry. They smashed their eggs. Napoleon was very angry. He said that if the hens smashed their eggs they would be killed. Nine



hens were killed by Napoleon's fierce dogs. The hens could do nothing. Their eggs were sold to humans.

A few days later something terrible happened. Napoleon told all the animals that there was an important meeting. He was surrounded by his nine fierce dogs. Napoleon was wearing his medals. The animals were silent.



Suddenly, the dogs chased four pigs. They bit them. Napoleon told the animals that the four pigs had been secretly talking to Mr Jones. They were Snowball's friend. The dogs killed the pigs. There was blood everywhere. All the animals were frightened. Napoleon said if any animal did not listen to him they would be killed. If an animal complained about anything they would be killed. All the animals were very sad. Animal Farm was worse than Manor Farm. One very important rule was 'no animal must kill another animal.' Today the fierce dogs had killed some animals.

Even Boxer was sad. He said, "This is not why we chased Mr Jones away."

In the evening an animal noticed a change in the sixth rule. It now read

6. No animal can kill another animal *without a reason*.

The last three words had been added on by the pigs.

Chapter 8

The animals worked hard to complete the windmill. It was completed in April. They had little food. Only the pigs and dogs had enough to eat. Napoleon began to eat at the dining table.

This was another rule he broke. In the beginning it was agreed that no animal should eat at a dining table.

Even though all animals still hated humans, Napoleon was secretly friends with them. Napoleon told the animals he was going to sell wood to a human. The animals were not happy. They could not do anything. The humans took the wood. They gave Napoleon money. The money was not real money.

He had been tricked.



The farmers attacked Animal Farm on the 16th June. They blew up the windmill. The animals attacked the humans. They ran away. Many animals were killed and a lot were injured. Boxer was also injured. All the pigs were hiding when the humans were attacking Animal Farm.

Two days later there was a big celebration. Napoleon was given more medals. At Animal Farm the 16th June was called 'The Battle of the Windmill.'

Chapter 9

Boxer had been injured in 'The Battle of the Windmill.' However, he still carried on working. Boxer would repeat, "Napoleon is always right" and "I will work harder." He was getting old. Boxer was not as strong as he used to be. There was another very cold winter. The animals had little food. Only the pigs and dogs had enough to eat. They were never hungry. Napoleon told the animals that they should be happy. He said if Mr Jones returned life would be worse for the animals. They did not believe him but they were too frightened to complain.

In April, Napoleon became President of Animal Farm. Songs were written about him. Poems were also written about him. There were pictures of Napoleon all over Animal Farm. He lived like a king.

In the autumn something bad happened. Boxer became ill. All the animals loved and respected Boxer. He was dying. Napoleon said he was going to take Boxer to a hospital. The animals were not happy. The animals wanted to look after Boxer. Apart from Mollie and Snowball no animals ever left Animal Farm.

A few days later a van came to Animal Farm. Boxer was put inside. All the animals said goodbye to Boxer. He was not going to hospital. Napoleon had sent Boxer to be killed. No animal ever saw Boxer again.



Chapter 10

Many years passed. Most of the animals who created Animal Farm had died. Mr Jones had also died. Only a few animals could remember Snowball and Boxer. The windmill was working. Clover was a very old horse and Napoleon was still President of Animal Farm. The dogs and pigs had become very rich. The other animals were still very poor. They worked very hard.

They were still hungry most of the time.

One day Clover saw something strange. She saw a pig trying to walk like a human. Napoleon was also walking like a human.

There was complete silence. All the pigs were walking like humans. No animal could complain. If they did they would be killed. The dogs shouted, "Four legs good, two legs even better."

The animals noticed something else. The seven rules had been replaced with one rule. It said, All animals are equal but some animals are better than other animals.

The pigs began to copy humans. They would be cruel to all animals. The pigs listened to the radio and had telephones. Napoleon started to wear Mr Jones' clothes.

One evening some humans came to Animal Farm. They went into the house. All the animals watched in secret. In the dining room there were six pigs and there were six humans. They were laughing and talking. The humans and pigs were eating and drinking together. One human said, "Humans like pigs. We do not like other animals."

Napoleon then said, "Pigs like humans. We do not like other animals."

The animals outside just listened in silence.

Napoleon said that the pigs own Animal Farm. He was going to change the name of Animal Farm back to Manor Farm. The pigs and the humans began to laugh. The animals outside just watched. They could not tell the difference between the pigs and the humans.

Historical Context

Animal Farm is a historical novel. It is a metaphor for Russia from 1917 to 1945. In order to understand the story students should know about Russian history.

In 1917 the King of Russia was called Tsar Nicholas. Like Mr Jones he was not a nice person. The King of Russia did not care about the Russian people. They were very poor and he was very rich. Lenin was a very important man. He told the Russian people they could have a good life. They did not need the King. Like Major in Animal Farm, Lenin had ideas that would change the lives of all Russians. Lenin died in 1921.



Lenin

A lot of Russian people had meetings. They wanted to get rid of the King. In Animal Farm the animals wanted to get rid of Mr Jones. Two very important people in Russia were Trotsky and Stalin. They planned to get rid of the King.



Snowball is Trotsky.

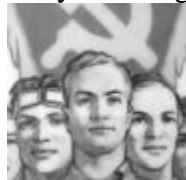


Napoleon is Stalin.

In November 1917 the King of Russia was killed. His family was also killed. Mr Jones is chased away from Manor Farm. In 1921, Russia changed its name to the Soviet Union. The animals changed the name of Manor Farm to Animal Farm.

In Russia Communism was set up. This means everyone is treated equally. There are no rich people and there are no poor people. The government makes sure everyone is happy. In Animal Farm all the animals are treated equally. In the first few years of Communism everyone was happy in the Soviet Union. Boxer and Clover represent the ordinary Russian people. They worked very hard.

They did not get many rewards.



Like Mollie the pretty horse, many Russians escaped from Russia. A Lot of countries wanted to destroy the Soviet Union. In the novel, humans attack Animal Farm twice.

Trotsky and Stalin did not agree with each other. Russia was a poor country. Trotsky wanted to build factories. He said this would make Russia rich. It was a good idea. Stalin stole this idea. In Animal Farm, Snowball wants to build a windmill. Napoleon steals this idea.

Napoleon trained the dogs to become fierce. Stalin trained some men. They were called the KGB. They would kill anybody who did not like Stalin. Stalin managed to make Trotsky leave Russia. In Animal Farm Napoleon's dogs chase Snowball away. In Russia most people began to live in fear of the KGB and Stalin. No one could complain. If they did they went to prison or were killed. In Animal Farm the animals never complain. They were too frightened to complain.

In Russia it is very cold during the winter. Most people had very little to eat. In Animal Farm the hens are killed by the dogs because Napoleon is angry. In Russia when Stalin was in power millions of people were murdered. Communism had changed. It did not help poor people. It seemed to be a big mistake. In 1941, Russia was attacked by Germany. Germany was strong. Everyone thought Russia would be defeated. However, the Russian army defeated the Germans. In Animal Farm 'The Battle of the Windmill' represents what happened in Russia from 1941 to 1945.

By 1945 Stalin was still President of the Soviet Union (Russia). He did not care about the Russian people. At the end of 'Animal Farm' the pigs do not care about the other animals.

