

Animal Farm

Why?

The ability to understand the historical and contextual influences surrounding a text opens our eyes to a new, deeper level of understanding and analysis. We are going to dive into the world of ***Animal Farm*** and explore how symbolism and language is used as a social commentary on wider issues at the time of writing.

Key Concepts

Allegory - a story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one.

Contextual Factors - the background, environment, setting, framework, or surroundings of events or occurrences.

Microcosm – a community, place, or situation regarded as encapsulating in miniature the characteristics of something much larger.

Cyclical Narrative - A story that ends in the same place/way it began.

Recall and Embed...

Rhetoric – language designed to have a persuasive effect and encourage the readers/listeners to act.

Semantic Field - a set of words related in meaning.

Contextual Study

Orwell's writing was heavily concerned with the mistreatment of the lower-classes and he campaigned against social injustice.

There was revolution in Russia in 1917 due to widespread poverty and starvation.

This revolution was initially led by Lenin before he passed away. After he passed away the choice to take over emerged between Stalin and Trotsky.

Stalin became leader and eventually had Trotsky exiled and assassinated.

Many suffered under Stalin's regime. However, there were various pieces of propaganda from newspapers and poetry praising Stalin.

Orwell wrote 'Animal Farm' as an allegory to criticise Stalin's regime and open the eyes of the British to the horrors taking place.

Vocabulary

Propaganda - information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view.

Revolution - a forcible overthrow of a government or social order, in favour of a new system.

Vivacious - attractively lively and animated (typically used of a woman).

Irrevocable - not able to be changed, reversed, or recovered; final.

Dictatorship - form of government in which one person or a small group possesses absolute power without effective constitutional limitations.

Hierarchy - a system in which members of an organisation or society are ranked according to relative status or authority.

Purge - remove (a group of people considered undesirable) from an organization or place in an abrupt or violent way.

Callous - showing or having an insensitive and cruel disregard for others.

Characters

Mr Jones—Originally in charge of the farm. Irresponsible toward the animals and sometimes whips them.

Old Major—Prize-winning Boar who inspires the revolution through his dream.

Napoleon—A large pig who lives on Manor Farm. An initial leader who becomes a dictator to the other animals on the farm.

Snowball—A pig who is an initial leader in the revolution. Becomes ostracised and blamed for the farm's faults after the revolution.

Squealer—A pig who emerges as Napoleon's chief enforcer and propagandist.

Boxer—A powerfully-built workhorse. Kind and determined but not very bright. Dedicates his life to working and the farm.

Muriel—The white goat who reads the seven commandments to Clover whenever Clover suspects the pigs are being manipulative.

Mr Frederick—The tough operator of a neighbouring farm. Based on Adolf Hitler.