

George Orwell and Animal Farm

'All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.'

George Orwell

George Orwell was born in India in 1903, and his real name was Eric Blair. When he was a child, he moved to England with his parents. When he returned to India, Blair decided to publish his works under the pseudonym of George Orwell. He wrote *Animal Farm* in 1945, but his most famous book is "*Nineteen Eighty-Four*", his last work; it was published in 1949 and a year later George Orwell died.

ANIMAL FARM

Mr Jones is the owner of the Manor Farm; one night, all the animals gathered around the pig Major, which incited them to rebel against Mr Jones. A few days later, an animal revolution broke out because Mr Jones forgot to feed them; so, they chased him away. All the animals were very happy: they began to organize a self-sufficient society and wrote the Seven Commandments of the new Animal Farm on a wall. But some pigs decided to take command of the farm: Napoleon, Snowball and Squealer. Step by step, in the Animal Farm a dictatorship headed by Napoleon started, a lot of animals were killed and the pigs took human customs and, most of all, semblances; in fact, they learnt to go on two legs.

Main characters

- Mr Jones: he's the owner of the farm; he's very violent
- Old Major (pig): it diffused the idea of animal rebellion, because men were too bad with the animals and they wanted to be free from every restriction
- Napoleon (pig): clever and ambitious, it became the boss of the farm. It started a dictatorship, supported by others pig and wild dogs.
- Squealer (pig): brilliant speaker, it can persuade other animals to follow Napoleon's ideas; it's faithful to its boss

Themes

- Use of intelligence: the most intelligent animals, the pigs, use their quality to subdue the others;
- Differences between men and animals: at first, animals were more organised; but when Napoleon began to command, pigs became very similar to men
- Equality: at first, all the animals were equal and respected each other, then social classes were created and some animals exploited the others

Narrative Modes and point of view

The author uses the techniques of the narration and the description, and the novel has a chronological order; the story is told by a third-person narrator.

Language

The language is simple and very understandable, full of adjectives and descriptions of the animals and the setting; because of its clear language, the novel can be considered also a tale for children.

Style

This novel is an example of anti-utopian novel, because it reflects a negative view of the future; it's also an

allegorical novel: in fact, the pigs system of government represents the Russian dictatorship of Stalin. The author uses irony and some metaphors to render the story more significant.

Personal comment

I like this novel very much because it's funny but also instructive: it deals with a historical event in a different way from the other historical novels. Although the language is very clear and the plot very simple, the story is more complicated, because the animals symbolize the Russian people and Russian dictator Stalin. For example, pigs are greedy men who impose restrictions.

A1. George Orwell ...

T F

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|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) is a pseudonym | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) was Eric Blair's child | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) was from England | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) died in 1948 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A2. Animal Farm ...

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- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) is a work by Eric Blair | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) is George Orwell's last book | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) is George Orwell's most famous book | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) was written in 1945 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A3. Animal Farm is about ...

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) life on a farm | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) an animal rebellion | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) Mr Jones dictatorship | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) Mr Jones Seven Commandments | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A4. The main characters of Animal Farm are ...

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|--|--------------------------|
| A) three animals and a peaceful farmer | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) three pigs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) a violent person and three animals | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) all the animals on a farm | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A5. The term 'subdue' means

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|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) repress | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) dominate | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) control | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) organise | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A6. At the end of the story ...**T** **F**

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) pigs impose another form of dictatorship | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) men impose another form of dictatorship | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) men become similar to animals | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) animals become similar to men | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A7. The term 'exploit' is a synonym of ...**T** **F**

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|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) use | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) help | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) utilise | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) support | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A8. Animal Farm ...

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|--|--------------------------|
| A) is narrated in the third-person perspective | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) is narrated in the first-person perspective | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) is narrated in first person | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) is a dialogue driven story | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A9. Orwell's masterpiece ...**T** **F**

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) is a utopian novel | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) is a celebration of a brilliant future | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) is also a tale for children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) criticizes Stalin's dictatorship | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A10. The quote "Everyone is equal, but some are more equal than others" ...**T** **F**

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A) is critical of democracies | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B) refers to the differences between social classes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C) is ironical | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D) contains a comparative | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A11 Complete the questions with the words given below. Then answer the questions.

WHAT – WHO – WHEN – WHERE – WHY

1. _____ was George Orwell born?
2. _____ was George Orwell born?
3. _____ was George Orwell's real name?
4. _____ did he write *Animal Farm*?
5. _____ is Nineteen Eighty-Four?
6. _____ did George Orwell die?
7. _____ is the owner of the Manor Farm?
8. _____ does an animal revolution break out?
9. _____ decides to take command of the farm?
10. _____ are the main characters?
11. _____ are the main themes?
12. _____ is the narrative mode of the book?
13. _____ is the novel considered also a tale for children?
14. _____ is *Animal Farm* considered an anti-utopian novel?
15. _____ is *Animal Farm* considered an allegorical novel?