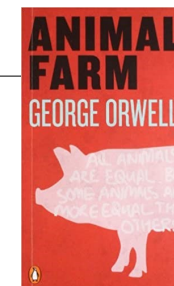


STM Knowledge Organiser

Year: 9

Subject: English

Unit: Animal Farm



Core Knowledge (The Background/ Context)

George Orwell – George Orwell was the writing name of Eric Blair (1903-1950). He was outspoken in his support of democratic socialism, and spoke out frequently against totalitarianism and social injustice. His two most famous works are ‘Animal Farm’ and Nineteen Eighty-Four

The Russian Revolution – The revolution was the movement that removed the reigning Tsar from power and led to the rise of the Soviet Union. The Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, were able to overthrow the provisional government and establish their own federal government, in creating the world’s first socialist republic. Eventually they became reconstituted as the Communist Party.

Karl Marx and Communism– Karl Marx was a German philosopher from the 19th Century, who rejected capitalism. He instead believed in the introduction of a system in which wealth was communal and labour was shared. He believed this would produce a fairer, more stable way of life. Whilst he lived a long time before the Russian Revolution (and in a different country) his theories formed the foundations for what became Communism.

Life in the Communist Soviet Union – The working class in the Soviet Union were supposed to be the country’s ruling class under the doctrines from which their socialism was derived, and yet they grew increasingly repressed throughout the progression of the USSR’s existence. It is generally accepted that the standard of living decreased, working conditions deteriorated, and personal freedoms were significantly violated.

Core Knowledge (Key Themes)

The Corruption of Socialist Ideals – Animal Farm is famous for criticising the development of Soviet communism. Although Orwell strongly believed in the socialist ideals upon which the revolution was built, he abhorred the ways in which these values had been repeatedly manipulated by those who rose to power. The gradual disintegration of the seven commandments visually depicts this.

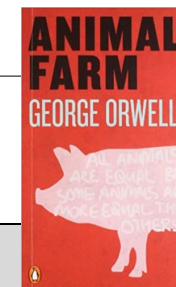
Class – Animal Farm demonstrates the means by which human beings seek to maintain and need to establish class structures. The novella shows how the oppressed who are able to stand united in the face of adversity often generate their own class divisions over time after the enemy is eliminated. This is evident in the slow rise of the pigs to fill the void left by Mr Jones.

Naivety – Animal Farm is not only told from the viewpoint of those in power, but also from the viewpoint of those who are oppressed. Orwell makes clear that these types of situations are formed not only because of the strategies of the oppressors, but also the naiveté of the people who do not have the education or the position to know better. For example, Boxer believes everything that he is told.

Religion – An idea of heaven (Sugarcandy Mountain) is promised to the animals by Moses (the raven) at some points throughout Animal Farm. Moses is derived from the name of the bible character who brought the word of God to the people. The thought of an evergreen, beautiful after-life awaiting them drives the animals on to work harder, and so the pigs use Moses to their benefit

Key Vocabulary

allegory	A story with an underlying (hidden) meaning
anthropomorphism	Giving human attributes to another form i.e. speaking animals
propaganda	Promotion of ideas through biased publicity or advertising.
communism	State ownership...a collective society working for the common good
totalitarianism	A state run by a dictator with sole autocratic rule.
socialism	A state where the community has ownership and control
republic	A state where the power is held by the people and their elected representatives
oppressor	Someone who abuses and persecutes others
doctrine	A belief, rule or way of thought
proletariat	working classes, ordinary people



STM Knowledge Organiser

Unit: Animal Farm

Year: 9 Subject: English

Core Knowledge (Key characters)

Old Major – Old Major is a prize-winning boar whose vision of a place in which the animals work for themselves serves as the inspiration for the rebellion. He is based on both Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin, who inspired communism. Old Major is well-respected, articulate, and persuasive. He is a clear leader who the animals listen to.

Napoleon – Napoleon is the pig who emerges as the leader of Animal Farm after the rebellion. Napoleon's character is based on Joseph Stalin – the leader of the communist Soviet Union. Napoleon is cunning, treacherous, lazy and selfish. He uses Squealer (propaganda) and the dogs (military force) to exert power over others. He has no real talents, rather he is a corrupt opportunist.

Snowball – Snowball is one of the other leading pigs, who challenges Napoleon for leadership of the farm after the rebellion. He represents Leon Trotsky. He is intelligent and passionate, yet he does not resort to the same levels of cunning and manipulation as Napoleon. Despite largely winning the support of the animals on the farm, Snowball is driven from the farm by Napoleon's forces.

Squealer – Squealer represents the Soviet propaganda machine. He is a pig who is an exceptionally gifted and persuasive speaker, and is utilised to spread positivity about Napoleon, and negativity about Napoleon's competition. He uses false statistics to suggest that the farm thrives under Napoleon, and twists the truth to ensure that the pigs retain political and social control.

Boxer – Boxer is a cart-horse, who demonstrates incredible strength, work ethic, and loyalty. He represents those in the working classes who were hugely overworked. Boxer's downfall is his slow wit, which ensures that he is unable to think for himself and is easily manipulated.

Core Knowledge (Key Events)

Chapter I—A drunk Mr Jones stumbles to bed, forgetting to lock up his farm buildings. The animals thus convene in the big barn to hear Old Major's speech. He blames their short and miserable lives on man, and incites rebellion. He teaches them a song: Beasts of England.

Chapter II—Old Major dies in his sleep, and the other animals prepare for rebellion. The pigs (the cleverest animals) prepare the others, teaching them animalism, which they don't all fully understand. The Rebellion occurs, and Jones is driven from the farm. The farm is re-named 'Animal Farm' and seven commandments written on the barn wall.

Chapter III—The animals labour in the fields throughout the summer. Boxer works hardest. There is a flag-raising ceremony each Sunday – Snowball and Napoleon often clash. Snowball spends time trying to educate the animals. Napoleon takes a group of puppies to 'educate' in a loft. When it is noted the pigs have been eating the apples and milk, Squealer persuades the animals that it is best.

Chapter IV—The news of Animal Farm has spread to neighbouring farms (through the birds), where animals have begun singing Beasts of England. Jones and other farmers thus launch an attack, however they are easily beaten by the animals. Boxer and Snowball fight heroically and are awarded medals as a result. Only a single sheep is lost, who is given a hero's burial. Snowball tells Boxer not to feel guilt for a human's death.

Chapter V— Mollie is tempted away from the farm by a red-faced man who feeds her. Snowball and Napoleon grow increasingly hostile towards one another. As Snowball announces plans for a new windmill, Napoleon unleashes his dogs, which attack Snowball and chase him off the farm. The animals are anxious about this, but Squealer's passionate defence and the growl of the dogs is enough to assure them that 'Napoleon is always right.'

Chapter VI— The animals work at a rapid pace to build the windmill, and their rations are cut. It is announced that the farm is now trading with humans, to the shock of the animals. It begins that the pigs have begun amending the commandments to suit their own interests. A storm destroys the windmill, yet Napoleon blames the destruction on the 'traitor Snowball.

Chapter VII—Snowball is blamed for more and more failures, which the humans attribute to planning errors. Hens eggs are now sold, which makes the hens rebel. Napoleon holds a meeting in which several animals are murdered by the dogs for their apparent treasons against the farm. It is revealed 'Beasts of England' may no longer be sung.

Chapter VIII—More of the commandments appear to change, but the animals are persuaded that this is not the case. Napoleon has now taken the title of 'Leader' and has multiple other honours. Trading with humans intensifies. A further battle with humans takes place, with the windmill destroyed, several animals killed, and Boxer injured. The pigs begin drinking alcohol.

Chapter IX—Animal Farm is named a republic and Napoleon unanimously named the president. Moses the raven returns and speaks of Sugarcandy Mountain. Boxer grows frailer and one day collapses. The pigs announce that he will be taken to hospital, but Benjamin reads on the van that he is in fact being taken to a slaughterhouse. Squealer announces that he died at the hospital, and that the van had only just been bought by the hospital.

Chapter X—Years pass by. Many animals die and few can remember the rebellion. Only the pigs seem richer, and begin walking on two legs. Humans come over for a meeting and commend how hard the pigs make the animals work, for so little rations. The name Animal Farm is returned to 'Manor Farm.' The animals can no longer differentiate between people and pigs.