

# Animal farm by george orwell

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Animal Farm is an allegorical novella by George Orwell published in England on 17 August 1945. According to Orwell, the book reflects events leading up to and during the Stalin era before the Second World War. Orwell, a democratic socialist,[1] was a critic of Joseph Stalin and hostile to Moscow-directed Stalinism, especially after his experiences with the NKVD and the Spanish Civil War.[2] In a letter to Yvonne Davet, Orwell described Animal Farm as his novel “ contre Stalin”. [3] The original title was Animal Farm: A Fairy Story, but the subtitle was dropped by U.

S. publishers for its 1946 publication and subsequently all but one of the translations during Orwell’s lifetime omitted the addition.

Other variations in the title include: A Satire and A Contemporary Satire.[3] Orwell suggested the title Union des républiques socialistes animales for the French translation, which recalled the French name of the Soviet Union, Union des républiques socialistes soviétiques, and which abbreviates to URSA, the Latin for “ bear”, a symbol of Russia.

[3]

Time magazine chose the book as one of the 100 best English-language novels (1923 to 2005);[4] it also places at number 31 on the Modern Library List of Best 20th-Century Novels. It won a Retrospective Hugo Award in 1996 and is also included in the Great Books of the Western World.

The novel addresses not only the corruption of the revolution by its leaders but also how wickedness, indifference, ignorance, greed and myopia corrupt the revolution. It portrays corrupt leadership as the flaw in revolution, rather than the act of revolution itself. It also shows how potential ignorance and

<https://assignbuster.com/animal-farm-by-george-orwell-2/>

indifference to problems within a revolution could allow horrors to happen if a smooth transition to a people's government is not achieved.

### Plot summary

#### Snowball's revolution

Old Major, the old boar on the Manor Farm, calls the animals on the farm for a meeting, where he compares the humans to parasites and teaches the animals a revolutionary song, 'Beasts of England'. When Major dies two young pigs, Snowball and Napoleon, assume command and turn his dream into a philosophy. The animals revolt and drive the drunken and irresponsible Mr Jones from the farm, renaming it "Animal Farm". They adopt Seven Commandments of Animal-ism, the most important of which is, "All animals are equal".

Snowball attempts to teach the animals reading and writing; food is plentiful, and the farm runs smoothly. The pigs elevate themselves to positions of leadership and set aside special food items, ostensibly for their personal health. Napoleon takes the pups from the farm dogs and trains them privately. When Mr Jones tries to retake the farm, the animals defeat him at what they call the "Battle of the Cowshed". Napoleon and Snowball struggle for leadership. When Snowball announces his idea for a windmill, Napoleon has his dogs chase Snowball away and declares himself leader.

#### Napoleon's rule

Napoleon enacts changes to the governance structure of the farm, replacing meetings with a committee of pigs, who will run the farm. Using a young pig named Squealer as a "mouthpiece", Napoleon announces that Snowball

stole the idea for the windmill from him. The animals work harder with the promise of easier lives with the windmill. After a violent storm, the animals find the windmill annihilated. Napoleon and Squealer convince the animals that Snowball destroyed the windmill, although the scorn of the neighbouring farmers suggests that the windmill's walls were too thin.

Once Snowball becomes a scapegoat, Napoleon begins purging the farm with his dogs, killing animals he accuses of consorting with Snowball. He and the pigs abuse their power, imposing more control while reserving privileges for themselves and rewriting history, villainising Snowball and glorifying Napoleon. Squealer justifies every statement Napoleon makes, even the pigs' alteration of the Seven Commandments of Animalism. "No animal shall sleep in beds" is changed to "No animal shall sleep in beds with sheets" when the pigs are discovered to have been sleeping in the old farmhouse. "No animal shall drink alcohol" is changed to "No animal shall drink alcohol to excess" when the pigs discover the farmer's whiskey. 'Beasts of England' is replaced by an anthem glorifying Napoleon, who appears to be adopting the lifestyle of a man. The animals, though cold, starving and overworked, remain convinced that they are better off than they were when under Mr Jones. Squealer abuses the animals' poor memories and invents numbers to show their improvement.

Mr Frederick, one of the neighbouring farmers, swindles Napoleon by buying old wood with forged money, and then attacks the farm, using blasting powder to blow up the restored windmill. Though the animals win the battle, they do so at great cost, as many, including Boxer, are wounded. Despite his injuries, Boxer continues working harder and harder, until he collapses while

working on the windmill. Napoleon sends for a van to take Boxer to the veterinary surgeon's, explaining that better care can be given there. Benjamin the donkey, who "could read as well as any pig",<sup>[5]</sup> notices that the van belongs to "Alfred Simmonds, Horse Slaughterer and Glue Boiler" (a knacker), and attempts to mount a rescue; but the animals' attempts are futile. Squealer reports that the van was purchased by the hospital and the writing from the previous owner had not been repainted. He recounts a tale of Boxer's death in the hands of the best medical care. Shortly after Boxer's death, it is revealed that the pigs have purchased more whiskey.

### Humanisation

Years pass, and the pigs learn to walk upright, carry whips and wear clothes. The Seven Commandments are reduced to a single phrase: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others". Napoleon holds a dinner party for the pigs and the humans of the area, who congratulate Napoleon on having the hardest-working but least fed animals in the country. Napoleon announces an alliance with the humans, against the labouring classes of both "worlds". He abolishes practices and traditions related to the Revolution, and changes the name of the farm to "The Manor Farm".

The animals, overhearing the conversation, notice that the faces of the pigs have begun changing. During a poker match, an argument breaks out between Napoleon and Mr Pilkington when they both play the Ace of Spades, and the animals realise that the faces of the pigs look like the faces of humans, and no one can tell the difference between them.

### Animalism

“ Seven Commandments” redirects here. For the Noahide code, see Seven Laws of Noah.:

The seven laws listed by the Tosefta and the Talmud are[7]

1. Prohibition of Idolatry
2. Prohibition of Murder
3. Prohibition of Theft
4. Prohibition of Sexual immorality
5. Prohibition of Blasphemy
6. Prohibition of eating flesh taken from an animal while it is still alive
7. Establishment of courts of law

The pigs Snowball, Napoleon, and Squealer adapt Old Major’s ideas into an actual philosophy, which they formally name Animalism. Soon after, Napoleon and Squealer indulge in the vices of humans (drinking alcohol, sleeping in beds, trading). Squealer is employed to alter the Seven Commandments to account for this humanisation, an allusion to the Soviet government’s revising of history in order to exercise control of the people’s beliefs about themselves and their society.[6]

The original commandments are:

1. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.
2. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.
3. No animal shall wear clothes.
4. No animal shall sleep in a bed.
5. No animal shall drink alcohol.

6. No animal shall kill any other animal.

7. All animals are equal.

Later, Napoleon and his pigs secretly revise some commandments to clear them of accusations of law-breaking (such as “ No animal shall drink alcohol” having “ to excess” appended to it and “ No animal shall sleep in a bed” with “ with sheets” added to it). The changed commandments are as follows, with the changes bolded:

1. No animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets.

2. No animal shall drink alcohol to excess.

3. No animal shall kill any other animal without cause.

Eventually these are replaced with the maxims, “ All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others”, and “ Four legs good, two legs better!” as the pigs become more human. This is an ironic twist to the original purpose of the Seven Commandments, which were supposed to keep order within Animal Farm by uniting the animals together against the humans, and by prevent animals from following the humans’ evil habits. Through the revision of the commandments, Orwell demonstrates how simply political dogma can be turned into malleable propaganda.[7]

## Characters

### Pigs

Old Major – An aged prize Middle White boar provides the inspiration that fuels the Rebellion in the book. He is an allegory of Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin, the founders of communism, in that he draws up the principles of the

revolution. His skull being put on revered public display also recalls Lenin, whose embalmed body was put on display.[8][9]

Napoleon – “ A large, rather fierce-looking Berkshire boar, the only Berkshire on the farm, not much of a talker, but with a reputation for getting his own way”,[10] An allegory of Joseph Stalin,[8] Napoleon is the main villain of Animal Farm. In the first French version of Animal Farm, Napoleon is called César, the French form of Caesar,[3] although another translation has him as Napoléon.[11]

Snowball – Napoleon’s rival and original head of the farm after Jones’ overthrow. He is mainly based on Leon Trotsky,[8] but also combines elements from Vladimir Lenin.[9]

Squealer – A small white fat porker who serves as Napoleon’s right hand pig and minister of propaganda, holding a position similar to that of Molotov.[8]

Minimus – A poetic pig who writes the second and third national anthems of Animal Farm after the singing of “ Beasts of England” is banned.

The Piglets – Hinted to be the children of Napoleon (albeit not explicitly stated) and are the first generation of animals actually subjugated to his idea of animal inequality.

The young pigs – Four pigs who complain about Napoleon’s takeover of the farm but are quickly silenced and later executed.

Pinkeye – A minor pig who is mentioned only once; he is the pig that tastes Napoleon’s food to make sure it is not poisoned, in response to rumours about an assassination attempt on Napoleon.



## Humans

Mr Jones – The former owner of the farm, Jones is a very heavy drinker. The animals revolt against him after he drinks so much that he does not feed or take care of them.

Mr Frederick – The tough owner of Pinchfield, a well-kept neighbouring farm, who briefly enters into an “alliance” with Napoleon, represents Germany.

Mr Pilkington – The easy-going but crafty owner of Foxwood, a neighbouring farm overgrown with weeds, represents Britain.

Mr Whymper – A man hired by Napoleon for the public relations of Animal Farm to human society, who is eventually used to procure luxuries like alcohol for the pigs.

## Equines

Boxer – Boxer is a loyal, kind, dedicated, and respectable horse, although quite dim-witted.

Clover – Boxer’s companion, constantly caring for him; she also acts as a matriarch of sorts for the other horses and the other animals in general.

Mollie – Mollie is a self-centred, self-indulgent and vain young white mare who quickly leaves for another farm after the revolution.

Benjamin – Benjamin, a donkey, is one of the oldest animals. He has the worst temper, but is also one of the wisest animals on the farm, and is one of the few who can actually read. He is skeptical and pessimistic, his most-often-made statement being “Life will go on as it has always gone on – that is, badly.”[12]

## Other animals

Muriel – A wise old goat who is friends with all of the animals on the farm. She, like Benjamin and Snowball, is one of the few animals on the farm who can read.

The Puppies – Offspring of Jessie and Bluebell, taken away from them by Napoleon at birth and reared by Napoleon to be his security force.

Moses – An old raven who occasionally visits the farm, regaling its denizens with tales of a wondrous place beyond the clouds called Sugarcandy Mountain, where he avers that all animals go when they die—but only if they work hard. He is interpreted as symbolising the Russian Orthodox Church, with Sugarcandy Mountain an allusion to Heaven for the animals.[13]

The Sheep – They show limited understanding of the situations but nonetheless blindly support Napoleon's ideals.

The Hens – The hens are among the first to rebel against Napoleon.

The Cows – Their milk is stolen by the pigs, who learn to milk them, and is stirred into the pigs' mash every day while the other animals are denied such luxuries.

The Cat – Never seen to carry out any work, the cat is absent for long periods, and is forgiven because her excuses are so convincing and she “purred so affectionately that it was impossible not to believe in her good intentions”.[14] She has no interest in the politics of the farm, and the only time she is recorded as having participated in an election, she is found to have actually “voted on both sides”.[14]

## Glossary of Terms

Coccidiosis: a parasitic infection that causes bloody diarrhea and sudden death in animals

Communism: a theory or system of social organization based on the holding of all property in common, actual ownership being ascribed to the community as a whole or to the state; in practice, communism is often a totalitarian system of government

Comrade: a fellow member of a political party; a member of the Communist party

Disinter: to exhume; to unearth that which is buried

Proletariat: in Marxism, the class of workers, especially industrial wage earners, who do not possess capital or property and must sell their labor to survive

Propaganda: information, ideas, or rumors disseminated to help or harm a person, group, movement, institution, nation, or other entity

Regime: a mode or system of rule or government; such a system when in power

Socialism: a theory or system of social organization that advocates vesting the ownership and control of the means of production and distribution, of capital, land, and other assets in the community as a whole

Totalitarianism: absolute control by the state or a governing branch of a highly centralized institution

Tushes: small, short tusks such as those belonging to a boar.

## Major Themes

### The Soviet Union under Stalinism

Animal Farm is a satire of totalitarian governments in their many guises. But Orwell composed the book for a more specific purpose: to serve as a cautionary tale about Stalinism. It was for this reason that he faced such difficulty in getting the book published; by the time Animal Farm was ready to meet its readers, the Allies were cooperating with the Soviet Union. The allegorical characters of the novel represent specific historical figures and different factions of Imperial Russian and Soviet society. These include Karl Marx (Major), Vladimir Lenin (Major), Leon Trotsky (Snowball), Joseph Stalin (Napoleon), Adolf Hitler (Frederick), the Allies (Pilkington), the peasants (Boxer), the elite (Mollie), and the church (Moses).

The resemblance of some of the novel's events to events in Soviet history is indubitable. For example, Snowball's and Napoleon's power struggle is a direct allegory of Trotsky's and Stalin's. Frederick's trade agreement with Napoleon, and his subsequent breaking of the agreement, represents the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact that preceded World War II. The following Battle of the Windmill represents World War II itself.

Despite his fairy-tale clarity in satirizing some historical events, Orwell is less specific about others. For example, the executions in Chapter VII conflate the Red Terror with the Great Purge. The executions themselves bear resemblance to both events, although their details connect them more to the Moscow Trials than to the Red Terror. Squealer's subsequent announcement that the executions have ended the Rebellion connects them to the period of

the Red Terror, however. Orwell leaves some ambiguity in the identities of the Rebellion and the Battle of the Cowshed. These ambiguities help the reader focus on the overall satire of Stalinism and the broader warning about the evils of totalitarian government.

### The Inevitability of Totalitarianism

Orwell held the pessimistic belief that totalitarianism was inevitable, even in the West. According to Russell Baker, who wrote the preface to Animal Farm's 1996 Signet Classics version, Orwell's pessimism stemmed from his having grown up in an age of dictatorship. Witnessing Hitler's and Stalin's movements from afar, as well as fighting totalitarianism in the Spanish Civil War, Orwell came to believe in the rise of a new species of autocrat, worse even than the tyrants of old. This cynicism is reflected in both of his highly successful novels, Animal Farm and 1984. Orwell emphasizes the insidiousness of totalitarianism early in the novel, when the pigs take the fresh milk and apples.

The pigs justify their actions on the basis of their superiority; they are smart and need more nutrition than the other animals to fuel their brainpower. There is no scientific basis for the pigs' claim—in fact, if anyone needs more food to fuel their labor, it is the manual laborers—but they can count on the animals' being too ignorant to realize that. In this way, Orwell makes the point that totalitarianism need not be blatant in order to be operating. It can hide under the guise of the “greater good” as it did in the Soviet Union before the totalitarianism became obvious.

Orwell uses a cyclical structure in *Animal Farm*, which helps advance the idea of totalitarianism's predictability. The novel begins with Jones as autocratic tyrant and ends with Napoleon not only in Jones's position, but in his clothes as well. Over the course of the novel, Napoleon essentially becomes Jones just as Stalin becomes an autocrat after pretending to espouse equality and freedom. Orwell cements this idea in the book's final scene, where he writes, " Twelve voices were shouting in anger, and they were all alike. No question, now, what had happened to the faces of the pigs. The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which" (139). The circularity of Orwell's story prevents the reader from imagining a better future for *Animal Farm*. After all, even if another Rebellion were to take place, its leaders would eventually come to emulate Napoleon.

According to Baker, technology turned out to be the force freeing people from Orwell's age of dictators. But " technology" can be just another banner under which to rally the people. While Orwell does portray technology as a source of progress in *Animal Farm*, he points out that it is useless unless it is in the people's hands. Most notably, even when the windmill is finished it is used for milling corn instead of its original purpose of supplying the animals with electricity in their stalls.

### Intelligence and Education as Tools of Oppression

From the very beginning of the novel, we become aware of education's role in stratifying *Animal Farm*'s population. Following Major's death, the pigs are the ones that take on the task of organizing and mobilizing the other animals because they are " generally recognized as being the cleverest of the

animals” (35). At first, the pigs are loyal to their fellow animals and to the revolutionary cause. They translate Major’s vision of the future faithfully into the Seven Commandments of Animalism. However, it is not long before the pigs’ intelligence and education turn from tools of enlightenment to implements of oppression. The moment the pigs are faced with something material that they want—the fresh milk—they abandon their morals and use their superior intellect and knowledge to deceive the other animals.

The pigs also limit the other animals’ opportunities to gain intelligence and education early on. They teach themselves to read and write from a children’s book but destroy it before the other animals can have the same chance. Indeed, most of the animals never learn more than a few letters of the alphabet. Once the pigs cement their status as the educated elite, they use their mental advantage to manipulate the other animals. For example, knowing that the other animals cannot read the Seven Commandments, they revise them whenever they like.

The pigs also use their literacy to learn trades from manuals, giving them an opportunity for economic specialization and advancement. Content in the role of the intelligentsia, the pigs forgo manual labor in favor of bookkeeping and organizing. This shows that the pigs have not only the advantage of opportunity, but also the opportunity to reject whatever opportunities they like. The pigs’ intelligence and education allow them to bring the other animals into submission through the use of propaganda and revisionism. At the book’s end, we witness Napoleon’s preparations to educate a new generation of pigs and indoctrinate them into the code of oppression.

Propaganda and Duplicity

<https://assignbuster.com/animal-farm-by-george-orwell-2/>

Working as a propagandist during World War II, Orwell experienced firsthand both the immense power and the dishonesty of propaganda. Many types of governments make use of propaganda, not only totalitarian ones. Consider, for instance, the arguments that led many United States citizens to go along with the idea of invading Iraq after the September 11, 2001, terror attacks. Propaganda serves the positive task of uniting the people, sometimes at the cost of misleading them. Orwell takes a firm stance on the harmfulness of propaganda in *Animal Farm* while acknowledging its value for rallying a mistreated and disillusioned populace.

In Chapter IX, Orwell demonstrates the positive value of propaganda. By this point, the animals are so downtrodden that they are desperate for something in which to believe. (Note the irony, though: it is Napoleon who has robbed them of their belief in the original version of Animalism.) The falsely optimistic statistics, the songs, and especially the Spontaneous Demonstrations give the animals something to live for. This chapter is an exception in terms of portraying propaganda in a positive light. For the majority of *Animal Farm*, Orwell skewers propaganda and exposes its nature as deception.

Squealer represents a totalitarian government's propaganda machine. Eloquent to a fault, he can make the animals believe almost anything. This fact is especially clear in Squealer's interactions with Clover and Muriel. Each time Clover suspects that the Seven Commandments have been changed, Squealer manages to convince her that she is wrong. After the executions, Napoleon abolishes the singing of "Beasts of England" in favor of a new anthem, the lyrics of which contain a promise never to harm *Animal Farm*. In



this propagandist manoeuvre, Napoleon replaces the revolutionary spirit of “Beasts of England” with the exact opposite, a promise not to rebel.

In addition to being a source of manipulation, propaganda is an agent of fear and terror. Orwell demonstrates this quite clearly with Napoleon’s vilification of Snowball and his assurances that Snowball could attack the animals at any minute. He uses similar fear tactics regarding Frederick and Pilkington. The most egregious example of propaganda in the novel is the maxim that replaces the Seven Commandments: “All animals are equal / But some animals are more equal than others.” The idea of “more equal” is mathematically improbable and a nonsensical manipulation of language, but by this time, the animals are too brainwashed to notice.

#### Violence and Terror as Means of Control

In *Animal Farm*, Orwell criticizes the ways that dictators use violence and terror to frighten their populations into submission. Violence is one of the yokes from which the animals wish to free themselves when they prepare for the Rebellion. Not only does Jones overwork the animals and steal the products of their labor, but he can whip or slaughter them at his discretion. Once the pigs gain control of the animals, they, like Jones, discover how useful violence and terror can be. They use this knowledge to their full advantage. The foremost example of violence and terror in the novel is the pattern of public executions. The executions can be said to represent both the Red Terror and the Great Purge, but they stand more broadly for the abuse of power. For example, they are also similar to the Taliban’s public executions in Kabul’s soccer stadium in modern Afghanistan.

Capital punishment for criminals is a hotly debated issue. Killing suspected criminals, as Napoleon does, is quite another issue. The executions perhaps best symbolize the Moscow Trials, which were show trials that Stalin arranged to instill fear in the Soviet people. To witnesses at the time, the accused traitors' confessions seemed to be given freely. In fact, they were coerced. Napoleon likely coerces confessions from many of the animals that he executes. Orwell's use of the allegory genre serves him well in the execution scene. Execution with weapons is a violent and horrifying act, but many people have become desensitized to it. Orwell's allegorical executioners, the dogs that kill cruelly, portray the bloody and inescapably animalistic side of execution.

Terror comes also in threats and propaganda. Each time the animals dare to question an aspect of Napoleon's regime, Squealer threatens them with Jones's return. This is doubly threatening to the animals because it would mean another battle that, if lost, would result in a return to their former lifestyle of submission. Jones's return is such a serious threat that it quashes the animals' curiosity without fail. The other major example of fear tactics in the novel is the threat of Snowball and his collaborators.

Napoleon is able to vilify Snowball in the latter's absence and to make the animals believe that his return, like Jones's, is imminent. Snowball is a worse threat than Jones, because Jones is at least safely out of Animal Farm. Snowball is "proved" to be not only lurking along Animal Farm's borders but infiltrating the farm. Napoleon's public investigation of Snowball's whereabouts cements the animals' fear of Snowball's influence. In modern

language, Snowball is pegged as the terrorist responsible for the infringements on the rights and liberties instigated by the pigs.

### Exploitation and the Need for Human Rights

Exploitation is the issue around which the animals unite. Initially, the animals do not realize Jones is exploiting them. For this reason, Old Major's speech is a revelation of momentous proportions. Major explains to the animals that they are enslaved and exploited and that Man is to blame. He teaches them not only what exploitation means, but also the fact that it is not inevitable. Orwell suggests that exploitation is, in fact, bound to happen when one class of society has an advantage over another. The opposite of exploitation, according to Major, is the state of being "rich and free." Major's ideas about animal rights symbolize the importance—and scarcity—of human rights in an oppressive regime. Gaining freedom does not necessarily lead people also to become rich, but it is better to be poor and free than poor and exploited.

All the animals on Animal Farm are exploited under Napoleon's control, save the pigs. Even the dogs, which work closely with the pigs, are exploited. The dogs face perhaps even a worse form of exploitation than the other animals, because they are made into agents of intimidation and death. Whereas Napoleon exploits the other animals' physical strength and their ignorance, he exploits the dogs' viciousness and turns them into villains against their parents' wishes.

Boxer's life is a particularly sad example of exploitation because he exploits himself, believing wholeheartedly in Napoleon's goodness. In the end, Napoleon turns the tables and exploits Boxer, having him slaughtered for

profit. By the end of the novel, we see clearly how the animals participate in their own exploitation. They are beginning to build a schoolhouse for the thirty-one young pigs Napoleon has fathered (perhaps an oblique reference to the “Thirty Tyrants” of ancient Greece).

That schoolhouse will never benefit the animals that build it; rather, it will be used to educate the pigs and indoctrinate them into the cycle of exploiting others. Throughout the novel, Orwell shows us how the lack of human rights results in total helplessness. However, though it underscores the need for human rights, the novel does not suggest how to achieve them. After all, once the animals expel Jones and gain rights for themselves, the pigs take those rights away and the cycle of exploitation continues with new players.

### Apathy and Acceptance

In the beginning of *Animal Farm*, the idea of freedom rouses the animals as if from a long slumber. Immediately following Major’s death, the animals begin preparing themselves for the Rebellion; just the idea of revolution is enough to motivate them, since they do not expect it to happen in their lifetimes. By the book’s end, the animals have become as apathetic as Benjamin always was. Despite the many hardships and injustices they face, the animals’ pride as well as Napoleon’s propaganda keep them invested in the “greater good” and the illusion of freedom.

If Benjamin is the harbinger of apathy, Boxer is its antithesis. Strong not only in body but also in spirit, Boxer will make any sacrifice for the benefit of *Animal Farm*. With Boxer’s eventual betrayal by the leaders he served so unconditionally, Orwell lays bare another type of apathy—theirs. Far from

truly considering Boxer a loyal comrade, the pigs treat him as apathetically as they would a mere object. Symbolically, they even make a profit by having him turned into literal objects—glue and bone meal.

Boxer's enthusiasm does not give him an advantage, but the other animals' eventual apathy gives them a defense mechanism against the painful reality of their lives. It is no coincidence that Animal Farm's most apathetic and cynical animal, Benjamin, is one of those that survives the longest. Benjamin's emotional detachment from situations, whether they are good or bad, keeps him from being disappointed. In his apathy and cynicism, Benjamin represents the stereotypical “ gloomy” Russian and also the perennially pessimistic Orwell himself.

#### Summary and analysis of Chapter I

Mr. Jones, the owner of Manor Farm, stumbles drunkenly up to bed as the farm animals wait in still silence. The moment he is out of sight, they begin to bustle around, preparing themselves for the big meeting that is to take place that night. Old Major has called the meeting to discuss a strange dream he had the previous night. He is waiting for his fellow animals in the big barn.