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Symbolism in Animal Farm George Orwell was born in 1903 (“ George Orwell”). He joined the Indian Imperial Police force in Burma in 1922 (“ George Orwell”). He resigned in 1927 and became a writer (“ George Orwell”). He wrote Animal Farm based on Stalin’s betrayal of the Russian Revolution (“ George Orwell”). In George Orwell’s 1946 novella, Animal Farm, a political roman Æ; clef, the author disguises farm animals for real people during the Russian Revolution and the author uses satire to illustrate how the communists gained control over the masses. According to the book, Understanding Animal Farm, “ Animal Farm is a political allegory of the history of the Soviet Union” (Rodden xviii). Just as in Understanding Animal Farm, the book Animal Farm: Pastoralism and Politics, it says, “ The Political theme of Animals Farm is closely associated with its satiric tone and its form as allegorical fable” (Smyer 25). Both of these books state how Orwell turned his book Animal Farm into a fable against Stalin and the Soviet Union. “ Animal Farm shows how fictional rhetorical strategies inevitably led to a pessimistic conclusion contradicting Orwell's own political actions and opinions during the period 1936-46, and attributes that contradiction to the effect of Orwell's chosen literary genre, combining elements of the fable and the fairy tale” (Kirschner). In the early 1900s, the Soviet Union was taking control of its country. The people respected their government and believed everything they said. Orwell was furious because he hated what was happening. Joseph Stalin was the leader of Soviet Russia at the time. The Soviet Union was at its height and Stalin was held in highest esteem in Britain, Orwell’s home country, both among the people and an important

social class, named intelligentsia. Orwell hated this fact because of how blind the people were to Stalin's control. Orwell couldn't expose his hatred for Stalin and the Soviet Union because of his fear of being arrested for denouncing Stalin, so he tried a different tactic; he wrote a book about exactly what was happening, except made everyone farm animals. The humans in the book were supposed to represent different countries like Germany and Britain ("Animal Farm"). In the book, *Animal Farm*, the characters that represented Stalin and his other leaders, like Lenin and Trotsky, were pigs ("Animal Farm"). The whole mass of people was simply represented as the other types of animals, such as horses and cows ("Animal Farm"). These characters made this book have a comical edge to it. At the time, Russia felt that Germany and Britain were trying to control them, so Stalin fixed the minds of the Russians into making them think that the other countries were actually the enemy. The book *Animal Farm* is about animals not liking their owner and agreeing with his view on things. The head pig, other known as Old Major, had an idea to overthrow the farmer and take control of the farm (Orwell 6-14). Old Major is the father of "Animalism" ("Animal Farm"). Old Major passed before he got the chance to start the Rebellion (Orwell 15). Napoleon and Squealer, who were the pigs that lead the Animal Rebellion, took Old Major's plan into action after his death (Orwell 16). The animals got together and overthrew the farmer and made the farm theirs (Orwell 20). Once the humans were gone, the animals needed a leader. They decided to appoint the pigs since they were the smartest and were the ones who led the Rebellion (Orwell 24-25). As time went on, the pigs started distorting the commandments, like the most important one, "All

animals are equal" to " All Animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" (Orwell 134). The animals were too gullible to realize what was happening to them before it was too late. Soon the pigs started trading with the humans again, and they learned to walk on two legs and wore clothes (Orwell 132). One of the rules was that no one was allowed inside the house, but eventually the pigs moved into the house and the animals didn't realize the commandments were changing (Orwell 66). The animals were becoming scared of the pigs. They always had dogs guarding them and they never helped with the work (Orwell 129). Soon humans came to the farm and the animals weren't sure who they should be more afraid of, the humans or the pigs (Orwell 135). The night the humans visited, the animals witnessed something strange. When they looked back and forth from pig to human face, they could no longer tell the difference between human and pig (Orwell 141). Old Major is to represent Karl Marx, but in some ways also symbolizes the original communist leader, Vladimir Lenin. Lenin founded the Russian Communist Party (" Vladimir Lenin"). Joseph Stalin, represented by Napoleon, discovered Lenin's writings and joined Lenin's Bolsheviks. " In 1922, he was made general secretary of the Communist Party, a post not considered particularly significant at the time but which gave him control over appointments and thus allowed him to build up a base of support. After Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin promoted himself as his political heir and gradually outmaneuvered his rivals. By the late 1920s, Stalin was effectively the dictator of the Soviet Union" (" Joseph Stalin"). Stalin became dictator, just as Napoleon became the dictator over Animal Farm. Squealer represented the Russian media (" Animal Farm"). The people needed to hear

someone's version of the truth, so they listened to Stalin's version, even if it wasn't the full truth. When Napoleon had the dogs slaughter the animals for doing crimes against him, Stalin had done things along those lines, too (Orwell 82-84). During the Great Terror of the 1930's, Stalin purged the Soviet Party of 'enemies of the people,' resulting in the execution of thousands ("Joseph Stalin"). When Napoleon slaughtered the animals, part of them were hens. They refused to give up their eggs and confessed crimes that they were Snowball's spies. "This is a reference to Stalin's attempt to collectivize the peasant farmers of Russia. The hens attempted to resist the order at first, just as the peasant farmers of the Ukraine. But, just as in real life, they were eventually starved into submission. In the book, 9 hens died during the incident. In real-life, it is estimated that somewhere between 4 and 10 million Ukrainian peasants were starved to death by Stalin" ("Animal Farm"). Before Snowball was chased out of Animal Farm, he has the idea to build a windmill that promised to make to animal's lives easier. Napoleon chased him out and made the plan his own saying that it was Snowball who stole his idea in the first place (Orwell 57). "The windmill is a symbol for Stalin's 'Five-Year plan'. Just as the windmill was promised to make the animal's life easier, the 'Five-Year Plan' was supposed to improve Soviet industry to the point that the proletariat's life as well by increasing production and allowing the Soviets to shorten the work-week. And just like the windmill, Stalin's plan was an utter failure. After the destruction of the Windmill, the Animals decided to build another one and in real-life, Stalin kept churning out new 'Five-year Plans' - promising that each new plan would solve all of Russia's problems and bring the USSR closer to parity with

the industrialized nations of the west" (" Animal Farm"). When Napoleon started trading with the humans, it represented the trading with other countries. When Napoleon sold the wood to Mr. Frederick, it represented the Nazi-Soviet pact (" Animal Farm"). After a while when humans started trading with the animals, which was against one of the commandments, Napoleon decided to change the name of Animal Farm back to Manor Farm (Orwell 140). Animal Farm represented the Soviet Union, and Manor Farm represented Russia (" Animal Farm"). This was foreshadowing events. The Soviet Union became Russia yet again, and decided to be part of the world again. Unfortunately, this led to the Second World War, which in the end Russia lost. They didn't want to part of the war, but in the end they had no choice and led to the downfall of Stalin. Orwell didn't need to put this in his book because he probably expected it to happen, realizing that Animal Farm, or Manor Farm, in the end didn't prosper. Works Cited " Animal Farm. " Newspeak Dictionary. Newspeak Dictionary. 2001. Web. 8 Dec. 2012. " George Orwell. " BBC. BBC, History. 2012. Web. 10 Dec. 2012. " Joseph Stalin. " BBC. BBC, History. 2012. Web. 11 Jan. 2013. Kirschner, Paul. " The Dual Purpose of Animal Farm. " Review of English Studies Nov. 2004: 759-786. EBSCOhost Industries. Hazleton Area High School. Hazleton Area High School Library. 10 Dec. 2012. Orwell, George. Animal Farm. New York, NY: New American Library, 1946. Text. Rodden, John. Understanding Animal Farm. Westport, CT: The Greenwood Press, 1999. Text. Smyer, Richard I. Animal Farm: Pastoralism and Politics. New York, NY: Twayne Publishers, 1988. Text. " Vladimir Lenin. " Biography. com. A+E Television Networks, LLC. 1996. Web. 11 Dec. 2012.