

# Animal farm essay

[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. The novel addresses not only the corruption of the revolution by its leaders but also how wickedness, indifference, ignorance and greed corrupt the revolution. It portrays corrupt leadership through things such as the use of manipulation and the power of language. It also shows how potential ignorance and indifference to problems within a revolution could allow horrors to happen if a smooth transition to a people's government is not achieved. Lord Actin once stated " Power corrupts and absolute power, corrupts absolutely. " Through this quote he refers to how people use power for their own interests. In the novella Animal Farm, power is presented as a corruptive force. This is shown through various techniques that Orwell uses such as allegory, irony, symbolism and metaphorical language. Orwell singles out one of the pigs, Napoleon, and creates an image of corruption through the use of verbal and situational irony when leading and being in charge of all the animals and the barn. As the pigs gain power, it accordingly becomes harder and harder for them to resist the temptations of enjoying an easier life for themselves Verbal irony is used to criticise dictatorship and communism. Napoleon vows to things that should never be done by an animal yet once he finds out what he can do, the rules and commandments are adjusted to fit him. " No animal shall sleep in a bed" becomes " No animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets. " When he starts drinking, " No animal may drink alcohol" soon becomes " No animal may drink alcohol to excess. " A good example is when Napoleon begins to walk, something that

they vowed they would never do, and changes their motto to " four legs good, two legs better. " Situational Irony is along the same line as verbal irony in the fact that Napoleon aims to get rid of all aspects of human qualities. Yet when he realizes that he has the same qualities as humans, he supposes he is more superior than any other animal on the farm hence the changes made in the seven commandments. Manipulation is used through some animals so that their power can be reinforced to the audience. The animals that are more intelligent use manipulation through their language and their physical attributes. Due to the lack of intelligence of most animals, they could be easily victimized. Many of the animals did not have an education to understand what was happening in the farm. Only few animals knew the alphabet and the animals needed someone to read for them, " Benjamin consented to break his rule, and he read out to her what was written." The animals were also not strong enough to compete with the stronger pigs. Napoleon had dogs that did what he requested, including killed many of the animals. The pigs trained the sheep to stop all the other animals from talking " they might have uttered some word of protest... all the sheep burst out into a tremendous bleating" Manipulation through language is used in the novella as well. The fourth commandment is first " no animal shall sleep in a bed" yet when Napoleon figures out the luxuries of a bed it is then changed to " no animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets". When this is discovered by Clover she questions why Napoleon was sleeping in a bed and the rest of them weren't. Squealer then manipulated them into believing that all animals sleep in beds but that humans sleep in beds with sheets which is what they must not do. The power of language represents

the ways in which words can affect crowd behavior and belief. This is seen through the two characters of Old Major and Napoleon. When Old Major gives his first speech, the animals are moved by the positive motivation he evidences as he tries to let them know how good life could be. When there are mottoes such as "Two legs bad, four legs good" the animals find the repetition comforting and basic: they now have an idea to follow. When the motto changes at the end, we see that the animals and their beliefs can change as quickly as the words. Language, whether it is in the commandments painted on the barn, or in the ways in which Napoleon gets the sheep to "go along" with whatever he says, is the driving force behind nearly every behavior of the animals except for the pigs.