

Old major's speech in george orwell's animal farm essay sample



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1. Who is Old Major? Why does his address the animals?

In the story Old Major is a meritorious hog, thanks to all the prizes he got on several exhibitions other animals hold him in high esteem, as he is clever, smart and calm. His age gives him a supremacy in experience over his companions. He calls a meeting to discuss a strange dream he had and as a kind of authority elucidates how unfairly, cruelly and sorely all animals are treated by the human beings. Old Major was the first one to call them by the name " comrades" and this act of dubbing was in fact the beginning of a craving for freedom and sowing the grain of rebellion. To take the notion further, Old Major addresses the animals because he acts with some noble inducements to show them the trust in solidarity and strong belief in prosperous future if they federate. As a result, the hog might be perceived as a representation of a philosopher propagating the value of social justice, even naïve, however still hoping to inspire the people to aim for progress and put an end to being set in a treadmill.

2. One of the stylistic devices Orwell uses in the speech is rhetorical questions. Access Six Minutes. Speaking and Presentation Skills:

<http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/rhetorical-questions/> read A. Dlugan's " How many ways can you use rhetorical questions in your speech?" and then explain what purpose rhetorical questions serve in the Old Major's speech:

To start with, Old Major employs a series of rhetorical questions to persuade the animals to consider, really think about what he is talking about and allows them to relate to it easier. The protagonist structures his speech with two rhetorical questions together or in parallel close to each other to

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emphasize the essence of them. Secondly, the hog wants to influence his receivers and to be considered as a credible, persona, as the animals will have no doubt that he would ever tell them anything counterfeit. It should be pointed that thanks to rhetorical questions Old Major presents his point of view in details.

3. How does the Old Major formulate the "ethos" aspect of his speech?

Quote at least TWO specific examples.

The protagonist formulates the ethos because he tries to create and present his upper position towards his companions and what is more, thanks to this usage he shows wisdom and open-mindedness. Old Major employs his influence as a well-respected old boar to get the other animals to listen to him, gaining attention. He even tells them he is about to die (which is also pathos). QUOTATIONS:

- "Now, comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious, and short". - "I feel it my duty to pass on to you such wisdom I have acquired. I have had a long life, I have had much time for thought as I lay alone in my stall, and I think I may say that I understand the nature of life on this earth as well as any animal now living."

- "At one end of the big barn, on a sort of raised platform, Major was already ensconced on his bed of straw, under a lantern which hung from a beam."

4. The most important cognitive image in the speech is that of a dream.

What is its role? Which rhetorical strategy (logos, ethos, pathos) would you associate it with and why?

In my opinion, the rhetorical strategy that would be truly associated with the image of dream is a pathos. Old Major firstly captures their attention by saying that he had a dream the previous night but delays revealing what he had dreamt about and thus arouses their interest and curiosity: " Comrades, you have heard already about the strange dream that I had last night. But I will come to the dream later." Only at the end of a fairly long speech in which he indoctrinates them with the ideas of a socialist society and only after he had stirred them up into rebelling against their human masters, he reveals the details of his dream - he seems to be nostalgic in a moment. The significance of the dream which contains this revolutionary vision about the struggle which the animals have to undergo to attain their utopia - the fair and free world - is that it provides the idea and the mission for the animals to revolt against Mr. Jones, their master and to establish their supposedly free society.

5. Is the image and role of the dream in Animal Farm and in Martin Luther King's speech " I have a dream" the same or different?

Taking both images and roles of dreams in the speeches mentioned above, at the first sight we might think that the most obvious similarity is rhetorical. Old Major describes " a dream of the earth as it will be when Man has vanished." It is needless to point that both do describe an ideal society, however Old Major's speech calls for violent revolution and King's speech suggests as an article of faith that African-Americans and whites could become reconciled, and that they could live together in equality. Old Major does not share this belief, arguing instead that " all the evils of this life of ours spring from the tyranny of human beings." He does not believe that the <https://assignbuster.com/old-majors-speech-in-george-orwells-animal-farm-essay-sample/>

species could possibly be reconciled. Only by seizing power from the humans will the animals achieve equality. On the other hand, we should assume that the idea of "dream" exerted in both inspirational texts succeed in convincing the intended audience to implement in the intended actions. The two authors just went about it in different methods. They both expressed anger and anxiety at injustice and they both implied actions by the audience. Orwell used logos and pathos to incite violence, while Martin Luther King Jr employed pathos and ethos to curb racial tensions.