

## Responding to the Novel

### Analyzing the Novel

#### Identifying Facts

1. The novel opens with a remarkable scene. A big old pig is waiting for Manor Farm's animals to assemble in the barn. According to old Major, why is Man the enemy of the animals? What does Major urge the animals to do?
2. In Chapter II, what objections do some of the animals raise to the principles of Animalism?
3. Describe the events leading up to the Rebellion at Manor Farm.

#### Interpreting Meanings

4. Orwell's animals are immediately humanized. How would you describe the **characters** of old Major, Clover, Boxer, Benjamin, and Mollie?
5. How are Snowball, Napoleon, and Squealer characterized? What traits set them apart from the other animals, such as Clover and Boxer? (After reading the description of these three leaders, which of old Major's warnings seems particularly important to keep in mind?)
6. Why is the promise of Sugarcandy Mountain a threat to the Rebellion and to the principles of Animalism? How is Mollie's behavior also a threat?
7. Who do you think is responsible for the disappearance of the milk at the end of Chapter

II? What problems in the future of Animal Farm do you think this incident might **foreshadow**?

8. What incidents in the story so far suggest that Commandments 2 and 7 (see page 816) might not be true? Which other commandments do you think might cause trouble in the future?
9. How could the animals represent a human society in miniature? Look especially at Orwell's description of the animals as they assemble in the barn (page 810).
10. Do you think any events in the animals' Rebellion are like events in real rebellions or revolutions you have read about? Explain.
11. Do you identify or sympathize with any characters so far? Do you dislike any of them?

#### Writing About the Novel

#### A Creative Response

**Writing a Newspaper Story.** Write the newspaper story that might have been published the morning after the rebellion at Manor Farm. Tell **what** happened, **where** it happened, **whom** it happened to, and **why** it happened. What will your headline be? What attitude will you take about the Rebellion: do you approve or disapprove? Before you write, decide whether your newspaper readers are people or animals.

# Responding to the Novel

## CH. III and IV

### Analyzing the Novel

#### Identifying Facts

1. During the first summer after the Rebellion, why are the animals so happy? Identify the specific ways in which their lives have improved.
2. Although Commandment 7 states that all animals are equal, certain inequalities quickly become noticeable. Identify at least four of these inequalities.
3. The characters of Snowball and Napoleon are sharply contrasted. Describe their different attitudes toward re-educating the animals. What does each pig do to put his beliefs into action?
4. On what point are Snowball and Napoleon in complete agreement?
5. Describe the Battle of the Cowshed. What human ceremonies mark the animals' victory celebration?

#### Interpreting Meanings

6. Describe the conflict over power that is taking place between Snowball and Napoleon. At this point in the novel, which of the pigs are you "rooting for"? Tell why.
7. Compare Snowball's "Four legs good, two legs bad" with the Seven Commandments on page 816. Do you agree that this single maxim contains the "essential principle of Animalism"? Explain why or why not.
8. Besides giving the animals human characteristics, Orwell uses some of our stereotypes, or

#### 2. REPETITION (CONT.)

- a listener's consciousness, it tends to be remembered. Which group in the novel is trained to repeat the slogan so loudly and long that all "rational thought" becomes impossible?
3. **Loaded words.** Certain words—like *peace*, *patriotism*, *moral*—arouse such strong emotional responses that they are called **loaded words** (they are loaded with feelings). Look back on page 811 at old Major's speech, and find some examples of loaded words. What loaded words can you find in Squealer's explanation of why the pigs take all of the apples and milk? (See page 820.)
  4. **Powerful images.** Just as there are loaded words, certain images are loaded with powerful emotional associations. Gardens, rainbows, sunshine, clear streams—these images tend to make us "feel good." Find examples of such "loaded" images in the song "Beasts of England" (see page 812). Can you think of opposite images that would make us feel bad or afraid?

## ANIMAL FARM

fixed ideas, about animals. Most people, for example, believe that a typical dog is loving, loyal, and highly trainable; and that a typical cat is independent, lazy, and comfort-seeking. Give at least four examples from the novel where animals display what we think of as a typical trait for their species. (Consider the cat, dog, donkey, pig, and sheep.) Do you think Orwell has chosen the right animals for his story?

9. As you read about the Battle of the Cowshed, who did you want to win—the animals or the humans? What do you think Orwell has done—thus far in the novel—to make you feel this way?
10. What do you think might happen next in the story? Think of three possible ways the story might end.

### Analyzing Language and Vocabulary

#### Propaganda Techniques

**Propaganda** refers to the deliberate attempt to influence a mass audience to act or think a certain way. Usually the term is associated with an intent to deceive. Here are some common propaganda techniques. (Notice that the pigs are experts in propaganda.)

1. **Slogans.** A "catchy" slogan is more easily remembered than a complicated and perhaps more accurate explanation. What slogan do the pigs invent?
2. **Repetition.** When a message is "drummed" into
5. **Appeals to our fears.** A powerful propaganda technique is to play on a listener's fears. The message says, in effect, that if you don't do a certain thing (or if you don't think in a certain way), something that you fear very much will happen. How does Squealer use this device in his speech on page 820?
6. **Appeals to our basic desires and needs.** All human beings need food, drink, clothing, and shelter in order to survive. We also have emotional needs: we need to be loved and cared for, to have meaningful work, to have a sense of dignity and self-worth. Look at old Major's speech (pages 811–812) and Squealer's (page 820) to find examples of appeals to some of these desires and needs.

Can you think of how any of these **propaganda techniques** are used in the world today—either to sell you an idea, a political party, or a product?

# Responding to the Novel

## CH. V

## ANIMAL FARM

### Analyzing the Novel

#### Identifying Facts

1. Explain why Mollie is never mentioned again on Animal Farm.
2. Snowball and Napoleon are in **conflict** about everything on the farm. Contrast their plans for the farm, their ideas about defending the farm and building the windmill, and their methods of winning support for their ideas.
3. List the specific events that lead to Snowball's expulsion from Animal Farm.
4. List at least four important changes that take place at Animal Farm after Snowball leaves. Even though some of the animals try to protest, why are they unable to stop these changes?

#### Interpreting Meanings

5. In a totalitarian government, one political party or group maintains complete control and bans all opposition. In what specific ways has Animal Farm now become a totalitarian state?
6. What do you suppose **motivates** Napoleon to change his position on the windmill? What does this suggest about his **character**?
7. After Snowball's expulsion, what happens to democracy and equality on Animal Farm? What new values begin to take their place?
8. What do you think is **foreshadowed** by the dogs' behavior toward Napoleon?
9. Who are the nine dogs that suddenly appear? What group in a human society do you think these dogs would resemble?
10. Squealer and the sheep each fill essential roles in the new society. Explain each one's function. What do you think their human counterparts would be in a totalitarian government?
11. Summarize the propaganda techniques Squealer uses in his arguments on page 828. What pattern do you see emerging in Squealer's method of persuasion?
12. Do Squealer, Napoleon, or Snowball remind you in any way of people you know or have read about? Explain.
13. How *should* the animals respond to Squealer?

# Responding to the Novel

CH. VI and VII

## Analyzing the Novel

### Identifying Facts

1. In Chapters VI and VII, several of the commandments that were established immediately after the Rebellion are broken. Identify at least three of these commandments. What reason do the pigs give for breaking each one?
2. When the Fourth Commandment is changed, why doesn't Clover trust her own memory about its original wording?
3. What frightening new strategy for silencing and manipulating the animals does Squealer use to justify trade with humans?
4. Identify some of the outright lies and distortions of the truth that Squealer uses to prove that Snowball was a traitor from the very beginning.

## ANIMAL FARM

5. Describe what happens after Napoleon accuses four pigs of being Snowball's secret agents. How does Boxer escape from being attacked by Napoleon's dogs?

### Interpreting Meanings

6. What **irony** do you sense in the following passages? (Read them in context first.)
  - a. "All that year the animals worked like slaves." (Page 830)
  - b. "This work was strictly voluntary, but any animal who absented himself from it would have his rations reduced by half." (Page 830)
  - c. "Then, as usual, the sheep broke into 'Four legs good, two legs bad!' and the momentary awkwardness was smoothed over." (Page 831)

## INTERPRETING MEANINGS (CONT.)

6. d. "Curiously enough, Clover had not remembered that the Fourth Commandment mentioned sheets; but as it was there on the wall, it must have done so." (Page 832)
7. Orwell could have told his story of Animal Farm without including the windmill. What do you think the windmill—and the animals' exhausting work—represents, or **symbolizes**, to the animals? To Orwell?
8. Do you think the animals are really guilty of the crimes they confess to in the barnyard? If not, what horrifying assumption can we make about why they confess anyway? (Is there more than one possible reason?)
9. From Napoleon's perspective, what purpose do the confessions and executions serve?
10. What **irony** do you detect in Boxer's response to them? Clover's response is considered one of the most important passages in the novel (see page 837). Do you see any **irony** in it, or are we meant to agree with what she is thinking?
11. Look back at old Major's speech on page 811. Which of his statements about life on Manor Farm under the rule of Mr. Jones are now true of life on Animal Farm? Explain the **irony** in this situation.
12. What do you suppose is Napoleon's real reason for outlawing the singing of "Beasts of England"? Why is it **ironic** that the animals sing this song at the end of Chapter VII?
13. What do you predict will happen next on Animal Farm? What would have to happen for the animals to be happy again, in the way that they were right after the Rebellion?



# Responding to the Novel

CH. VIII and IX

## Analyzing the Novel

### Identifying Facts

1. Explain how Squealer manages to convince the animals that each of the following is true:
  - a. The Sixth Commandment has not been violated by the slaughter in the barnyard of the animals who confessed to crimes. (Page 840)
  - b. The Battle of the Windmill was actually a victory for the animals. (Page 843)
  - c. The animals are better off than they were in the days under Farmer Jones before the Rebellion. (Page 845)
2. Name at least four ways in which the pigs' lives are different from those of the other animals on the farm. In what ways has the pigs' behavior come to resemble human behavior?
3. Summarize what happens during the long-negotiated sale of the timber to Mr. Frederick. How does Frederick double-cross Napoleon?
4. Explain how Boxer is betrayed by the pigs. What happens to his body?
5. What is Napoleon's **motive** for betraying Boxer?

### Interpreting Meanings

6. When Napoleon thinks he is dying, what is really the matter with him?

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7. Why is it **ironic** that the pigs begin to wear green ribbons in their tails?
8. How does the rewriting of history concerning Snowball grow increasingly ridiculous? What change do you detect in the animals' reaction to each new revision of the "facts"?
9. Why do you suppose the pigs encourage Moses the raven to remain on Animal Farm? How might the animals' belief in Sugarcandy Mountain be in the pigs' best interest? Are there parallels to the idea of "Sugarcandy Mountain" in real life?
10. How does Boxer's death **ironically** fulfill old Major's prophecy on page 812?
11. How did you feel as you read about Boxer's illness and death?
12. Reread Squealer's description of Boxer's death (page 849). Why do you suppose the animals go on believing everything that the pigs tell them? At this point in the novel, how do you feel about the animals' gullibility and the pigs' manipulations? Explain your response.
13. Compare and contrast "Beasts of England" with the poem "Comrade Napoleon." Is one a better work of literature, in your opinion?
14. What ending do you predict for the story? What ending would you *like* to find in the next chapter? Does everyone in class agree?

# Responding to the Novel

CH. X

ANIMAL FARM

## Analyzing the Novel

### Identifying Facts

1. Even though the animals have finished building the windmill, why don't they have the promised comforts (less work, hot and cold water, light, and heat in every stall) that electricity was supposed to bring them? How does Napoleon explain this change in plans?
2. Contrast the pigs' daily lives with the lives of the other animals on the farm. According to Napoleon, which animals achieve the "truest happiness"?
3. What event turns the animals' world "upside down"? Explain why Squealer had to teach the sheep a new song before this event could take place.
4. Throughout the novel, the pigs change the Seven Commandments to suit their purposes. How do they further modify the commandments in this chapter?
5. At the banquet with the farmers, what does Pilkington admire about Animal Farm? In his toast, what lies does Napoleon tell, and what changes does he announce?

### Interpreting Meanings

6. What details in this chapter **satirize**, or ridicule, the work done by bureaucrats?
7. Why does the farm grow richer without making the majority of the animals any richer?
8. Reread the description of the animals' joyous behavior immediately following the Rebellion (page 815). Why is it **ironic** that the pigs begin carrying whips?
9. How do you think the final saying on the barn wall ("All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others") relates to the novel's **theme**, or central meaning?
10. Of all the changes that Napoleon announces at the banquet, which would you say is the most significant? Why?
11. In the last scene, what **transformation**, or change, do the animals witness as they peer through the farmhouse windows? How does this transformation express the novel's central **irony**?

12. Reread the passage on page 852 that begins: "None of the old dreams had been abandoned . . ." Do you think the animals' continuing belief in the coming of the Republic shows that they have not been duped by the pigs after all? Or does it prove instead how truly gullible they are? Explain.
13. Did you find the novel's **resolution** satisfying? Or did you expect or want a different ending? Explain your response.