

Animal Farm by George Orwell

English I Honors Summer Reading Assignment

During the summer before 9th grade English I Honors, all 9th grade students will read *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. *Animal Farm* is a modern classic allegory about a group of animals who take over a farm. The allegory is a critique of the USSR and communist ideas that had ruined people's lives during the 20th century. Students will read the novel and create a journal answering questions posed for each chapter.

Rationale: *Animal Farm* is about a group of farm animals that take over the farm from their master. They create a communist-like state as they navigate how to manage a farm in the most equal way possible. As we read, we will discuss the themes of equality, corruption, and the role of government. We will answer big questions like “What does it mean that all men are equal?”, “What form of government is the best?”, and “What does a corrupt government look like?”.

You can ask your child these questions at home to help them understand the story:

- What is *Animal Farm* about?
- What is communism?
- What does communism have to do with *Animal Farm*?
- What does *Animal Farm* have to say about corrupt governments?

Assignment: Students will write 12 journal entries in a composition notebook that will be turned in on the first day of school. 5 bonus points will be awarded if turned in at orientation. Each entry must be one page long, single spaced. Each entry must answer the question for that chapter and include a quote from that chapter with a page number. Below are the topics for each chapter:

Chapter:

1. Before you read the book, write about everything you know about Communism, socialism, and capitalism. If you don't know these terms, do some research on these terms. Is one better than another? Why?
2. Major in chapter 1 states that "[t]he life of an animal is misery..." (Orwell, pg.7). He later blames this misery in life on humans. Where does misery in our life come from? Is Major correct in his thinking?
3. Moses in chapter 2 represent religion in the USSR. How do the animals treat Moses? What does this tell you about religion (like Christianity) in communist countries?
4. Boxer's motto is "I will work harder" (Orwell, pg. 29)! It is obvious that Boxer is the hardest working animal on the farm. Boxer represents hard workers in the USSR. How do the animals treat Boxer? Should we reward people who work harder than others? Why?
5. Boxer and Snowball were both given medals for their bravery in the battle. In your opinion what is a hero? Is Boxer and Snowball heroes? Why?
6. Snowball and Napoleon were always arguing. How are Snowball and Napoleon different? How are they the same?
7. In this chapter, Napoleon moves into the farmhouse and starts to sleep in a bed. He is changing all the rules that were originally formed. What does this tell you about Napoleon's intentions? What can you predict will happen in later chapters?
8. Propaganda is when the government uses news sources to spread lies. What methods does Napoleon use to spread lies? How effective is his propaganda?
9. Napoleon changes the rules on the barn wall often. What effect does this have on the animals? How does Napoleon get away with these changes?

10. What happened to Boxer? What do you think this represent in the allegory? (in other words, what deeper meaning does this moment have). What do you think about Napoleon's decision?
11. The last line of the book points out that the other animals could not tell the difference between the humans and the pigs. What does that represent? Has Napoleon become like the humans? What specific examples did you see?
12. Now that you have read the book, what do you think about communism, socialism, and capitalism? Have your opinions changed? What are some things America can do to make us more free.

How to Quote: Quoting is when you take a sentence or phrase from a source (book or website) to prove a statement that you have made. To do this, take the sentence or phrase and surround it with quotation marks (“”). Then at the end of the sentence put parenthesis with the author's last name and page number in them. Like this: The animals worked harder than ever, “for the harvest was even bigger this year” (Orwell, 50).