

Answers

Animal Farm

DO IT! ANSWERS

pp.9–37

p.9 Do it!



- Many events in the novel make it hard for the animals to trust the pigs. Briefly consider some of these events and the pigs' excuses: eg the milk and windfall apples; living in the farmhouse and sleeping in beds.
- Role of Squealer's propaganda in gaining trust: examine his explanations and the animals' reactions.
- Trust – reflected in 'Napoleon is always right' – can be blind and undeserved. This trust has to be asserted; the pigs' blatant untrustworthiness.
- Orwell shows that trust and loyalty is built through a mixture of propaganda, force and the animals' desperate need to believe. He warns against unconditional trust.

p.13 Do it!



- Compare how Orwell introduces Napoleon ('own way') and Snowball ('inventive') and consider how they will each measure up to old Major's principles.
- Snowball's attitudes and behaviour after the revolution, and how we feel about him; his version of how the revolution should be developed.
- Napoleon's attitudes and behaviour after the revolution, and how we feel about him; his version of how the revolution should be developed. How he and Snowball conflict.
- What Orwell might be implying by having Napoleon completely victorious.

p.17 Do it!



- Explore how in the early weeks after the revolution Orwell hints at the pigs' treachery without being explicit. Orwell builds the reader's apprehension about the fate of the revolution.
- Orwell signals the disaster represented by the pigs by having them break all old Major's rules and principles, as though Orwell is ticking off the rules as they are broken one-by-one.
- The pigs' rule-breaking enriches them while it impoverishes the rest of the animals.
- The neat plot oppositions and contradictions referred to above are part of the pigs' systematic transformation into a new class of oppressors emphasised by their increasing resemblance to humans.

p.21 Do it!



- Consider Orwell's ambiguous attitude to Snowball reflected in how he introduces Snowball, his choice of name and Snowball's support for the pigs' consumption of the milk and windfalls.
- Snowball's democratic, empowering model of leadership after the revolution.
- Snowball's bravery and willingness to lead by example from the front.
- Snowball disappears and Orwell does not bring him back. What criticisms of Snowball's style of leadership does Orwell suggest?

p.25 Do it!



- Examples of greed – milk, farmhouse, beds, alcohol – and how the pigs justify these luxuries, thus showing they know them to be ‘wrong’.
- How the pigs are described by Orwell to emphasise their greed – fat, ‘very round cheeks’ (Squealer), etc. He associates greed with cunning, cruelty and laziness to make it even less appealing.
- The ending shows the triumph of greed and material pleasure (luxury).
- However...the ‘heroes’ and the virtuous characters do not represent greed: they are selfless, putting others first...even Benjamin, who puts Boxer before his own self-interests.

p.29 Do it!



- Different models of power in the novel: Boxer’s physical strength, bravery and determination; the power of the masses to overcome oppressors (Mr Jones); Snowball’s desire to empower the animals; Napoleon’s desire for personal power.
- How Napoleon twists the rules, and he fools and intimidates the animals to ‘get his own way’. His motives are conscious: his rise to power is brought about by a deliberate, well-planned strategy.
- Orwell’s intentions: perhaps the novel is more than cautionary – a useful warning. Perhaps it is defeatist and disillusioned in intent, showing the futility of rebellion – the abuse of power by a tiny elite will always be the outcome.
- Look at how the animals overcame their farmer/oppressor: it was a spontaneous, desperate expression of their ‘mass strength’. Perhaps Orwell wants us to remember this and conclude that even the pigs will inevitably be overthrown.

p.33 Do it!



- The purpose of *Animal Farm* is to simplify a complex subject – the Russian Revolution and the systematic abuse of power. The novel’s brevity is an aspect of this simplification.
- The brevity of the novel helps to emphasise the speed with which the revolution is lost and the animals’ conditions of ‘misery and slavery’ are re-created. It supports the plot’s momentum towards its depressing and dramatic conclusion.
- The book is short partly because its descriptions and explanations are kept short – for the sake of clarity. This succinctness is fitting for a ‘Fairy Story’ that is designed to tell a story that teaches a lesson.
- The novel is an allegory to warn readers. Orwell wants its message to be clear and compelling. He is not concerned with subtleties of psychology in his characters. Instead each character illustrates basic motives: bravery, greed, etc. Brevity helps to emphasise the simplicity of these motives.

p.37 Do it!



- Orwell introduces him in terms that are unappealing and make him sound greedy and selfish: eg ‘round’ (fat); at the end hardly able to see due to fatness.
- Orwell presents him as crafty and untrustworthy (eg ‘skipping from side to side’, ‘twinkling eyes’); he emotionally blackmails the animals (Jones will return) and uses the dogs to imply a threat.
- Squealer does not win the animals over by having the best arguments. Instead Orwell emphasises that he *persuades* them, through a combination of cleverness, lies and propaganda.
- Squealer’s evil is finally ‘proved’ when he lies about the fate of Boxer, shamelessly inventing and acting out a false story of Boxer’s death, representing Boxer as a supporter of Napoleon right to his last breath.
- On the other hand, there is a farcical element to Squealer that might give the reader hope that his type will not succeed forever, eg his undignified collapse into the mud while revising a commandment.

ANSWERS TO EXAM STYLE QUESTIONS

pp.38–45

The points offered below are only indicative and highlight some key things that could be included in your response. You may cover other points as well. It's how your response is written and how it fits with the mark scheme that will determine the quality of your answer.

p.38 Question 1



- Examine the ending. It neatly completes the direction the plot has been heading in – total victory for the pigs and the completion of an ‘upside-down world’. The neatness of the ending emphasises the inevitability of the failure of rebellion.
- Exceptions to this neatness give some hope for the animals’ freedom: the pigs and humans are not really united – they will compete even against their own common interests – just as Frederick and Pilkington did. The fight over cards and cheating.
- The ending is disheartening, but we read it with the knowledge of the novel’s opening chapter and old Major’s inspiring vision of justice and freedom. That vision is much more powerful than the sordid squabbles between humans and between pigs and humans.
- At the end, the animals finally and literally see the pigs for what they really are. This will confirm the suspicions they had along the way about the pigs’ behaviour and motives, and perhaps in the long run will make the animals reject the pigs.

p.39 Question 2



- Napoleon is a tyrant who is determined to get his own way. For him, the attractions of leadership are selfish ones – complete obedience to him, the biggest share of luxuries and comforts, and high status shown through a form of worship.
- Leadership is about asserting your will – by force if necessary.
- Squealer’s comments point out another aspect of Napoleon’s version of leadership – dishonesty, pretence, *lack of* integrity.
- Orwell shows that Napoleon’s style of leadership leads to the destruction of the principles that leadership should be upholding and safeguarding.

p.40 Question 3



- At the start, the animals have power that comes from their oppression and their numbers. It is a sort of sleeping power that gives way to Mr Jones’ cruel rule. Their power is shown unconsciously and spontaneously when they are provoked into expressing their collective power/strength to overthrow Jones.
- By contrast, Napoleon represents a power based on planning and cunning. It is power exercised for individual benefit, rather than for the masses.
- Boxer represents physical power that is not used selfishly. Unfortunately, this sort of power can be exploited by the cunning and ruthless few (represented by the pigs).
- Perhaps Orwell is pleading for people to be realistic about power when they fight for their freedom: it is self-defeating to use your collective power to overthrow an oppressor, only to then hand all power to a small elite to use as they see fit.

p.41 Question 4



How far does Orwell present Squealer as a dishonest character in *Animal Farm*?

- Look at the way Orwell presents Squealer: he has 'twinkling eyes' (suggesting cunning), 'skipping from side to side' as though he is distracting his listeners. His appearance and behaviour is dishonest.
- He lies and misrepresents the facts about food production ('he could turn black into white') and other matters.
- He fools the animals into accepting false versions of events (eg why the pigs sleep in beds, Snowball's role in the Battle of the Cowshed).
- Orwell presents Squealer's dishonesty as skilful and systematic – his dishonesty is not spontaneous; it is planned as an essential part of Napoleon's rise to power and the animals' return to 'misery and slavery'.

p.42 Question 5



- Define propaganda (eg the spreading of ideas and information to support a cause). Examine how old Major's speech is a sort of propaganda. How the animals react.
- The pigs' propaganda: how the pigs use it to overcome the animals' objections to the pigs' decisions and behaviour.
- How the pigs' propaganda connects to old Major's speech and thus gives it greater power and credibility for the animals.
- Squealer's attempt to 'turn black into white': how the animals resist and have to be convinced. To what extent are the animals convinced at the end – and is the pigs' propaganda going to be successful (or necessary) beyond the end of the novel?

p.43 Question 6



- Examine why and how they rebel against Jones.
- What causes the animals not to oppose the pigs despite their 'crimes'? Animals' fear and exhaustion, as well as relief at being freed from human rule.
- How the pigs guard against the animals rebelling against them – role of intimidation and lies.
- The ending: are the animals likely to rebel against the pigs now that the pigs are as oppressive and cruel as their human predecessors?

p.44 QUESTION 7



- Explain how the novel is a metaphor/allegory with the animals representing oppressed humans whose lives are already 'nightmarish'.
- How the society imagined by old Major and created by the animals' rebellion is *not* nightmarish.
- The nightmarish conditions of Napoleon's *Animal Farm*: secret scheming, lies, violence, starvation, etc.
- Old Major's dream became a nightmare, but does the ending hold any hope that the dream will be achieved? What notes of hope can be found in the ending?

p.45 Question 8



- Relationship with Snowball: mindless conflict and competition aimed at defeating him. Jealousy. Controlling the revolution and the farm are more important to Napoleon than anything else – despite the aims set out by old Major.
- Relationship with Squealer: he delegates to Squealer because he recognises Squealer's usefulness. He recognises the importance of propaganda and persuasion (until brutal oppression can be relied on).
- Relationship with Boxer: he knows that Boxer's strength, determination and bravery are essential, but he would willingly sacrifice Boxer (as he eventually does) if Boxer expresses doubts or loses his strength. He would rather control a weak farm than have to share control over a strong one.
- Napoleon's selfish obsession with keeping personal control is self-defeating: it threatens the safety and welfare of the whole farm, just as it threatened Mr Jones' control.