



**Department of Distance Education**  
**Punjabi University, Patiala**

---

**Class : B.A.II (English Literature) Elective    Semester : 4**  
**Paper : Literary Masterpieces : Study of Classics**  
**Medium : English    Unit : I**

---

***Lesson No.***

**GEORGE ORWELL : ANIMAL FARM**

- 1.1 : George Orwell : A Biographical Sketch
- 1.2 : The Historical Background of Animal Farm  
and the Analysis of the Novel
- 1.3 : Characterization : Textual Analysis
- 1.4 : Animal Farm as an Allegory
- 1.5 : Animal Farm : Nature and Structure

---

***Department website : [www.pbidde.org](http://www.pbidde.org)***

**LESSON NO. 1.1**

---

**GEORGE ORWELL : A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

**STRUCTURE**

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 George Orwell : An Introduction
  - 1.1.1 George Orwell : Life
  - 1.1.2 George Orwell : Fictional Works.
  - 1.1.3 George Orwell : The Major Non-Fictional Works.
  - 1.1.4 In-Text Questions
  - 1.1.5 George Orwell : Letters, Essays and Articles.
  - 1.1.6 Let us Sum up.
  - 1.1.7 Suggested Reading
  - 1.1.8 Important Questions.

**1.0 OBJECTIVES**

This lesson aims to acquaint you with

- the life of George Orwell
- the Non-fictional Works of George Orwell.
- the fictional works of George Orwell.
- the letters, Essays and Articles of Orwell
- list of Important questions.

**1.1 GEORGE ORWELL : AN INTRODUCTION.**

**1.1.1 George Orwell : Life.**

George Orwell was born at Eric Blair in Motihari (Bengal) in 1903. He spent in India; and the colour, the heat and the social milieu affected his childish fancy deeply. In 1907 he was sent to England where he attended a primary school at Henley-on-Thames. It seems that his early childhood at home had not been quite happy. Of his father he has written:

One ought to love one's father, but I know very well that I nearly disliked my father, whom I had barely seen before I was eight and who appeared to me simply as a gruff-voiced elderly gentleman forever saying : 'Don't'. Orwell's mother, eighteen years younger than his father, a charming woman, was a bit exotic and gypsy-looking. Even her, Orwell did not love as boys love their mothers:

I never felt love for any mature person except my mother, and even her I did not trust in a sense that shyness made me conceal my feelings from her.

Orwell has recorded that suddenly, at the age of eight, he was separated from his family and "flung into a world of force and fraud and secrecy". This was the world of St. Cyprian's school in Eastbourne where he had to study for six years. Lonely and despondent. He soon developed miserable mannerisms which made an unpopular throughout my school days. One of the school ethics was "an almost neurotic dread of poverty and, above all, the assumption that money and privilege are the things that matter." Orwell suffered fiercely on account of the irascible inferiority complex which he came to have because his parents were not rich, and he did not have much money. Orwell has recorded his agony in St. Cyprian's school in the essay, "Such, Such were the Joys". When Cyril Connolly, a school fellow of Orwell, painted a pleasant picture of this school in one of his books, Orwell asked him. "I wonder how you can write about St. Cyprian's. It is all like an awful nightmare to me." Soon after his arrival at St. Cyprian's, Orwell began "wetting" his bed for which "shameful weakness" he received two "beatings", which produced in him "a sense of desolate loneliness and hopelessness, of being locked up not only in a hostile world but in a world of good and evil where the rules were such that it was actually not possible for me to keep them. I had a conviction of sin and folly and weakness, such as I do not remember to have felt before." The most moving parts of "Such, Such, Were the joys" spring from Orwell's recognition of his own imposture, infidelity and mendacity; yet, the responsibility for being what he was is attributed by him to the environs at school.

Despite having such a wretched time at St. Cyprian's, Orwell was in a position to win a scholarship which enabled him to join the public school at Eton. It appears that in this school he neither studied very hard nor got high grades, nor showed any real promise of a genius which he was to become as a writer. Never in his five years at Eton was he very enthusiastic about the environment. Indeed, the aristocratic values and the snootiness prevalent in the life at Eton were repugnant to him. Having failed to win a scholarship, and lacking the financial means, Orwell could not join the British police force in Burma. To that end Orwell got admission in a tutorial establishment to prepare for his competitive examination. From two teachers at Eton he received the necessary testimonials of good character, which he had to send with his application for being allowed to appear in the examination. In the summer of 1922 he was examined, got the seventh position in a class of twenty-nine, and was one of the three men selected for the Police Service in the East. As his father had spent several years there, he chose Burma.

Reaching Rangoon in the same year, 1922, Orwell took courses in Police Procedure, Law, Burmese and Hindustani. Attached as the assistant to the District Superintendent of Police, he had multifarious duties, like to run the office, look after the training school for locally recruited constables and supervise the stores of

clothing and ammunition, check the night patrols in the city, and to assume the general charge when the superintendent was away. In this position as a sahib in his house there were a number of Burmese servants, whom he allowed to dress and undress himself; and sometimes in his ire he beat and kicked them. But he got outraged with his job as an imperialist police officer, and felt that he could not continue any longer. So, in August 1927, he went on leave to England, and resigned his job in Burma. His experiences in Burma have been vividly described in *Burmese Days*, and essays like "Shooting an Elephant" and "A Hanging".

Making a strange turn in his life, Orwell now purchased a tramp's clothing in a pawn shop and made the first of his many plunges into the world of the poor and the outcast of London. In the spring of 1928 he crossed over to Paris where he rented a rundown room in a working class quarter. Having contracted pneumonia in February 1929, Orwell spent several disgusting weeks in a Paris hospital as charity patient.

Orwell wrote two novels and several short stories in the summer of 1929, but none of these could be published. He was forced to pawn all his clothes, as the little money that he had was stolen; and he worked on a low job in a ritzy but squalid hotel. Leaving Paris at the end of 1929, Orwell went back to London, where he gave lessons to a retarded boy in a town on the Suffolk coast. Later, he picked up a job in Kent, and taught in small private schools in two different towns. His first book, *Down and Out in Paris and London*, published in 1933, is a record of his experiences among the poor of the two cities mentioned in the title. From 1930 to 1935, Orwell contributed book reviews to "Adelphi", a magazine edited by Sir Richard Rees, a close friend of Orwell. He took up a part-time job in a book shop where he worked for a year and a half, and later put this experience in the novel *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*.

The Left Book Club commissioned Orwell, in January 1936, to study the social and economic conditions in the industrial region of northern England and write a book on that. Giving up his job at the book shop, he proceeded to the industrial country borough of Wigan to see, at first hand, the conditions of the working class life. These impressions he put in his book, *The Road to Wigan Pier*. In June 1936, Orwell married Eileen O'Shaughnessy, the student of psychology in London University.

Another crucial turn came in Orwell's life, when, in December 1936, he went to Spain to write about the Civil War that had broken out there. However, rather than getting busy observing the conditions there and writing about them, he joined the militia, called P.O.U.M., at the Lenin barracks in Barcelona, in order to fight on the side of the democratic forces against Fascism. His wife also came over to Barcelona to work at the office of I.L.O. Orwell was sent to the battle front at

Aragon in north-east Spain after a week's cursory training, where he underwent the hunger and tedium of static French warfare, and was wounded seriously in the neck. Recovering, from the wound, he again offered to go to the battle front but, suddenly, P.O.U.M. was declared illegal. Orwell and his wife, now suspects in the eyes of the Communist Police, somehow managed to cross the French Border into safety. These events were put in Orwell's book, *Homage to Catalonia*, where he made a blistering attack on Stalin's communists.

Orwell fell ill with tuberculosis in March 1938. L.H. Myers gave the Orwells a gift of three hundred pounds, which enabled them to spend the winter in Marrakech (in French Morocco), but, unfortunately, neither Orwell nor his wife improved in health when they came back to England in 1939. But in Marrakech Orwell wrote his novel, *Coming up for Air*.

Orwell had been aware of the menace of World War II, and when it broke out in September 1939, he volunteered himself for the army but was rejected on medical grounds. In August 1941, he took up the job of the Talks producer for the Indian Section of the B.B.C., and carried on war propaganda for the cause of the Allies, addressed to the people in Asia. Giving up this job, in November 1943, Orwell became the literary editor of "The Tribune" for which he also wrote a column, "As I Please", for the next four years.

In February 1944, Orwell completed *Animal Farm*. Several publishers refused to publish it, as it denounced Russian Communism under Stalin. As at that time, Russia was an ally of the Western democracies against Hitler's Nazism, no English Publisher wanted to offend Stalin. Then, in August 1945, Secker and Warburg published the novel. The book became popular; half a million copies of it were sold through the American Book-of-the Month-Club. For the first time in his life, Orwell became financially prosperous.

In February 1945, Orwell had gone to France, and then to Germany, as a war correspondent for a newspaper. While he was still abroad, his ailing wife passed away. In June 1944, Orwell and his wife had adopted a one month old baby, and named him Richard Horatio Blair. Even when his wife died suddenly, Orwell refused to give up his adopted son, and put the little boy under the care of several house-keepers until his younger sister, Avril, came to live with him in 1946.

Even though he was ill most of the time, Orwell started writing *Nineteen Eighty Four* in August 1946 and finished it in November 1948. Now he was living on the island of Jura in the Hebrides, where his house had neither electricity nor telephone. Perhaps there was a masochistic strain in him which made him select Jura as a punishment. In the summer of 1947, Orwell and the boy, Richard were shipwrecked in a dangerous whirlpool off Jura, but were luckily rescued by a fisherman. In December 1947 Orwell was admitted to a tuberculosis sanatorium

near Gilsgow where he remained until June 1948. In October 1949, Orwell married Sonia Brownell. In June 1949, *Nineteen Eighty Four* was published but Orwell did not live long enough to enjoy the success of his masterpiece, as he died on the 21st January 1950. After Orwell's death, V.S. Pritchett wrote :

George Orwell was the wintry conscience of a generation which in the thirties had heard the call to the rasher assumptions of political faith. He was a king of sai and, in that character, more likely in politics to chasten his own side than the enemy.... Conscience took the Anglo-Indian out of the Burma police, conscience sent the old Etonian among the down and outs in London and Paris, and the degraded victims of the Means Test or slum incompetence in Wigan; it drove him into the Spanish Civil War and, inevitably, into one of its unpopular sects, and there Don Quixote saw the poker face of Communism. His was the guilty conscience of the educated and privileged man and this conscience could be allayed only by taking upon itself the pain, the misery, the dinginess and the pathetic but hard vulgarities of a state and hopeless period.

### **1.1.2 George Orwell: Fictional Works** **Burmese Days (1934)**

*Burmese Days*- there is an ironic ring in this title. The phrase, "Burmese Days", seems to suggest that the book contains a record of some delectable experiences in Burma. In reality, however, the novel relates the tale primarily of a man's distress and destruction as a consequence of his involvement with Burma, and with his fellow Englishmen ruling that country. John Flory, the central character in this novel, is an English timber merchant, based in the remote Burmese town, Kyauktada. Intelligent and susceptible as he is, Flory is foredoomed to failure in his effort to keep up civilized and humane standards in the face of his fellow Englishmen who have degenerated into callous beings in the native surroundings of Burma. Flory's strife is both with the material and the social milieu. His relations with the other Englishmen in the town become strained because he cannot share their solid confidence in the righteousness of the British Raj. The political system which they consider as sacrosanct appears profane to him. While looking down upon the Burmese people, Flory takes an admiring interest in the local culture; while they shun all contact with the natives, Flory finds his only confidant in Dr. Veraswami, the Indian civil servant. The novel is an account of human endeavour devastated by the inexorable force of circumstances, but the reader does not get compassionately involved with him because he does not really become alive as a person.

U. Po Kylin, the crafty Burmese magistrate, is the prime mover of all the events in this novel. It is he who, through his devious designs, controls even the

rulers. He ruins Dr. Veraswami, drives Flory to suicide, defames Macgregor, the Deputy Commissioner, incites a revolt in which two men are killed. Kylin has advanced himself by blackmail, bribery, cheating, and his corrupt career is a serious accusation of both the English rule which permits him success and the English superiors who completely fail to see through his real character. The main aim of Kylin's machinations is the English Club, the last fortress of the white insularity.

Besides Flory, the English colony consists of the drunken and rowdy Lackersteen, his designing and snobbish wife, the malicious and bigoted Ellis, the stupid and bloodthirsty West field, the pretentious Macgregor, the innocent and inoffensive Maxwell. Such English characters could hardly carry the "whiteman's burden" of elevating the native Burmese; on the contrary Flory is right in observing, "we're not civilizing them, we're only rubbing our dirt on to them."

### **A Clergyman's Daughter (1935)**

Not having a nuclear and controlling idea in *A Clergyman's Daughter* Orwell's targets range from the Anglican church and the clergy, working conditions among the hoppers, and the hideousness of London to the private-school "rackert". This lack of hub is reflected in the loose structure of the novel. Dorothy's amnesia is unconvincing. And this amnesia becomes an excuse for a picturesque treatment of Orwell's own experience and the various social evils that he wants to expose.

For a novel of serious purpose, the characters here are too farcical and satiric type. Reverend Hare, the snobbish clergyman; Victor Stone, the ardent reformer trying to bring the church closer to Rome; Mr. Warburton, the country gentleman preying on virginity; Mrs. Semprell, the town gossip; Mrs. Creevy, a despotic schoolmistress, all symbolize certain attitudes. Only Nobby, Flo and Charlie are presented with any uniqueness, but they appear only briefly. The absence of a disciplined structure and character depth seems to show that Orwell was not sure of his aims. Still, some parts of the novel are very effective. In the first chapter Orwell shows his power to describe the sordid aspects of life. In the church and in a few remaining parishioners, the decay is clear. More rooted in habit than in Christianity, the church is literally falling apart. Only Dorothy, with her visits to the poor, extends the church's work beyond the walls of the building. Not wanting to be bothered about his duties. Dorothy's father complains when a workingman wants his sick child to be baptized: "I really cannot think why it is that the lower classes always seem to choose mealtimes to come pestering me." Dorothy tries to make amends for her father's deficiency but her endeavours are abortive because she has not real faith, and the church is already dead. Like an automation, she lives by religious catch-phrases. However, a sudden amnesia deprives her of all her

imaginary supports, namely the routine parish duties, which have given some sort of order to her life. In the underworld of London, among the migrant workers, prostitutes and tramps, she must learn how to cope with existence and how simply to stay alive. When she regains her memory, she realizes that she cannot go back to her father because of an ignominy about her and sent to teach in an inferior private school. Having taught there for about a year, and learnt that the only motive behind this kind of lower-middle class school is profit, she comes back to her father. She resumes her duties as a "clergyman's daughter" because in that, she feels, lies her "salvation".

### **Keep the Aspidistra Flying (1936)**

The last member of a debilitated middle class family, Gordon Comstock concludes that there is nothing in the contemporary society to match his talent. So, he gives up, accepts failure, destitution and squalor. But, it is only an adolescent gesture of defeatism adopted to shun responsibility: the mystique of failure is nothing more than indulgence in self-pity; it denotes moral enervation, not strength. The rejuvenation of Gordon's will is brought through Rosemary Waterloo. She gives herself to him freely, unafraid of the results, when he is on the verge of final collapse. Becoming pregnant, she presents him the choice of abortion, having the child out of marriage, or wedding and a return to his former advertising job. He accepts the last course because he feels it has something to do with life.

Orwell's central vision of total grimness and despondency in this novel is represented throughout his works like a fatal omen of collapse and doom. In *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*, it is Gordon's vision of the deathliness in modern life, of London slaving under capitalistic oppressions, which makes him long for a cleansing conflagration:

He had a vision of London, of the western world: he saw a thousand million slaves foiling and grovelling about throne of money. The earth is ploughed, ships sail, miners sweat in dripping tunnels, and underground clerks hurry for the eight-fifteen with the fear of the boss eating at their vitals. And even in the bed with their wives they tremble and obey. Obey whom? The money-priesthood, the pin-faced masters of the world. The Upper crust.

In each of his novels, Orwell contrasts this kind of dreadful vision with joyous scenes of escape from the domination of urban technology to the freedom and simplicity of peaceful nature. At the end of *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* Gordon decides to join his destiny with the common men who strangely change the greed and fear of modern civilization into something far nobler. This idealistic commitment represents Orwell's attempt to formulate an acceptable solution to the overwhelming sense of collapse.



### **Coming up for Air (1939)**

This novel recounts the tale of George Bowling who is a middle-aged man from the lower-middle-class; intimately involved with family and friends and enmeshed in the economic and social system. Bowling is an ordinary looking insurance agent living with his wife and two children on an inferior housing estate in the Thames Valley. He longs for a way of life which he had known during his boyhood in the small market town of Lower Binfield.

George Bowling's life and times are described in three distinct phases. First, there is the Edwardian boyhood in a quiet Oxfordshire market-town, which is depicted convincingly and unsentimentally. In this part of the novel, Orwell describes the life of a not very prosperous shop-keeping family. According to Bowling, one feature of the Edwardian time which set it apart from what followed was a feeling of security, even when people were not very secure, as described below:

More exactly, it was a feeling of continuity. All of them knew they'd got to die and I suppose a few of them knew they were going to go bankrupt, but what they did not know was that the order of things could change. Individually, they were finished, but their way of life would continue. Their good and evil would remain good and evil. They did not feel the ground they stood on shifting under their feet.

But World War I ends this sort of stability and starts what Bowling calls "a ghastly flux". Bowling finds himself removed from the grocer's shop and after some service in France, becomes an officer with the funny responsibility of guarding twelve tins of beef on the Cornish coast. For Bowling, the war upsets not only his individual attitudes and expectations but also the whole social and moral order of England. At the end of the war, Bowling returns to a society which is percolated by a feeling of fear. There is the fear of losing a job; there are the slipshod new suburban housing estates which spread over the countryside and bury lower Binfield; there is the commuter's round; there are the cheap clothes, the mass-produced furniture and food, and the mad ideologies preaching hatred, a hatred which stems from an all pervasive fear.

### **Animal Farm (1949)**

Discussion of this novel has been undertaken in the next lessons.

### **Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949)**

A novel about the future, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is an awful warning of the terror that could come in the near future if all the despotic ideas were enforced and we were made to exist in world of fear.

In the future contemplated in this novel, England no longer is England but "Airstrip One", a province of Oceania. In addition to Oceania, there are two other

powers on earth, Eurasia and Eastasia. These powers are involved in a sort of endless war from the control of a thickly populated, but militarily helpless no-man's land situated among them in India, Africa and Indonesia. This perpetual war is carried on without a will to triumph, as none of the combatants wants to end it. There is even a doubt that the government of Oceania sometimes fires rocket bombs on London to remind the population of the war and maintain their fear and hatred. By an implicit understanding, annihilative weapons like the atom bomb are not used by any of the powers.

Ironically, one function of the Ministry of Truth is to keep on rewriting history to fit in to the intentions of the Party which rules Oceania. Those who know the truth and endeavour to remember things which the Party would want forgotten are "re-educated" in the prisons and torture chambers of the Thought Police. They are liquidated and "Vaporized". They become "un-persons" about whom no one can mention.

There are three classes in the society of Oceania : the privileged and dominant few called "the Inner Party": the closely observed agents of this power, known as the "Outer Party"; and the proles' or the masses who have to be kept under control by terrorism or entertainment. These "proles" comprising eighty-five percent of the total population are considered unimportant.

"Big Brother" is the supermost title and his portrait, with a bushy moustache, looks down menacingly from every wall. He is the one without a peer in power, knowing every-thing and always rightly predicting everything. No one is sure of the existence of this mythical figure. There is an underground movement directed against the Party and led by the Jew Emmanuel Goldstein who is infact only an invention of the Party. Systematically, periodically, the hatred of the masses for this non-existent leader is aroused. This is specially so during the so called "Hate Week" which is observed once a year, and which reaches its culmination in the public execution of thousands of war criminals. There is a ministry of Peace which, ironically, is responsible for war. The Ministry of Love is concerned with political crimes, especially the so-called "thought crime". And there is a Ministry of Plenty which administers an economy of permanent shortages.

In the England of Nineteen Eighty Four, in spite of constant production efforts and successful There Year-Plans, goods are never in abundance. The state owns everything; nothing is genuine-Victory coffee, Victory gin, Victory cigarettes. The apartment block where the hero of the novel, Winston Smith, lives is named Victory Mansions. The elevator is out of order, the running water is luke warm at best, the staircase smells of cabbage. The telescreen is a kind of television set which at the same time records the picture of the spectator. It is installed everywhere : in offices, in homes, in parks and public places, so that no one is safe from the

eavesdropping eyes of the Thought Police who keep everybody under scrutiny. The official language is called "Newspeak". Its object is to make free thought important through abbreviations and simplifications. The trio of the important Party slogans is : "Peace is War"; "Ignorance is Strength", and "Freedom is Slavery".

Though love is an anathema in Oceania, there is a love story in this novel. Winston Smith, a clerk of the Ministry of Truth, falls in love with a girl, Julia, who works in a different department of the same ministry. Inwardly, both of them are opposed to Big Brother, to the Party, and to all that the party stands for. They divulge their secret thoughts to O' Brien whom they consider a kindred spirit, but in reality, he turns out to be a bigoted supporter of the party and who eventually has them arrested. Winston Smith is subjected to various tortures till he breaks down completely and is then converted to the Party creed.

### **1.1.3 George Orwell : The Major Non-Fictional Works.**

#### **Down and Out in Paris and London**

An autobiographical book, *Dawn and Out in London and Paris* records some of the actual experiences of the author in the cities of London and Paris. In the spring of 1928, Orwell left London for Paris to live cheaply, as he was almost penniless at the time and in urgent need of work. Staying in Paris till the end of 1929, he returned to London. In this book Orwell's main objective was to expose the condition of a particular part of society, and to suggest as to who was responsible for it. The main character in this book begins in complete ignorance and simplicity and proceeds to knowledge. The impact of the book arises from the fact that Orwell depicts this movement from naivete to knowledge, thus giving the reader a feeling of discovery. Orwell's simplicity is seen particularly with regard to the manners, morals and living conditions of the poor. In his endeavour to get a job in Paris, he discovers that the sense of honour, which the poor are supposed to possess, had already been reduced to something obsolete. Hungry and jobless, he loses the opportunity of getting a job as he does not tell a lie about how long he will stay in Paris. Boris, the Russian immigrant, who had found this opportunity for Orwell scolds Orwell for having told the truth. Orwell learns about those who exploit the tramps. The hotel owner, the pawn owner, and even the hotel operators, all use and dehumanize the poor and the outcast.

Orwell's experiences may be regarded as a moral encounter in the modern society, an initiation into the knowledge of good and evil. While the defiance of Bozo and Boris and their will to survive have an exhilarating effect on Orwell, the overriding theme of the book is that of decay. Orwell's descriptions show the city life of the poor as inhuman, monstrous and destructive. His use of vivid detail maintains the reader's anger and suggests the spiritual wasteland of society.

Orwell's companion on the trams is Paddy Jacques. He is the only one of these major characters who might be called typical. On the other hand, Boris and Bozo are eccentrics. The son of a rich man, Boris was an officer before the Russian revolution. A comic figure, he combines the manners of an aristocrat with the appearance of a beggar. Bozo has neither fear, nor regret, nor shame, nor self-pity. Indeed, he has confronted his position and extracted a philosophy of living for himself. London and Paris are shown as enervating and corrosive cities, yet people like Boris and Bozo manage to retain their humanity and identity. Perhaps Orwell is suggesting that the lower classes have an internal strength to survive. Never being sentimental in the portrayal of the working men, Orwell can even criticize the outcasts for their lack of gratitude and their revengefulness.

Though the structure of this book is unsteady, yet the author's descriptions are extra-ordinarily convincing. His power of observation and the use of detail to depict the substratum of this modern European City make this book more than a simple tract. This book shows the maturing of a social conscience which might never have arisen, had Orwell not gone through these early experiences in city slums.

### **The Road To Wigan Pier**

This book was written as a result of an assignment given to Orwell by the organization called "Left Book Club" for a report on the conditions of the unemployed in the north of England. There is a strong basis to hold that this book is both a political tract as well as a piece of left-wing sociologizing. But to see it exclusively in these terms is to misread the book. Properly speaking, it should not be read as a single book but as two separate essays, which are only superficially related. For the most part, the first section is a detailed account of his experiences among the industrial workers. The second section is primarily a record of Orwells' ideas and feelings in regard to socialism. The most effective passages in this book are those where Orwell narrates what he himself saw and felt: for instance, his stay at Brooker's lodging house and his descent into a coal-mine.

*The Road to Wigan Pier* opens with an image of decay and disintegration in the description of Brooker's lodging house, where he got a "feeling of stagnant meaningless decay, of having got down into some subterranean place where people do creeping round and round, just like black beetles." This is followed immediately by an image of a young housewife whom Orwell sees from the train. This woman stands as a symbol of industrialization. Her's was "the usual exhausted face of the slum girl who is twenty-five and looks forty, the most desolate, hopeless, expression," We also find the images of the black and aged grandmother, with the yellow cretinous face; the worn skull-like face of the slum mother, and the dumpy shawled woman crawling in the cindery mud in search of coal chips. Yet, Orwell

found the coal-miners as men of strength and endurance. He says, All of us owe the comparative decency of our lives to the poor drudges underground, blackened to the eyes, with their throats full of coal-dust, driving their shovel forward with arms and belly muscles of steel."

### **Homage to Catalonia:**

Five months after the outbreak of the Civil War in Spain, Orwell went there in December 1936. He went there as a newspaper correspondent to report the exciting events taking place there. However, instead of writing reports for the newspapers, he joined the ill-equipped Trotskyist POUM militia in Barcelona, had the experience of trench warfare, and was wounded in the neck.

*Homage to Catalonia* is a frankly political book, yet it has literary merits which include brilliant description of Catalonia landscape, of the emotional atmosphere of a revolutionary militia, of Barcelona in different phases, the account of being wounded almost to death, and being hunted like a criminal.

This book has got two narrative strands : one related with the external events, and the other with the author's internal feelings and reactions to those events. The external narrative records what happened in Catalonia between December 1936 and June 1937, and argues that during these crucial months the genuine socialist revolution, which had taken place, was betrayed. The second narrative, the internal one, records the process of Orwell's own education from a simple minded and ignorant idealist of the early pages of this book to the hard headed realist of the final pages. These two strands are inter-related in the book throughout. It is not possible to separate them, as the external event directly impinges upon Orwell's education, and this education, in turn, leads him to see a pattern in those events rather than merely regarding them as meaningless facts. Constantly and very movingly, the book describes Orwell's personal responses.

Before going to Spain, Orwell was not totally sure that socialism could be realized: that human beings could live in a state of equality. In all his previous experiences, class distinctions had so pervaded, whether at school, in Burma, or in England upon his return, that it was difficult for him to believe in the possibility of a classless society. The Spain experience proved to Orwell that a classless society could work. Barcelona was a large, modern city which, despite its abolition of class privilege, was evidently still functioning properly. But the real test was the militia, the volunteer fighting force, which had abolished all forms of inequality between officers and men.

But, then, just the opposite also happened, Orwell not only saw the establishment of a classless society, he also watched it die. On returning to Barcelona, after several months on the front, early in 1937, he found that the city had reverted to its pre-revolutionary class distinctions. Normal division of society

into the rich and the poor, the under-class and the lower-class, was coming back. A similar pattern was evident even in the armed forces. Even more upsetting to Orwell was the conflict among the parties supporting the government. Fierce internal struggles for power were destroying the unity of the left. Orwell watched all these happenings with a sense of despair. Yet *Homage to Catalonia* ends optimistically. Orwell says towards the end of this book : "When you have had a glimpse of such disaster as this the result is not necessarily disillusionment and cynicism. Curiously enough, the whole experience has left me with not less but more belief in the decency of human beings."

#### 1.1.4 In- Text Questions

Dear student you have read so far about the life and works of George Orwell. Now try to answer the following questions in the space provided:

Q. No. 1. Give a brief account of George Orwell's life.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q. No. 2. Name any two fictional works of George Orwell.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q. No. 3. Name any two Non-Fictional Works of George Orwell.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 1.1.5 George Orwell : Letters, Essays and Articles.

George Orwell wrote many letters and Essays, and a large number of articles that he contributed to the different magazines and journals. All these have been published under the title ***The Collected Essay, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*** in the following four volumes:

Volume I: An age like this: covering the period 1920-1940.

Volume II: My Country Right or Left covering the period 1940-1943.

Volume III: As I Please : Covering the period 1943-1945.

Volume IV: In front of your Nose : Covering the period 1949 till Orwell's death.

#### 1.1.6 Let us sum up

In this lesson we have discussed George Orwell's life, his fictional and non-fictional works. We have also given the In-text questions for you. We hope that you will find these questions useful. Write their answers in the space provided.

**1.1.7 Suggested Reading**

1. Jeffrey Meyers : A Readers Guide to George Orwell
2. Raymond Williams : George Orwell : A collection of Critical Essays (Twentieth Century Views)
3. Miriam Gross (Ed.) : The World of George Orwell.
4. Sant Singh Bal : George Orwell.

**1.1.8 Important Questions:**

- Q. No. 1. Write a brief account of the life of George Orwell.
- Q. No. 2. Name and discuss important fictional works of George Orwell.
- Q. No. 3. Name and discuss important Non-fictional works of George Orwell.

---

**LESSON NO. 1.2**

---

**The Historical Background of Animal Farm and the Analysis of the Novel**

**STRUCTURE**

2.0 Objectives

2.1 The Historical Background of Animal Farm

2.1.1 Animal Farm : An Introduction and Analysis of the Novel.

2.1.2 Animal Farm : A chapter wise Analysis

2.1.2.1 Chapter -1

2.1.2.2 Chapter -2

2.1.2.3 Chapter-3

2.1.2.4 Chapter-4

2.1.2.5 Chapter-5

2.1.2.6 Chapter-6

2.1.2.7 Chapter-7

2.1.2.8 Chapter-8

2.1.2.9 Chapter-9

2.1.2.10 Chapter-10

2.1.3 Intext questions

2.1.4 Short Notes

2.1.5 George Orwell : Bibliography

2.1.6 Important Questions

2.1.7 Let us sum up.

**2.0 OBJECTIVES**

This lesson aims to acquaint you with

- The historical background of *Animal Farm*
- The introduction of *Animal Farm*
- The Analysis of the novel chapter wise
- In-text questions
- Short Notes
- List of Books
- Important questions

**2.1 The Historical Background of Animal Farm**

As this novel allegorises and satirises a number of incidents in the history of Russia under Stalin's totalitarianism, it is relevant to know its historical background. Karl Marx, the father of modern Communism, appears as old Major in the opening chapter of *Animal Farm*. Much respected as Old Major is among the



animals of Mr. Jones's Manor Farm, they all come in response to his call for the nocturnal meeting in the barn. There, Old Major explains to the animals certain principles (of communism) and goads them to rebel against the tyranny of Mr. Jones, who represents "man", the real foe of all the animals.

Nicholas, the autocratic Czar, ruled Russia when in 191, World War I broke out. Russia was going from bad to worse, and the Czar and his ministers were totally unable to stem the rot. Many prime ministers changed, but not the wretched conditions in Russia. Then, even the army chief joined the popular leaders in submitting a list of demands to the Czar. Common people, starved and provoked by the police oppression, engineered the fall of the Czar in 1917. This event came to be known as the Revolution of March, 1917. The provisional government established after this revolution was sabotaged by the Soviet of workers and soldiers' deputies, which had come up after the overthrow of the Czar. Bolsheviks dominated the Soviet. After several changes in the government, Kerensky became the prime minister, but he proved quite ineffective. There was chaos every where: industrial production was declining; the armed forces were in a state of disorder: anarchy prevailed in the country side. At this juncture, Lenin returned to Russia from exile, overthrew Kerensky's by tottering government on November 7, 1917, and led the Soviets to set themselves in an unchallenged dictatorial authority. Thus came to power the Bolsheviks, committed to the ideology of communism. After Lenin, Trotsky was the next in authority, and the various major Bolsheviks occupied key positions under the new rule.

After Lenin's passing away, in 1924, there started a struggle for supremacy among Lenin's chief deputies of whom Trotsky and Stalin were the leaders. Stalin's position was strong, but Trotsky was generally considered to be Lenin's most obvious successor. A fierce strife broke out among Lenin's possible successors, and it lasted for fourteen years. It was only with the most brutal surges of 1936-38 that Stalin destroyed all his rivals. Trotsky was the earliest victim. After being banished from Russia, in 1927, and then being persecuted in every country where he took refuge, Trotsky was finally killed in Mexico in 1940, presumably by Stalin's agents. Stalin made his adversaries to appear and endless trials compelled them to accuse each other of all sorts of crimes; and forced them to confess having perpetrated the most fantastic crimes. They were physically liquidated on a scale unknown in the history.

In 1936, Stalin introduced a new constitution which accorded to the communist party a dictatorial position. Consequently all those freedoms which had been originally promised were suppressed.

Stalin and Hitler had been suspicious of each other. However, on 23 August, 1939, they signed a non-aggression pact. Within a few days of this pact, World War

II began. On 22nd June, 1941, Hitler's armies invaded Russia. The Russians came out triumphant in this deadly war, but at a colossal cost.

### **2.1.1 Animal Farm : An Introduction And Analysis of the Novel**

Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* between November 1943 and February 1944, after the Battle of Stalingrad and before the Allies invaded Normandy. The Allies had at this time developed a strong bond of solidarity with Russia, as they were fighting together their common foe, Hitler. Orwell, therefore, had difficulties in publishing the novel. For political reasons, various publishers, like Gollancz, Faber and Cape, refused to accept the book. It was not expedient, they thought to offend Russia at this critical time in the war. Feeling very offended by these rejections Orwell wrote to his agent that if Secker and Warburg did not publish it, he would publish it himself; but this firm did publish it, in August 1945.

It proved a turning point for Orwell. Half a million copies of *Animal Farm* were sold through the American Book-of-the Month Club; and it was translated into thirty-nine languages. By 1950 Orwell had earned a good deal of money to feel prosperous for the first time in life. In 1947 and 1952, the BBC broadcast the radio version of *Animal Farm* by 1972, eleven million copies of the book had been sold.

Orwell's account of the genesis of *Animal Farm* suggests that his political purpose totally determined the form of the narrative. In a prefatory note to the book, he asserts that he began to write with the aim of demolishing the Stalinist myth:

On my return from Spain I thought of exposing the Soviet myth in a story that could be easily understood by almost anyone and which could be easily translated into other languages. However, the actual details of the story did not come to me for sometimes until one day (I was then living in a small village) I saw a little boy, perhaps ten years old, driving a huge cart-horse along a narrow path, whipping it whenever it tried to turn. It struck me that if only such animals became aware of their strength we should have no power over them, and that men exploit animals in much the same way as the rich exploit the proletariat.

I proceeded to analyse the Marxist theory from the animal's point of view. To them it was clear that the concept of a class struggle between humans was a pure illusion, Since whenever it was necessary, to exploit animals, all humans united against them; the true struggle is between animals and humans. From this point of departure, it was not difficult to elaborate the story."

The motive force behind *Animal Farm* was Orwell's deep disgust with dictatorship confined with a disgust with its defenders among the left-wing intellectuals. From 1935 onwards, Orwell had begun to perceive that Russia had taken a wrong turn and had turned into a tyrannical totalitarianism. Therefore, in the interest of the word Socialism, it was essential to expose the Stalin myth. In the

nineteen-thirties and forties, especially after Russia had come into the war, many younger British intellectuals had joined the British communist Party or had become its sympathizers. Orwell strongly disapproved of these British intellectuals, because in his opinion they were supporting Stalinist propaganda which Orwell considered to be all lies and humbug at the cost of freedom, truth and ultimately, of literature. He wrote *Animal Farm* to lay bare the reality of the Russian Revolution, and how this Revolution was betrayed by Stalin's tyranny.

Orwell said that he did not feel compelled to give up his socialistic ideas or to join the Tories in England. He continued to support the Left of English Labour Party, even though he became a determined enemy of communism as it was being practiced in the Soviet Russia. Orwell identified himself with the Left from the mid-thirties until his death in 1950. As he says in the essay "Why I Write", "Every line of serious work that I have ever written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism, as I understand it." When his work, after the publication of *Animal Farm*, became popular with a conservative audience, he refused to associate himself with his new readers. In 1945, when he was asked to address a meeting protesting Soviet pressure on Yugoslavia, sponsored by what Orwell took to be "an essentially Conservative body", he declined, even though he shared their indignation. He observed, "I belong to the left and must work inside it."

### **2.1.2 ANIMAL FARM : A CHAPTER-WISE ANALYSIS**

**2.1.2.1 Chapter 1** *Animal Farm* is a fable in the sense that the characters are animals with human traits. They gather, communicate with one another, have a much respected leader and develop ambitions. As in many fables, animals here are used to unmask the frailties and evils of mankind. Also, Orwell is employing allegory to make more intense his vision while keeping the reader entertained with a charming and artistically convincing surface reality. Allegory is the symbolic representation of one world for another; the surface world is as well the portals to the intellectually more significant world within. In *Animal Farm*, on the surface animal story throws a satiric light on the twentieth century socio-political world.

Orwell concisely shows Farmer Jones as a shiftless farm owner who cares more for a drink than for a well run farm. This negligence is a stimulus to the animals in their rebellion. Old Major symbolizes the combination of Marx and Lenin. It was Marx who had a "strange dream" which he wished to communicate to the world. Of course, that dream is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat. As the animals come into the barn for the nocturnal meeting. We are told something about each of them. Boxer, a horse with prodigious strength is indefatigable but rather stupid; Benjamin, the donkey, the oldest animal on the farm, never laughs and on a few occasions that he speaks, is bitter and

misanthropic. These animals represent human types, they are flat characters who act as stereotypes of human personalities. Thus, Boxer represents a man enormously strong and perseverant but ignorant and native, agreeing to just about anything suggested to him. Benjamin, the animal sage, is standoffish and taciturn, a sharp observer but who chooses to stand outside the action.

Old Major's concern for the animals is noble. His concern is the destiny of the animals. He has watched their kind life under horribly slavish conditions by their owners. The animals labour hard but receive, in return, nothing but just enough food to live and work. Of course, this is the protest of the worker against the entrepreneur, a protest against exploitation and bondage. As Marx called for the overthrow of capitalistic "tyranny" and for the building of a state whose economy was in the hands of the worker, so the old Major is exhorting the animals to revolt against the "tyranny of the human beings." His vision is for a new order, one in which animals will be their own masters, and will enjoy the produce they have made. Major urges the animals to struggle, to win freedom. They have been so long in fetters that they can imagine no other way; but Major knows there is another way and his song, "Beasts of England", inspires them to endeavor to attain it. However, he cautions that the animals must avoid the habits of man, which he considers "evil". He inspires cohesion among the animals by having them realize that they are all comrades, that they share a common lot, and that they are all equal. Of course, this is the Communist ideal of concord among all the workers. As the animals have only one enemy, man, so the workers have only one enemy, the entrepreneur.

### **2.1.2.2 Chapter 2**

Orwell makes it evident that the animals had no intention of rebelling at this time. Yet the foundation of the rebellion has to be laid. Thus, the pigs who might correspond to the proletariat intellectuals, began to prepare the animals for the revolution. Here we are introduced to the two chief pigs Snowball and Napoleon. Two more 'human types' are also met in this chapter. There is Mollie, the white mare whose only care is her own comfort and appearance; she is vanity incarnate and does not care a fig for the Rebellion. The other character, Moses, always talks of Sugarcandy Mountain, which is a kind of jocular parallel of the theological heaven. He is an antagonist of the movement because he is proposing something over and beyond animalism. And when Mr. Jones is driven out Moses follows after him.

The revolt itself is almost a bonus to the animals. It arises from reaction rather than action. It is more chance than plan. It is imperative to read clearly the Seven Commandments, as the outcome of the novel and the revolt revolves on whether they are maintained or not. Also worth noting is the fact that the milk,

which Napoleon had said should be left, was missing upon the animals return from the fields. We might suspect something sinister here.

### **2.1.2.3 Chapter 3**

There is a considerable improvement in the lot of the animals in the early days of the new order. The animals are manifestly inspired and they work and live accordingly. All unite except Mollie and Benjamin, because Mollie, we have seen, is vain and self-infatuated, and all that matters to her is own comfort. However, Benjamin remains untouched because of sagacious caution; he has lived too long and seen too much to be carried away by an ephemeral wave of zeal : he watches and waits, dubious of outcome. Meanwhile, Snowball and Napoleon are competing for at least intellectual control of the movement; and it is clear that they are not going to compromise. In his ardor for organization, Snowball is like Leon Trotsky. If there were no Napoleon opposing him, and he could do what he wanted, it is possible the ideals of the revolt could have been realized. Orwell, indeed, paints him in agreeable colours. Were he ambitious to usurp a dictatorial control of the farm, he would not go through such pains to educate the animals. An autocrat wants a blind obedience from the masses and there can be no blind obedience if there is intelligence and understanding. By allowing the committees to operate themselves, he is preparing for the Marxist ideal of a classless society. On the contrary, the intentions of Napoleon are suspect, Although at first it is not clear why he had taken a litter of puppies to nurture himself, yet there is something ominous there.

More apparent of the change of attitude is the pigs reserving for themselves the milk and the windfall apples. Squealer does a smart job of convincing the animals that the pigs, who are the architects of the daily operations, require the milk and the apples for their health. And if the pigs were unable to perform their duties, Jones would return. That dispels any doubt from the minds of the animals that the pigs must have the milk and the apples. Squealer, then, emerges as the conspiring propagandist of the privileged class. The pigs, indeed, are making themselves the advantaged class despite the seventh commandment, which says that all animals are equal. Thus, we find the first significant breach of the Animalist creed. What the animals had struggled for is now being taken from them by their own kind.

### **2.1.2.4 Chapter 4**

The other farmers who apprehend that the same Rebellion would erupt in their farms, parallel the leaders of many countries after the successful Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The Battle of the cowshed reflects the trouble the Russians had with Germany in 1918. We should remember Snowball's bravery and commitment because, later on, Napoleon and company will falsify this fact.

In this chapter the characters act as can be expected from them. For instance, Mollie avoided the battle totally and hid herself. Boxer, with his might and resolution, proved a hero. We see here another side of Boxer, his moral rectitude. He was very disconcerted when it seemed that the boy he kicked was dead.

#### **2.1.2.5 Chapter 5**

Napoleon had schemed to take power for some time, which is clear in his training the nine ferocious dogs to be what the secret police were during Stalin's reign of terror. The triumph of Napoleon is the triumph of might over right. For Snowball was a scrupulous comrade who worked earnestly to realize the ideals of Major Reasonable and oratorical as he was, the use of force to gain his objective clearly never entered his thinking. But Napoleon is relentless and hungry for power and self-aggrandisement. Thus, *Animal Farm* is crumbling into the worst of all possible political worlds—a dictatorial state, in place of debates there will be commands, in place of the weekly meetings of all the animals there will be a committee of pigs led by Napoleon in place of peaceful cooperation there will be a secret police; in place of truth there will be a twisting of reality: in place of the margin of error there will be 'Napoleon is always right.'

#### **2.1.2.6 Chapter 6**

Circumstances require that the animals end their insularity from humans and engage in trade. At the same time, the pigs are widening the line between themselves as the ruling aristocracy and the common animals. From another angle, they are just a new order of capitalists exploiting the workers. The methods they employ to stop opposition are clearly Hitlersque. Squealer reminds us more and more of Dr. Goebbels who believed in Hitler's idea that a lie told often enough would start passing for truth and was an expert in sophistry as an effective device for persuasion. The growing dogs, the secret police, bring silence and obedience whenever needed. Indeed the animals are reduced to weak, blind followers, to do what they are told. The forces of darkness and evil are starting to seize control, stamping down the unsuspecting good. Like Hitler, Napoleon needed a scapegoat, which he found in Snowball. The use of a scapegoat produces cohesion behind the leader. The common masses begin to think that there is only one obstacle between them and the actualization of their dreams. Consequently, they become more faithful and resolute. They become the victims of their own zeal with their intelligence and will deviated.

#### **2.1.2.7 Chapter 7**

It appears that Orwell wrote this chapter with the Russian history clearly in mind. The food problem of the animals corresponds to the failure of Russia's economic policies in the 1920's and the famine that was the consequence. But even more important in the novel and in the history of Russia is the "purges". Under

Stalin, in the 1930's, the Communist party killed many high-ranking officials who "confessed" to their crimes. Like Stalin, Napoleon's purpose in doing this was to inject paralytic terror in the hearts of the subjects. It was only incidentally that he wanted to dispose off those who, however feebly, exhibited discontent at one time or another with his rule. Certainly the hens and the sheep posed no physical threat. Also, it was not possible that Boxer would want to rebel against a leader he thought could do no wrong. So ignorant was Boxer of Napoleon's knavery that he waited for the leader's word to release one of the dogs set upon him by the knave himself. Thus, the net of dictatorship spreads over the animal farm with these new methods of terror and massacre, reducing the animals to impotent servility. New order it is, but how different and removed from the ideals expounded by Major. Orwell seems to suggest here that it is easier to dream of a new Utopian order than to actualize it, that such dreams are futile unless there is a corresponding change of heart among all concerned. The bitter irony is that what is transpiring on the *Animal Farm* is antithetical to what the Rebellion was all about. The vision was the equality and freedom of perfect democracy, the reality is the terror and deprivation of totalitarianism.

#### **2.1.2.8 Chapter 8**

There is a hint here that the animals might be sorry that the Rebellion ever began. Their existence has become a long, torturous toil, with hardly enough food to keep them going. But the ignorance of the masses is the strongest asset of the dictator, and Napoleon takes full advantage of it. He is modifying his image to compel worship. The irony here lies in the fact that Napoleon becomes the subject of satire and ridicule. He gives up what perhaps was an honest relation with Pilkington to be put upon by an obvious villain, Frederick. He assures the animals that no harm could come to the windmill just before the event that ended its existence. He is described as a coward and deride. Also ridiculed in this chapter is Squealer. Squealer uses statistics to prove to the animals that food production has increased by at least 200%. It is said that Snowball never did get "Animal Hero, First Class" in the Battle of Cowshed, but was really a coward and one with the enemy. Though the animals achieved nothing more in the Battle of Windmill than the retaining of their own land while losing the object of their torturous labour for two years, the Battle was declared by the leader in celebrations, both solemn and festive, as a great victory. So, truth is in the hands of the autocrat and is devoid of external legitimacy; he moulds it to suit his schemes. The consequences are ultimate absurdity, because without the reality of truth, fixed values fall apart. Everything is arbitrary; reality itself is made the whimsical product of one man's will. Individuals lose their birthright: the liberty to be.

**2.1.2.9 Chapter 9**

The totalitarian state takes further base steps to tighten the reins. Thus, Squealer does not report a “reduction” of rations for the animals, but only an innocuous “readjustment”, and his figures that food supply now is certainly more ample than in the days of Jones. But even if it were not so, the animals lived in subservience then, but not anymore. The illusion of freedom is Squealer’s unfailing device. The animals must be made to realize that they are enjoying unparalleled prosperity, that they are moving closer to the ideals of the Rebellion, and that their leader has the omniscience of a god and the same allegiance to the cause as a Boxer. The pigs, despite obvious reversals and frequent mistakes are successful in keeping the illusion going. Napoleon’s latest stunt is the use of more occasions of state to allow the animals to celebrate; and to have their minds busied so they will not think of their hunger. Ironically, one of these events is called Spontaneous Demonstration, while, in fact, it is preplanned and virtually demanded of the animals. In the previous chapter there was a reshaping of reality by the pigs; here history is totally twisted. History has nothing to do with fact but is whatever the leader requires it to be. And the animals trained to be ignorant, accept what is told to them. Power is complete with this alarming naiveté and blind obedience.

The increase of power brings in the increase of special privileges. Indeed, a virtual caste system is established whereby when an animal notes a pig on a path, he must step aside, and only the members of the advantaged class are allowed to wear frivolous decorations, indulge in parties and feast lavishly, while the rest of the farm animals work endlessly and starves. The other important part of this chapter is Orwell’s remarkable treatment of Boxer’s plight. We have come to admire Boxer for his dedication to the farm, and also to pity him for his ignorance and credulity. That he is considered very remarkable is shown in the reaction of Benjamin. This wise, old donkey had to the point of Boxer’s accident, shown absolutely no emotion. But when Boxer fell, it was Benjamin who helped him. And when he saw the sign on the truck he became excited, clearly deeply hurt. Benjamin wins our admiration. But it was Boxer who inspired such compassion. And we feel so sad when he was callously betrayed by the leader for whom he spent his life.

**2.1.2.10 Chapter 10**

The metaphorical metamorphosis of the pigs into humans coincides with the dictatorial practices of a would be classless state, with the acquisitiveness of the communists in utter disregard of their anti-capitalist ideas. The Bolsheviks struggled to overthrow a tyrant, but to replace him, a few years later, came Stalin. The wheel has turned full circle-Animal Farm returns to being Manor Farm; the



pigs have become humans-the tyrannical, exploiting class. The masses exist in conditions more awful than before the Rebellion.

### 2.1.3 INTEXT EXERCISE

Dear student, so far you have read the historical background of *Animal Farm* and also the detail chapter wise summary of the novel. Now try to answer the following questions in the space provided:

Q.No.1 What do you know about the historical background of the novel.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.No.2 What is the importance of the opening chapter of the novel.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.No.3 Justify the title of the novel *Animal Farm*

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 2.1.4 SHORT NOTES

**Q.1. Explain the terms fable and allegory in relation to *Animal Farm*.**

Ans. Fable is a short story that exemplifies a moral thesis or principle of human behaviour by using animal characters with a definite moral. In *Animal Farm*, Orwell expands the beast fable into a sustained satire on the political and social conditions of our age.

Allegory is a narrative in which agents and action and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived not only to make sense in themselves but also to signify a second, co-related order of persons, things, concepts or events. *Animal Farm* is a political allegory. Orwell here satirizes the Russian totalitarianism. It is a fierce attack on Stalin and on his betrayal of the Russian Revolution.

**Q.2. Comment on the significance of the lines. "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others"**

Ans. *Animal Farm* comes into existence with a hope of the golden dream promised in the old Major's nocturnal song. For the achievement of this golden dream seven

commandments are framed. However, one by one, the seven commandments are modified and moulded out of recognition, as it suits the pigs. Ultimately only one commandment remains with an ironical sting in it “all animals are equal but some animals are more equal than other.” The only commandment left on the wall exposes the lust for power. It satirically points out the horror of the cold and calculated process by which happiness, decency and hope are systematically annihilated.

**Q.3. *Animal Farm* is the destruction of the soviet myth, discuss?**

Ans. With the Russian Revolution of 1917, there was sudden upsurge of opposition against imperial forces. This was an era of commitment to socialist definitions of freedom and quality. However, by 1930s, this optimism withered away. A new kind of totalitarianism in Russia, Germany and Italy came to be witnessed. Orwell was convinced that nothing has contributed so much to the corruption of the original idea of socialism as the belief that Russia is a socialist country. Hence he believed that the destruction of the Soviet myth was essential if there was to be revival of socialist movement. In *Animal Farm* the events and personages of the Russian history from 1913 to 1943 have been satirized. In this political allegory Orwell emphasizes the fact that political changes without moral directness are sure to push society to the brink of nothingness and chaos.

**Q.4. Animals represent some of the historical and political personages, identify them.**

Ans. Old Major in *Animal Farm* is Karl Marx who gave a clarion call to all the workers of the world to unite to slough their capitalist masters. Snowball and Napoleon are Trotsky and Stalin. Squealer is the editor of *Pravda* the official newspaper of Russia. Moses symbolizes religion. “Sugar Candy Mountain” stands for Heaven. Clover and Boxer are the loyal proletariat. The two human forms, Pinchfield and Foxwood symbolize the two groups of non-communist powers-the forces of Capitalism and Fascism Pilkington is Churchill-the Prime Minister of England and Fredrick is Hitler.

**2.1.5 GEORGE ORWELL : BIBLIOGRAPHY**

The Bibliography of George Orwell includes journalism, essays, books, and fiction written by the British writer George Orwell (1903-1950). Orwell was a prolific writer and *The Economist* considered him perhaps the 20<sup>th</sup> century’s best chronicler of English culture. Orwell primarily wrote non-fiction-including book reviews, opeds, and investigative journalism- for a variety of British periodicals. He first achieved widespread acclaim with his fictional novella *Animal Farm* and cemented his place in history as a novelist with the publication of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* shortly before his death.

### **Books and novels**

Orwells' final two novels – *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eight-Four* – had sold almost fifty million copies in sixty-two languages by 2007; more than any other pair of books by a twentieth-century author. Several of his works were semi-autobiographical in nature: *Burmese Days* was inspired by his period working as an imperial policeman and is the most fictionalized; *Down and Out in Paris and London* records his experiences tramping and teaching in those two cities; *The Road to Wigan Pier* is initially a study of poverty in the north of England, but ends with an extended biographical essay of Orwell's experiences with poverty; and *Homage to Catalonia* recounts his experiences volunteering to fight fascism in anarchist Catalonia during the Spanish Civil War with the Worker's party of Marxist Unification.

- *Down and Out in Paris and London* (9 January 1933, Victor Gollancz Ltd.)
- *Burmese Days* (October 1934, Harper & Brothers)
- *A Clergymans' Daughter* (11 March 1935, Victor Gollancz Ltd.)
- *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (20 April 1936, Victor Gollanez Ltd.)
- *The Road to Wigan Pier* (February 1937, Left Book Club editions, 8 March 1937 Victor Gollancz Ltd.edition for the general public)
- *Homage to Catalonia* (25 April 1938, Secker and Warburg)
- *Coming Up for Air* (12 June 1939, Victor Gollanez Ltd.)
- *Animal Farm* (17 August 1945, Secker and Warburg)
- *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (8 June 1949, Secker and Warburg)

**[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Orwell\\_bibliography](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Orwell_bibliography)**

### **Essays**

Orwell wrote hundreds of essays, book reviews and editorials during his lifetime. His insights into linguistics, literature, and politics – in particular anti-fascism, anit-communism, and democratic socialism-have continued to be influential, even decades after his death. Several of these were published in collections during his life-*Inside the Whale and Other Essays* by his original publisher Victor Gollanez Ltd in 1940, and *Critical Essay* by Secker and Warburg in 1946. The latter press also published the collection *Shooting an Elephant and other Essay* in 1950 and *England Your England and other Essays* in 1953.

Since his death, many collections of essays have appeared, with the first attempt at a comprehensive collection being the four-volume *Collected Essays, Letters and Journalism of George Orwell* edited by Ian Angus and Sonia Brownell, which was published by Secker and Warburg and Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich in 1968-1970. Peter Davison of De Montfort University spent 17 years researching and correcting the entirety of Orwell's works with Angus and Stella Davison and devoted

the last eleven volumes of the twenty-volume series *The complete Works of George Orwell* to essays, letters, and journal entries. The entire series was initially printed by Secker and Warburg in 1986, finished by Random House in 1998, and revised between 2000 and 2002.

- “A Hanging” (1931) and “Shooting an Elephant” (1936), recounting Orwell’s time in Burma
- “As I Please”, a series in the *Tribune* (December 1943- April 1947)
- “The Lion and the Unicorn : Socialism and the English Genius” And “England Your England” (1941), on the essence of English culture
- “London Letters”, a series in the *Partisan Review* (1941-1946)
- “My Country Right or Left” (1940), an investigation of patriotism
- “Politics and the English Language” (1946), a critique of political language and poor journalism
- “Such, Such Were the Joys” (possibly written c 1947), published posthumously in 1952), criticizing Orwell’s experiences as schoolboy at St Cyprian’s School
- “Why I Write” (1946), on being an author

### **Pamphlets**

Starting with *The Lion and the Unicorn*, several of his longer essays took the form of pamphlets and were published and distributed independently.

- *The Lion and the Unicorn: Socialism and the English Genius* was printed by his publisher Secker and Warburg as Searchlight Books No. 1 on 19 February 1941
- *Betrayal of the Left* was printed by his other regular publisher Victor Gollancz Ltd. In 1941, with material from Victor Gollancz John Strachey, and other.
- *Victory or Vested Interest?* Came from The Labour Book Service on 2 May, 1942, with Orwell’s “Culture and Democracy” (made up of the pieces “Fascism and Democracy” and “Patriots and Revolutionaries”) amongst others.
- *Talking to India*, by E.M. Forster, Richie Calder, Cedric Dover, Hsiao Ch’len and Others: A Selection of English Language Broadcasts to India was published in 1943 by Allen & Unwin, edited with an introduction by Orwell
- *James Burnham and the Managerial Revolution* – Socialist Book Centre, printing of *Second Thoughts on James Burnham* under this title in July 1946
- *The English People* was printed by Harper Collins 1947

- *British Pamphleteers Volume I : From the 3<sup>th</sup> Century the 18<sup>th</sup> Century* from Allan Wingate, spring 1948 was co-edited by Orwell and Reginald Reyonlds with an introduction by Orwell.

### Poems

While Orwell was not known for his poetry, he did compose several verses which have survived, including many written during his school days:

- "Awake ! Young Men of England" (191)
- "Ballade" (1929)
- "A dressed Man and a Naked Man" (1933)
- "A Happy Vicar I Might Have Been" (1935)
- "Ironie Poem About Prostitution" (written prior to 1936)
- "Kitchener" (193)
- "The Lesser Evil" (1924)
- "A Little Poem" (1935)
- "On a Ruined Farm Near the His Master's Voice Gramophone Factory" (1934)
- "Our Minds Are Married, but we Are Too Young" (1918)
- "The Pagan" (1918)
- "Poem from Burma" (1922-1927)
- "Romance" (1925)
- "Sometimes in the Middle Autumn Days" (1933)
- "Suggested by a Toothpaste Advertisement" (1918-19)
- "Summer-like for an Instant" (1933)
- "As One Non-Combatant to Another" (1943)

### Editing

In addition to the pamphlets *British Pamphleteers Volume I : From the 3<sup>th</sup> Century the 18 Century and Talking to India*, by E.M. Forster, Richie Calder, Cedric Dover, Hsiao Ch'ien and Others: *A Selection of English Language Broadcasts to India*, Orwell edited two newspapers during his Eton years-*College Days ! The Colleger (1917)* and *Election Times (1917-1921)*. While working for the BBC, he collected six editions of a poetry magazine named *Voice* which were broadcast by Orwell, Mulk Raj Anand, John Atkins, Edmund Blunden, Venu Chitale, William Empson, Vida Hope, Godfrey Kenton, Una Marson, Herbert Read, and Stephen Spender. The magazine was published and distributed to the readers before being broadcast by the BBC. Issue five has not been recovered.

### Collected editions

*The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell* (CEJL) is divided into four volumes:

- An Age Like This 1920-1940
- My Country Right or Left 1940-1943
- As I Please, 1943-1945
- In Front of Your Nose, 1945-1950

*The complete Works of George Orwell* (TCW) is a twenty-volume series, with the first nine being devoted to the books and novels and the final eleven volumes entitled:

- A Kind of Compulsion : 1903-1936
- Facing Unpleasant Facts: 1937-1939
- A Patriot After All : 1940-1941
- All Propaganda Is Lies : 1941-1942
- Keeping Our Little Corner Clean: 1942-1943
- Two Wasted Years: 1943
- I have Tried to Tell the Truth : 1943-1944
- I Belong to the Left : 1945
- Smothered Under Journalism : 1946
- It Is What I Think : 1947-1948
- Our Job is to Make life Worth Living 1949-1950

The initial publication from 1986 includes the following volumes, which would be incorporated into the latter printings, as well as an authorized biography:

- An Age like this : 1920-1940
- My Country, Right or Left : 1940-1943
- As I Please: 1943-1945
- In Front of Your Nose : 1945-1950

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Orwell\\_bibliography](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Orwell_bibliography)

Davison later compiled a handful of writings-including letters, an obituary for H.G. Wells, and his reconstruction of Orwell's list-into *Lost Orwell : Being a Supplement to The Complete Works of George Orwell* (LO), which was published by Timewell Press in 2006, with a paperback published on 25 September 2007 (ISBN 185725214). In the *The Daily Telegraph*, Tom Rosenthal called it "...a treasure trove of new discoveries." The *Lost Orwell* also received favorable reviews in the *Sunday Times* and *Private Eye*. In *The Spectator* Philip Hener wrote a mostly favorable review, but added "I was quite pleased to have read this book, and Orwell's alluring personality has a knack of shining out of even the most banal sentence (....) I wouldn't necessarily recommend buying it, though." *The Spectator*

Two essay collections were published during Orwell's lifetime – *Inside the Whale and Other Essays* (ItW) in 1940 and *Critical Essay* (CrE) in 1946 (the latter published in the United States as *Dickens, Dali, and Others* in 1958). His publisher followed up these anthologies with *Shooting an Elephant and Other Essays* (SaE) in

1950, *England Your England* and *Other Essays* (EYE) in 1953-which was revised as *Such, Such Were the Joys* (SSWtJ)-and *Collected Essays* (CoIE) in 1961. The first significant publications in the United States were Doubledays' *A Collection of Essays by George Orwell* (CoE) from 1954, 1956's *The Orwell Reader, Fictions, Essays, and Reportage* (OR) from Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, and Penguin's *Selected Essays* (SE) in 1957; re-released in 1962 with the title *Inside the Whale and Other Essays* (ISBN 010011854) and in abridged form as *Why I Write* (WIW, ISBN 013036351) in 2005 as part of the Great Ideas series. In the aforementioned series, Penguin also published the short collections *Books v. Cigarettes* (ISBN 0110366), and *Decline of the English Murder* (ISBN 011191260). The later does not contain the same texts as *Decline of the English Murder and Other Essays* (Dot EM), published by Penguin in association with Secker & Warburg in 1965.

In 1976 Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd, in association with Octopus Books published *The Complete Novel* (CN), this edition was latter republished by Penguin Books in 1983, and reprinted in Penguin Classic 2000 (ISBN 978-0-11-1852-6). Since the publication of Davison's corrected critical edition, JohnCarey's thorough *Essays* (EL) was released on 2 October 2002 as a part of the Everyman's Library (ISBN -375-4203-3) and George Packer edited two collections for Houghton Mifflin, released on 13 October 2008-*All Art Is Propaganda: Critical Essays* (AAIP, ISBN 02103551) and *Facing Unpleasant Fcts: Narrative Essays* (FUF, ISBN 02101363),

### **Other Works**

After his first publication – the poem “A wake ! Young Men of England”, published in *Henley and South Oxfordshire Standard* in 191 – Orwell continued to write for his school publication *The Election Times and College Days ! The Colleger*. He also experimented with writing for several years beforehand journalism (e.g. 1931's *The Spike*), articles (eg. 1931's *Hop-Picking*), and even a one-act play. (He would also adapt four plays as a radio dramas.)

His fiction production was not as prolific-he wrote a few short stories which were unpublished and claimed to have written two entire novels in French while living in Paris, but burned the manuscripts (Orwell routinely destroyed his manuscripts and with the exception of a partial copy of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, they are lost.) In addition, Orwell produced several pieces while working at the BBC as a correspondent. Some of these were composed by him and others were merely recited for radio broadcast. For several years, these went uncollected until the anthologies *Orwell: The War Broadcasts* (WB) (Marboro Books, June 1985 – ISBN 0877957452 in the United States, *Orwell : The Lost Writings* Arbor House, September 1985 – ISBN 0877957452) and *Orwell: The War Commentaries* (WC) (Gerald Duckworth & Company Ltd., London, 1 January 1985) were edited by W.J. West. Orwell was responsible for producing *The Indian Section* of BBC Eastern

Service and his program notes from 1 February and 7 December 1942, have survived (they are reproduced in *War Broadcasts*.) He was also asked to provide an essay about British cooking along with recipes for *The British Council*. As mentioned above, Orwell kept a diary which has been published by his widow – Sonia Brownell – and academic Peter Davison, in addition to his private correspondence.

**Full list of publications**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Collected</b>	<b>Notes</b>
'42 to '44 : A <i>Contemporary Menoir Upon Himan Behaviour During the Crisis of the World Revolution by H.G. Wells</i>	21 May 1944	<i>EL</i>	Book review published in <i>The Observer</i>
<i>Alexander Pope</i> by Edith Sitwell, <i>The Course of classicism</i> by Sherard Vines	June 1930	<i>CEJL I</i>	Books reviews published in <i>New Adelphi</i> , June/August 1930 credited to "E. A. Blair"
<i>All Art Is Propaganda: Critical Essays</i>	13 October 2008	--	Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in New York City, edited by George Packer. Companion volume to <i>Facing Unpleasant Facts: Narrative Essay</i>
<i>Angel Pavement</i> by J.B. Priestley	October 1930	<i>CEJL I</i>	Book review published in <i>Adelphi</i> , Credited to "E. A. Blair"
<i>Animal Farm</i>	17 August 1945	<i>CN</i>	Published by Secker and Warburg in London on an Harcourt Brace



			Jovanovich in New York City on 26 August 1946. The original printings is entitled <i>Animal Farm : A Fairy Story</i> .
"Anti-Semitism in Britain"	April 1945	SSWtJ, EYE, ColE, CEJL III, EL	Published in <i>Contemporary Jewish Record</i>
"Are Books Too Dear? "	1 June 1944	EL	Published in <i>Manchester Evening News</i>
"The Art of Donald McGill"	September 1941	CrE, CoE, ColE, MotEM, CEJL II, EL, AAIP	Published in <i>Horizon</i>
"Arthur Koestler"	11 September 1944	CrE, ColE, CeJL III, EL,	Unpublished typescript
"As I Please" # 1	3 December 1943	CEJL III, EL, FUF	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 2	10 December 1943	EL, FUF	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 3	17 December 1943	CEJL III, EL, FUF	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 4	24 December 1943	CEJL III, EL	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 5	31 December 1943	CEJL III, EL	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 6	7 January 1944	CEJL III	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 7	1 January 1944	CEJL III	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 8	21 January 1944	CEJL III	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 9	28 January 1944	CEJL III	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 10	4 February 1944	CEJL III	Published in <i>Tribune</i>
"As I Please" # 11	11 February 1944	CEJL III	Published in <i>Tribune</i>

### 2.1.6 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

- Q. No.1           What is the theme and message of the novel *Animal Farm*.  
 Q.No.2           Write the historical Importance of the novel.  
 Q.No.3           Write the critical summary of the novel.

**2.1.7 LET US SUM UP**

In this lesson, we have given the historical background and a chapter-wise analysis of the novel. We have also given the solved short notes and the important questions and Orwell's bibliography. We hope you have been able to understand the contents easily.

**LESSON NO. 1.3**

---

**CHARACTERIZATION : Textual Analysis**

**STRUCTURE**

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Characterization

3.1.1 Characters in *Animal Farm*

3.1.1.1 Major

3.1.1.2 Napoleon

3.1.1.3 Snowball

3.1.1.4 Squealer

3.1.1.5 Boxes

3.1.1.6 Benjamin

3.1.1.7 Moses

3.1.1.8 In-text question

3.2 In-text questions

3.3 Let us sum up

**3.0 OBJECTIVES**

This lesson aims to acquaint you with

- the characterization of the novel
- characters in the novel
- In-text questions
- summing up the lesson

**3.1 CHARACTERIZATION**

In a novel that endeavors to simulate reality, a human character is bound to undergo some change of outlook or nature. He cannot remain unaltered as there is the gradual, almost imperceptible change that results just from years of living, as in *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens. Also there are those dramatic exceptional series of events which cause radical change in nature: Henchard is an important example. And then there is the novel in which little time passes (in *Ulysses* only seventeen hours) and nothing extraordinary occurs. Still, as the characters are dynamic and open to experience we feel that they are not quite the same as they were when they started the day. To live is to change, in the literary work as in the real world. But in *Animal Farm* such is not the case. Characters in this novel are static: they are predetermined and follow a fixed pattern of behaviour. Tess, in Hardy's novel is "real" and, therefore, undergoes a drastic change with the unfolding of events. But the animals in *Animal Farm* are single dimensional types

which precludes change. Boxer lives and dies as simple, stupid, hardworking and good : Moses never gives up his talk of the Sugarcandy Mountains: Clover remains motherly and compassionate: Squealer always cleverly propagates his master's voice : Napoleon remains crooked, callous and monomaniac, the sheep always bleat stupidly, and so on. In this novel, all that a character has to do is to give an indication of what he is and we know that he will stay that way. In *Animal Farm*, there is perhaps, the one surprise in character is Benjamin's show of emotion and concern upon the hurt and the subsequent end of Boxer. But this, too is not so much a change as the revelation of character brought out by a certain situation. We had no occasion to feel that Benjamin was compassionate until Boxer's tragedy occurred. Benjamin only revealed something new about himself : he did not change.

Not only the characters in *Animal Farm* do not change, psychologically they are too simple to require much analysis or motivation. They are caricatures and a caricature is necessarily a simplified version of that from which it was drawn. Characters in this novel mostly are allegorical or symbolical. They were created to represent something beyond themselves, and may, therefore, be called thematic characters. Characters here are animals whose human features are abstractions. An animal represents that human quality which he has. This is not to deny the intrinsic interest of some of the characters but the intellectual interest is in the human interest he represents.

In some novels, say *Jude the Obscure* of Hardy, the relationship of the different characters are complex, and become an integral part of the book, and it is an absorbing exercise to analyse these characters. But when in a novel like *Animal Farm* the characters are flat, cardboard type, they lack the complexity to require such analysis. For instance, Squealer relates differently with Napoleon than with the animals, but the nature of the difference is too clear to require comment.

### **3.1.1 Characters in *Animal Farm***

#### **3.1.1.1 Major**

Old Major, on the Manor Farm of Mr. Jones, symbolizes Karl Marx, whose political philosophy of communism inspired Lenin and other Bolsheviks to usher in the social revolution in the Czarist Russia, and thus, launch a new and powerful force to shape the future course of the world history, Old, benevolent and a source of sagacity that he is, Major's call to the animals of the farm to come for a nocturnal meeting in the barn to listen to his "dream" evokes an immediate and positive response. To the assembled animals, old Major speaks thus:

Now, comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it. Our lives are miserable, laborious, and short. We are born, we are given just so much food as will keep the breath in our bodies, and those of us who are capable of it are forced to work to the last atom of our strength. No animal in

England knows the meaning of happiness or leisure after he is a year old. No animal in England is free. The life of an animal is misery and slavery; that is the plain truth.

But this, old major tells the animals, is not “part of the order of nature.” The grave injustice to the animals is caused by man:

Man is the only real enemy we have. Remove Man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished for ever.

Man is the worst kind of parasite on the animals, whom he exploits and oppresses. The interests of the animals and man are not mutual, because “Man serves the interests of no creature except himself”, but the interests of the animals are common “All animals are comrades”. Therefore, old Major, exhorts the animals to work together night and day, body and soul, to cause a “rebellion” against their callous exploiter, Man.

The wise old Major seems to realize that the vices of Man can also infect the animals; therefore he tells them:

Even when you have conquered him, do not adopt his vices. No animal must ever live in a house or sleep in a bed, or wear clothes, or drink alcohol, or smoke tobacco, or touch money, or engage in trade. And, above all, no animal must ever tyrannize over his own kids. Weak or strong, clever or simple, we are all brothers. No animal must ever kill any other animal. All animals are equal.

These ideas in the speech of old Major later become the “Seven Commandments” for the animals when they have driven away Jones and become their own masters. But in the above quoted words, old Major has sounded the grave warning that the animals must not adopt the ways and vices of Man. It is as if old Major knew what would happen to the animals in their own rule. Orwell was exposing, allegorically, what had happened to the socialist revolution in Soviet Russia, under the regime of Stalin.

Towards the end of his speech, old Major sings the song, “beasts of England”, a song of the golden time to come for the animals:

Soon or late the day is coming,  
Tyrant Man shall be overthrown,  
And the fruitful fields of England,  
Shall be trod by beasts alone.

### **3.1.1.2 Napoleon**

In this novel, Orwell advances two ideas: although the principles of communism are noble, the evil in the nature of man perverts their successful application to unsuccessful reality. By extension, man cannot resist the temptation of power: if the opportunity for power exists, he will unabashedly grab it. The result

is inevitable corruption and the formation of a secret-police autocratic state. Orwell watched not only the Soviet Union but Nazi Germany reduced to autocracy. Shocked by the sinister spectacle, he was forced to protest and use an animal fable as his medium. In this fable, Napoleon is the chief actor. Napoleon symbolizes the human lust for power, unlimited unhindered power. He wanted power and was wreckless in his way of obtaining it. In the human drama the search for power is a crucial drive and force. Napoleon allegorizes the thirst for power brought to its extreme. In his quest for an absolute power, Napoleon uses squealer to humbug the animals; betrays his noble follower, Boxer; uses an able comrade. Snowball, as a scapegoat; sets his snarling dogs to tear the animals to pieces, and so on. Napoleon's diabolism represents the lust for power brought to its extreme. Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini were the human counterparts of Napoleon.

As a dictator, Napoleon comes to control reality. Animals must accept what the dictator says is the truth. No longer truth is perceived, it is dictated and accepted as such. So is history. Facts are slanted to go along the design of the dictator. If it is his purpose that the farm yields more crops now than at any earlier time, "facts" are made to show this; if it is his objective that a total friend of animalism be a traitor, it is proved thus and becomes a fact. Anyone protesting must face the fierce dogs. There can be no question of the universal asset. Such is the way of an autocracy. The individual becomes a unit, that must yield, body, brain and conscience-or die.

### **3.1.1.3 Snowball**

No compromise seems possible between Snowball and Napoleon. It is obvious that they are vying for control of the animal world. In his avidity for organization, Snowball is like Leon Trotsky. Where there is no Napoleon to sabotage and finally destroy the whole movement, and if Snowball could have his way, the ideals of the Rebellion could have been fulfilled. Orwell points Snowball in congenial colours. Were Snowball ambitious to seize dictatorial command of the farm, he would not take such trouble to educate the animals. Education makes people intelligent and they start understanding and questioning. A dictator's dream is blind obedience from the masses, and education hinders the dictator's plan. The dictator will train some people, of course, but only the way Napoleon trained the puppies. By allowing the committees to operate themselves, Snowball seems to be preparing for the Marxist ideal of a classless society. We can safely believe that when the animals are ready to rule themselves, Snowball would have made himself a benign advisor. Snowball's commitment to the cause of *Animal Farm* is total. He is brave and dedicated in the Battle of the Cowshed while Napoleon avoids the fighting. The victory of Napoleon over Snowball is the victory of might over right. Snowball was a scrupulous comrade who worked diligently to actuate the ideals of

Major. He was a person of reason and oratory; the use of ruthless force to attain his objective never entered his mind. But he was pitted against an adversary who was relentless in his drive for absolute power; naturally, Snowball had no chance to succeed. The consequence was his ignominious expulsion and denigration.

#### **3.1.1.4 Squealer**

A major idea in *Animal Farm* relates to the power of political propaganda which plays a crucial role in shaping the public opinion. Every government, specially an autocracy, carries on propaganda to support its policies, and to defend and justify its actions, no matter how wrong headed those policies may be and how unjust and cruel those actions may be. In this novel, Squealer has the art to turn black into white. Whatever decision Napoleon takes in breach of the Seven Commandments is defended and justified by Squealer who is so dexterous that he is able to make the animals think that their memories are playing them tricks. He is able even to convince the animals that the commandment prohibiting the animals not to kill one another had really forbidden killing without cause. Similarly, he is able to convince them that the commandment forbidding the animals to sleep in beds had actually forbidden sleeping in beds with sheets. He reads out inflated figures of food production to convince the animals that nothing has gone wrong with the government's functioning even when the rations of the animals are reduced. Squealer's perverted logic and his sophisms are a source of humour in the novel, but he carries on a denigration of Snowball in a most devastating manner, convincing the animals that Snowball was never a hero, but always a villain.

Squealer alternately cajoles, hoodwinks and threatens the animals. After the first revolutionary flowering of equality among the animals, the pigs soon come into their own. The crucial transformation occurs on the *Animals Farm* when the other animals realize where all the milk and the apples go : they go to the pigs, private mash. And Squealer justifies this to the animals in the key speech in the story. The pigs were not eating this mash out of selfishness, asserts Squealer, reproving the protesters, but of duty. Science had shown beyond doubt that mild-and apple mash was totally imperative to the welfare of a pig:

We pigs are brain-workers. The whole management and organization of the farm depend on us. Day and night we are watching over your welfare. It is for your sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples. Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in your duty? Jones would come back ! Yes, Jones would come back.

In our times we find that all government, democratic, dictatorial or any other, depend a lot on propaganda. Squealer is, historically, a mouthpiece and an artful instrument of Napoleon's (Stalins') propaganda onslaught. He is Hitler's Dr. Goebbels; he proves that if you repeat lies a number of times cleverly, the common

masses will believe them. But Squealer has a great relevance for all the modern rulers also. The modern governments have got a most powerful and ingenious machinery of propaganda in the form of the press, the radio and the T.V. By overt and covert propaganda through these agencies the rulers can mould the public opinion, manipulate the public mind. What Squealer could do in making the animal opinions, the present day government propaganda agencies can do to shape the human opinions, whatever we might say in protest against this as a challenge to our intelligence.

### **3.1.1.5 Boxer**

The two main mottos by which Boxer lives and dies are : “ I will work harder” and “Napoleon is always right”. A horse of titanic body and strength, work is his passion by which he hopes to solve the problem of life. Perhaps work is a great thing, but in an organized society where lots of crooked and cunning people are there, you have got to be intelligent to see through the deceit around, otherwise you will adopt a simplistic creed like “Napoleon is always right” and be betrayed fatally. And there in lies pity and the pathos of Boxer’s life.

Boxer is a hero not only in work, but also in war; in the Battle of the Cowshed he wins the medal, “Animal Hero, Second Class”, for his bravery, yet he is kind by heart, and feels sorry that his blow might have killed the stable-lad: “He is dead. I had no intention of doing that. I have no wish to take life, not even a human life.” But Boxer has such a weak intelligence that he can’t learn beyond that letter D. He can’t comprehend any complex situation. When Napoleon has carried out a slaughter of his supposed opponents on the farm, Boxer is very upset, but his reaction to this brutality perpetrated by Napoleon is that of a puzzled guy.

I do not understand it. It would not have believed that such things could happen at our farm. It must be due to some fault in ourselves. The solution, as I see it, to work hard. From now onwards I shall get up a full hour earlier in the morning.

This attitude of a workalcoholic proves Boxer’s undoing. Overwork fells on him and incapacitates him; the rest is done by the monstrous master. Napoleon, disposes him off to the knacker.

There are many people who are credulous because they themselves are innocent of hypocrisy or the urge to self gain through the use of other. Boxer is one like that. His is more than just blind obedience, his ignorance of evil makes it impossible for him to suspect others. As his own impulses are good, his vision excludes evil. An autocrat thrives on such people because they pose absolutely no threat of disobedience or rebellion.



**3.1.1.6 Benjamin**

Morose and taciturn by nature, whenever Benjamin speaks, it is to make some surely remark, like saying that God has given him a tail to keep the flies off, but that he would rather have no tail and no flies. He never laughs because, he observes, there is nothing to laugh at. Alone among animals of *Animal Farm* he is not enthusiastic about the Rebellion, as he believes that things never improve much, and hunger, hardship and disappointment are the unalterable law of life. Indeed, Benjamin's misanthropic views prove right in the case of the rise and fall of the animals' rule on the farm.

Benjamin never shirks work, but he never volunteers to do extra work either like Boxer. When it comes to learning, he learns as well as any pig; when it comes to fighting he fights actively, but he refuse to get emotionally involved or get enthusiastic about any thing. We are surprised at his show of emotion and concern upon the injury and subsequent tragic end of Boxer. We could never guess that Benjamin was so compassionate.

**3.1.1.7 Moses**

Symbolizing the Church, Moses claims to know about the existence of a mysterious country, called Sugarcandy Mountain, where all the animals go after death. There all the animals would rest for ever from their labours. That place has got everlasting fields of clover, and the lump sugar grows on the hedges. Some of the animals believe him because their lives on this earth are laborious and that for this reason it is only fair to expect that a better world than this exists elsewhere. The pigs have to argue very hard to persuade them that there is no such place.

**3.2 IN-TEXT QUESTIONS**

Dear student so far you have read all the characters in the novel. Now a few questions are given below, please try to answer those questions in the space provided:

Q. No.1 Discuss, in brief, the character of Napoleon

---

---

---

---

Q. No.2 What is the significance of the character of Major.

---

---

---

---

Q.No.3 Write few lines on the characterization in the novel ***Animal Farm***.

---

---

---

---

---

---

### **3.3 LET US SUM UP.**

In this lesson we have introduced all the main characters in the novel ***Animal Farm***. We hope that you will understand them easily.

---

**LESSON NO. 1.4**

---

**ANIMAL FARM : As an Allegory**

**STRUCTURE**

- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 ***Animal Farm*** As An Allegory
- 14.2 Satire in ***Animal Farm***
- 14.3 In-text questions
- 14.4 Suggested Reading
- 14.5 Important Questions
- 14.6 Let us Sum up.

**14.0 OBJECTIVES**

This lesson aims to acquaint you with

- Animal Farm as an allegory
- Satire in Animal Farm
- In-text questions
- Suggested Reading
- Sum up the lesson

**14.1 ANIMAL FARM AS AN ALLEGORY**

An allegory is a narrative which carries a second meaning underneath its surface story. Generally, the characters in an allegory do not have individual psychologies but may be incarnations of abstract ideas. An allegory may be a play such as *Everyman*, or a poem, such as Spenser's *Faerie Queen* or a novel such as John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which depicts a Christian's struggles and triumphs against the background of a fascinating cast of fictional characters. Orwells' *Animal Farm* is a powerful allegorical satire. The animals in this novel are humans in disguise, some of them being actual historical personalities.

The humans in this book symbolize the capitalist class while the animals stand for the proletariat. The pigs are the Bolsheviks; the Rebellion against Mrs. Jones is the Russian Revolution of October 1917. The neighbouring farmers are Western countries who tried to support the Czarists against the Reds. The wave of rebelliousness which ran through the countryside after the Rebellion refers to the unsuccessful revolutions of Hungary in 1919 and Germany in 1923; the "Spontaneous Demonstration" stand for the May Day celebrations: The special committee of the pigs presided over by Napoleon represents the Russian

Politbureau; Napoleon's dealings with Mr. Whymper and Willingdon market symbolize the Treaty Rapallo made by Russia and Germany in 1922.

Old Major seems to stand for both Marx and Lenin. While the proletariat is represented by Boxer, an endless worker, firmly loyal to leader, but rather stupid. As Moses symbolizes the Russian Orthodox Church and later Roman Catholic Church Mollie seems to symbolize the white Russian, and her retrogressive defection is caused by vanity and love for luxury. Squealer represents the propaganda machinery under Stalin used by the dictator to justify all his good and evil policies. Pilkington may stand for Churchill. Pilkington is an old fashioned gentleman who enjoys country sports on Foxwood which has associations of both cunning and the Tory landed gentry. Frederick is like Hitler, tough and shrewd. Frederick drives hard bargains, steals other people's land for his own farm which has been rightly called "Pinchfield" and is a tyrant for his subjects.

Intellectual and energetic impressive and eloquent, Snowball of *Animal Farm* is very close to the real Trotsky. Though shot through by a comic current, Orwell's description of Snowball's activities is close to Trotsky of the Russian history. Snowball the novelist informs us, engages himself in organizing the animals of the *Animal Farm* into various committees, like 'Wild Comrades Re-education Committee', "Clean Tails Committee", "Egg Production Committee", and so on. Also he tries to teach reading and writing to the animals. In addition, he studies military history, organizes commands and leads the army to victory in the "Battle of the Cowshed" where the foreign powers helps Mr. Jones and attack the farm (i.e. Russia). Like Trotsky, Snowball is "full of plans for innovations and improvements".

Perhaps the most obvious thing in the allegory is Stalin's representation through Napoleon. Trotsky had once compared Stalin to the historical Napoleon who, rising from an ordinary position, became a powerful dictator. Both the historical Napoleon and Stalin transformed revolutions into dictatorships. Napoleon, the pig in *Animal Farm*, is not an eloquent speaker, yet he knows how to attain his aim. Fierce-looking, he controls the party machinery, and is an expert in conspiring. He can twist history to suit his purposes, and yet manage to convince the animals through the conniving casuistry of Squealer. He can take credit for all successful achievements, replaces the worship of Major with a more elaborate worship of himself. Of course, Orwell's account of Napoleon is satirical but that is how he wanted to expose the Stalin of history.

The major historical conflict between Stalin and Trotsky of Russia has been symbolized through the conflict between Napoleon and Snowball. The major ideological point of divergence between Stalin and Trotsky was that whereas the latter advanced the idea of permanent revolution, Stalin was for Socialism in one country, Trotsky had faith in the revolutionary vocation of the proletariat for the

Western countries, but Stalin believed in the glorification of Russia's socialist destiny. In *Animal Farm* we find this conflict quite clearly though in much simpler form. Napoleon wants the animals to get arms and learn to use them; but Snowball proposes that more and more pigeons should be sent out to incite revolt among the animals on the other farms. Snowball opines that if revolts occurred in other countries, the animals would not require any self-defence: but Napoleon holds that if their self-defence is feeble they are sure to be conquered. The second major point of disagreement between Stalin and Trotsky was that the latter wanted priority to industrialization over agriculture and the expansion of the Socialist sector of the economy. These ideas were ultimately adopted by Stalin in the first five year plan of 1928, which called for a collectivization of farms and also for industrialization. In the novel of Orwell, Snowball thinks of wonderful machines which would do types of jobs letting the animal graze easefully. These machines would do such a bit part of labour that the animals may have to work for only three days a week. Snowball is most enthusiastically for the construction of the windmill; but Napoleon argues that if the animals busy themselves with the windmill, instead of increasing the food production, starvation would surely be their lot. In the novel Napoleon has found a clever method to thwart the powerful sway of Snowball's speeches: instructed by Napoleon, the sheep start shouting, "four legs goods, two legs bad" to disturb Snowball's eloquence. Historically, at the Communist Party Congress in 1927, at Stalin's instigation, the suggestions put forward by the opposition were lost in the din and disturbance caused by Stalin's supporters. Stalin-Trotsky conflict reached a crucial point in mid 1927, after Britain broke diplomatic relations with Russia and thus snubbed Stalin's hope of an agreement between the Soviet and the British trade unions. Trotsky and the opposition denounced Stalin for the failure; but, before they could bring this issue before the Party Congress and remove Stalin from power, Stalin expelled Trotsky from the Party. This was a turning point in the Soviet history because it signaled the final defeat of Trotsky. In the novel Orwell refers to this historical incident when he says that before Snowball had concluded his speech, this voting by the animals in his favour was doubtless. Then, suddenly, Napoleon's ferocious dogs pounced upon Snowball, who just sped from the farm.

Besides this famous conflict between Stalin and Trotsky, Orwell's novel allegorizes some other events of the Russian history also. As Stalin desired an untrammelled personal dictatorship, which was yet not there in 1934, he ordered trial of all his opponents. Every sort of cunning and cooked evidence was brought forward against the accused, who were then speedily executed in large numbers. These Great purge Trials are allegorized in *Animal Farm*. At a well-attended meeting, Napoleon announces that all those who had secretly helped Snowball

should come forward and confess their guilt. It is quite evident that all these so called confessions have been made under pressure. They confess various sorts of crimes, and are once murdered, on the spot, and at the end there is a big pile of corpses lying before Napoleon. The destructive methods used by the hens in their protest against Napoleon symbolize the destructive methods employed by the Russian peasants in 1929 to protest against Stalin's forced collectivization of their farms. The aim of the hens in smashing their eggs was to stop Napoleon from selling them off. The Russian peasants had killed their cattle, broken their implements and burnt their crops. The consequence of this much destruction by the peasant was years of hardship, culminating in the Ukraine famine of 1933.

Stalin kept the options open for negotiating with the British and the French, but at the same time had kept a secret link with the Germans. In a similar fashion in *Animal Farm*, the animals are surprised to find that during Napoleon's apparent friendship with Mr. Pilkington, Napoleon had really been in secret agreement with Mr. Frederick. But Napoleon is himself hoodwinked in his double game. Frederick's notes turn out to be counterfeit; Frederick attacks the Animal Farm without warning and destroys the windmill. This refers to Hitler-Stalin non-aggression pact of August 1939, which Hitler breached by launching a sudden invasion on Russia in 1941. Hitler's defeat in the Battle of Stalingrad, in January 1943, parallels the defeat of Frederick and his men in *Animal Farm*.

In 1944 Stalin had tried to make up with the Pope in order to get Roman Catholic support for his Polish policy. The return of Moses, after an absence of several years from *Animal Farm* seems to allegorise this incident.

The allegory in *Animal Farm* primarily fits the Russian history of Stalin era, yet it also seems applicable to all the revolutions in essence. The pattern in the *Animal Farm* can be applied to the French Revolution and the Spanish Civil War. It seems that Orwell here is stating that a revolution begins with great idealistic enthusiasm and popular support. In the time just following a revolution, there is a general feeling that an ideal dream is being actualized. A spreading of fellow-feeling, fraternity and equality seems to intoxicate the atmosphere. But, as time passes, the sense of freedom is replaced by a sense of necessity and slavery. Some people come to have special privileges. Not long after, there rises a new class of people who, because of their superior skill and lust for power, take command and re-establish the class structure. As time goes on, the past is forgotten or intentionally erased from the minds and memories of the people. Power-hungry leaders arise, the dream of equality and justice fades away, and the state becomes supreme with the establishment of a new dictatorship. This is what comes to pass on Animal Farm. After the successful rebellion against Mr. Jones there is a feeling of justice and equality and the seven noble commandments are written. But as days pass, ideals

are distorted, principles changed, history falsified, innocents punished, and a crooked commander establishes an unchallenged autocracy. Even the name, Animal Farm, is rechanged to Manor Farm. Things come to the same sad state as they were in the past. Indeed the allegory in Animal Farm is a dire warning for all the people of all the places.

#### **4.2 SATIRE IN ANIMAL FARM**

Out of the enormous and amorphous mass of human drama, a satirist, consciously or unconsciously, selects those details which are grotesque and ugly, and then proceeds to expose their absurdity. The satirist's act of selections is a creative act as it is in the organizing, arranging and shaping of his jumbled material that the satirist's art is shown. A satire is not a transparent medium like a moral tract, and the reader is not given a direct view of reality. A satirical writing is a special mirror which reflects distorted images of society to attract attention of the watcher for his amusement and instruction.

According to Karl Beckson and Arthur Gauz, a satire is the "ridicule of an idea, a person or type of person or even mankind." Satire has been employed since classical times to ridicule human vices and weaknesses. Horace, the Roman writer, in his verse satires, laughs at human follies gently and is amused rather than severely indignant. But, Juvenal is sternly indignant in his reaction to man's vices and gives vent to his moral rage with triumphant force. The former type of satire has come to be known as Horatian, and the latter as Juvenalian. Swift's satires, like *Gulliver's Travels* and *Tale of a Tub* are Juvenalian in character. In Shakespeare's play, certain characters, such as Falstaff, are satirized gently for comic purposes.

A satire is a witty or humorous exposure of human foibles and vices. Through this medium a writer can tear off individuals, communities, institutions, government etc. A satirist generally employs ridicule, irony, mockery and sarcasm as his weapons of attack. In his great satire, *Gulliver's Travels* Swift's aim was to ridicule all men or women for their vices, absurdities and evil ways. *Gulliver's Travels* is an allegorical satire because Swift does not lash at person and institutions directly but in a veiled manner. All the persons and institutions and other aspects of life ridiculed in this book are in disguise.

So long as Orwell had been concerned with unveiling the vices of the British imperialism and of the capitalist system, his belief in democratic socialism had been a strong prop for him. But as he directed his scrutinizing eye on the operation of the communist system, he was shocked to find their fundamental lies and corruption, Orwell's bitter experience of the Spanish Civil War and the shock of the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939, came as a great blow to his faith. This marked the

beginning of the emotional and mental state which led him to write the two powerful satires, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eight-four*.

*Animal Farm* was a lament of despair. In all the beast fables, there is always a surface gaiety, a seeming good humour and a light and bantering tone. Indeed *Animal Farm* should have been a poor tale had it not possessed these qualities which belong to the convention of the beast fables. It is a great achievement because Orwell employs the outwardly frivolous form of the beast fable to convey his intensely bitter message, with a telling force. Those sadly miss the real point of the book who consider *Animal Farm* an excellent book simply because it has admirable good humour and gaiety. The book definitely contains much humour, yet even in the most comic situations, there is the disturbing element of fear or cruelty which jars the reader's laughter. It will be in order here to give a few instances to show the veracity of this opinion. Snowball, one of the two leading pigs after the establishment of the animal rule on the farm, is endlessly active in thinking out and endeavouring to execute plans and schemes for the betterment of the farm and the animals. At one stage he is organizing the "Clean Tails League", "Egg Production Committee", "Whiter Wool Movement" and "Wild Comrades", "Re-education Committee". You feel so amused and happy at the activities of Snowball. But not at the same time some one else on the farm is busy with his sinister schemes to cause the fall of Snowball and the Utopian dream of equality, justice and liberty in the *Animal Farm*. Napoleon has been rearing and teaching the young dogs to raise a brutal force to set up his autocracy. The versatile Snowball has prepared a detailed scheme for a windmill to produce electricity for the great benefit of the animals. But when Napoleon rejects the whole plan by urinating on it, we laugh, but this laughter turns into cry of despair when, later on, in a meeting of the animals to discuss and decide the fate of the windmill, Napoleon utters a high-pitched whimper and nine enormous and fierce dogs dash for Snowball who just escapes with his life. At this Orwell remarks, "Silent and terrified the animals crept back into the barn." And, indeed the reader's feeling of humour is stunned into a serious silence. Again, the confessions forced from the animals are very funny:

The three hens who had been the ring leaders in the attempted rebellion over the eggs now came forward and stated that Snowball had appeared to them in dream and incited them to disobey Napoleon's orders... then a goose came forward and confessed to having secreted six ears of corn during the last year's harvest and eaten them in the night. Then a sheep confessed to having urinated in the drinking pool.

But all the animals thus confessing are slain on the spot "until there was a pile of corpses lying before Napoleon and the air was thick with the smell of blood."



All gaiety vanishes. Orwell, we find, is employing in these situations the technique of painting glib situations in a comic setting.

But, then, it is not essential that a truly successful animal fable must carry a gay and light hearted message. For the success of a satirical beast fable, what is really necessary is the author's power to keep his readers conscious simultaneously of the human attributes satirized and of the animals as animals. If the animals in a satirical beast fable are allowed to remain simply animals, the writing will become a non-satirical children's story; and if the animals are painted as only transparent symbols, the writing will become a dull sermon. In *Animal Farm* Orwell has succeeded in maintaining this delicate satiric balance.

In Orwell's writings, there is a fundamental idea that men divide themselves into a limited number of groups which can be isolated and characterized by a keen observer. Thus, in *Burmese Days*, we meet such types as the corrupt officials, the "pukka sahibs" and the wretched natives of Burma; and in *Down and out in Paris and London*, we find such types as the greedy restaurateurs, the over-worked plongeurs and nouveaux riches. In *Animal Farm* the social types are depicted as various kinds of animals. Thus, horses represent the toiling workers; the pigs represent the exploiters; the sheep the blind followers, and the dogs the repressive police. The characters in a satirical animal story may be crafty, evil, pathetic, cynical, loveable, intelligent, stupid, but they can only be seen as members of large social groups and not as individuals.

The most common reading of *Animal Farm*, is to consider it as satire on the betrayal of the Russian Communist Revolution and the ascendancy of Stalin to power. The strife of the animals to set up a free, just and equal community takes the shape of a skilfully depicted history of the Soviet Union from 1917 upto the time of the Tehran Conference, 1943. There is no mistaking of the political allegory in *Animal Farm*. Urged and inspired by the prophetic and realistic vision of Old Major, the ill treated animals of the Manor Farm are able to drive out their master Mr. Jones and his men, rather unexpectedly and suddenly. They are thrilled at the sudden feeling of liberty. The name of the farm is changed to "Animal Farm". Two pigs, Napoleon and Snowball, become the leaders of the animals. Under their leadership and commitment of almost all the animals to the dream and the defence to the "Animal Farm", the attacks of the human neighbours, Pilkington and Fredericks are defeated. Amidst great enthusiasm and expectations, the Seven Commandments of Animalism are written on the big barn for the guidance and compliance of all the members of the community. It seems a golden time, promised in the song, "Beasts of England" will henceforth spread for the animals. But without the passage of much time, the golden dream begins to go rancid. The first major stop of inequality and privilege is taken when the milk of the cows and the apples

are reserved for the pigs, to the exclusion of all the other animals. The justification given for this step in the words of Squealer, is an excellent example of Orwell's satiric genius:

Milk and apples (this has been proved by science, comrades) contain substances absolutely necessary to the well being of a pig. We pigs are brain workers. Day and night we are watching over your welfare. It is for your sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples. Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back.

In the antagonism that develops between Snowball and Napoleon, the cunning and brutal force used by Napoleon succeed in the expulsion of the former. With that vanishes the hope of the realization of the golden dream promised in the old Major's nocturnal swan song. Through politics, propaganda and terror, Napoleon consolidates his position. Dissidents are ruthlessly liquidated and suppressed. The irony and the satire become devastating in the treatment of Boxer, the noble horse. Sturdy, simple and loyal, Boxer had devoted his life to two simple principle: "I will work harder", and "Napoleon is always right". Indeed Napoleon was never "right" because he was never sincere. So the most loyalist of all the animals is sold off to the knacker when he is hurt and is no more able to work. To the dictators, the soldiers are cannon fodder, and common workers are the units of work one by one, the Seven 'Commandments are modified and moulded out of recognition as it suits Napoleon and his pigs. Ultimately only one commandment remains, with its internal irony: "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others". The rulers, privileged pigs now live in Mr. Jones's house, walk on two legs, carry whips, wear human clothes, invite their human neighbours to a friendly game of cards. Pigs have, indeed, become indistinguishable from men, who were the original oppressors of the animals. The satire reaches its top here:

The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again: but it was impossible to say which was which.

The story and the satire of *Animal Farm* applies to the other countries, besides Russia. Of course, the indictment of Stalin's regime is manifest, yet Orwell passes a judgement on all the power hungry politicians and rulers. Mr. Pilkington and Mr. Frederick, who represent the Capitalists and the Nazi Germany are as evil as the pigs. The initial ideals of a revolution or a constitution may have been noble and perfect, but the consequences may be the same kind of tyranny. Fascism, Nazism and Capitalism are as evil as Communism. In each of them the ruling gang follows its game of power hunger, neglecting the original ideals and visions. Perhaps in this satire. Orwell is warning us that the essential horror of the human condition is because evil is in the human genes; the lust for power is ingrained in human system. Consequently there have been, there are, and there will always be pigs in

every society who will monopolize power and privileges. Extremely unfortunate is the fact of our social existence that noble animals like Boxer, ignorant ones like the sheep, cynical and indifferent ones like Benjamin also, wittingly or unwittingly contribute to the success of the pig tyranny. The satire in *Animal Farm* points out the horror of the cold and calculated process by which happiness, decency and hope are systematically annihilated.

#### 4.3 INTEXT QUESTIONS

Dear student, so far you have read *Animal Farm* as an allegory and satire in the novel. Now read the following questions and try to answer them in the space provided:

Q. No.1 Discuss *Animal Farm* as an allegory.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.No.2 Write a brief essay on the satire in *Animal Farm*.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4.4 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. John Atkins; George Orwell : A Literary Study.
2. Christopher Hollis, A study of George Orwell.

#### 4.5 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Q.No.1 Do you find satire in *Animal Farm*.

Q.No.2 Discuss *Animal Farm* as an allegory.

#### 4.6 LET US SUM UP:

In this lesson we have discussed *Animal Farm* as an allegory and also as a satire. We hope you have understood the contents.

---

**LESSON NO. 1.5**

---

**ANIMAL FARM : Nature and Structure**  
**STRUCTURE**

- 5.0 Objectives
  - 5.1 ***Animal Farm*** : the nature of its appeal
  - 5.2 ***Animal Farm*** : Plot
    - 5.2.1 Structure of ***Animal Farm***
- 5.3 In text question
- 5.4 Suggested Questions
- 5.5 Suggested Short notes
- 5.6 Suggested Readings
- 5.7 Let us sum up
- 5.8 Response Sheet.

**5.0 OBJECTIVES**

This lesson aims to acquaint you with

- The nature and its appeal of *Animal Farm*
- The structure of *Animal Farm*
- In-text questions
- Suggested Questions
- Sum up

**5.1 ANIMAL FARM – THE NATURE OF ITS APPEAL**

Although *Animal Farm* is an allegorical satire with far reaching implications, yet it has its own intrinsic rationale. It can be read with delight for its own sake. Indeed, it has been very popular as an animal story with the school children. Even the adults may, for the moment, ignore the human world of history and politics, and fully accept the world of *Animal Farm* on its own terms. This novel has got an absorbing bunch of animal characters. The story contains suspense and intrigue, there are moving moments of sacrifice and love, compassion and pathos; and then, the climax is compelling. It is not essential to know that Snowball represents Trotsky or Marx's ideas are spoken by Major in the nightly meeting. The pigs are interesting in themselves. Boxer and Benjamin, Clover and Mollie, they hold our attention for their characteristics, be it loyalty, cynicism, compassion or vanity. Like a fine piece of art, the *Animal Farm* evolves with clarity and a sense of inevitability. With his blind and absolute faith in the autocratic Napoleon, we know Boxer is

bound to be betrayed. Once the pigs begin sleeping in the beds, we guess they would find reason to infringe the other commandments and then falsely justify their actions. Indeed, this is a very special feature of its appeal that *Animal Farm* can be read delightfully for its own sake.

One major reason for the appeal of *Animal Farm* is the great significance of its political meaning. Indeed, Orwell's foremost aim in this book was to construct a political satire, and he has been remarkably successful in that aim. The animal fable becomes the political fictive microcosm of a real political macrocosm. It is autocracy that is being satirized here. The process in his novel and in the dictatorial world is the same: dictatorial rule that invites its toppling construction of ideals and values for a new, classless society, sabotage, the fall of ideals and values, Orwell has made two very important points here: the principles of communism are noble, but a flaw in the human nature prevents their successful operation in society. Man cannot overcome the lure of power, and whenever a chance for power arises, he grabs it without the least scruples. This ultimately, leads to corruption and the formation of a secret- police totalitarian state. Orwell had watched Soviet Union and Nazi Germany going the autocratic way. Shocked by the evils therein, he constructed his protest in the form of an animal fable in this novel.

*Animal Farm* is a forceful satire on the betrayal of the Russian Communist Revolution by Stalin and his henchmen. The struggle of the farm animals in having driven away their human exploiters to set up a free, just and equal community takes the form of a most skillfully worked-out history of Soviet Union from 1917 upto the time of the Tehran conference. Inspired by the teachings of the Old Major, the animals establish their own utopian community. The control of the farm ultimately comes into the hands of Napoleon. The pig, who drives away Snowball from the farm, just as Stalin had driven away Trotsky into exile. Gradually, all the Seven Commandment, which also undergoes a drastic change, and now reads as : "All animals are equal but some are more equal than others". Meanwhile the pigs keep on acquiring more and more privileges. With the savage dogs at his command, Napoleon liquidates his opponents as Stalin did in the purges of 1936-38. The pigs acquiring more and more privilege correspond to the bureaucracy or the oligarchy which had begun to flourish during Stalin's regime. The pigs begin to live in Mr. Jones's house; they now walk on two legs; they start carrying whips; put on human clothes; subscribe to magazines and newspapers, and invite their human neighbours to a friendly game of cards. In this game there is a violent row as Pilkington and Napoleon simultaneously produce the ace of spades; the two are trying to deceive each other. But for the peeping animals, there is no visible difference between their ruler pigs and the humans. From pig to man, and man to pig the animals look, but it is impossible to tell one from the other. Orwell's satire

here reaches its height. The conclusion drawn is a appalling warning: unrestricted rule, whether of humans or pigs, results in a similar tyrannical autocracy, where the ruling class enjoys at the cost of the masses.

Though the satire in the novel has allegorical parallels to one particular country, yet it is relevant for all the countries, at all the times. The pigs of the *Animal Farm* stand for Stalin and his cohorts, but they are now indistinguishable from Pilkington and Frederick, who represent the Capitalists and the Nazis. Orwell is suggesting that ideologies do not make any difference since the idea of Lord Acton applies to all kinds of rulers: "Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely." Nazism, Fascism and Capitalism are as evil as Communism, since under each of them the unhindered ruler can vitiate and violate the good, original principles in the constitution and turn the common masses into working slaves. Orwell seems even to suggest more: the power and the lust will always turn the ruling gang into selfish brutes, but in the sordid drama all of us might have contributed one way or another. If you are loyal and hardworking and as stupid as Boxer so that you believe in the infallibility of the leader, you are contributing to the success of the autocracy, if you are intelligent and wise, but become totally indifferent to public affairs like Benjamin, then also you are helping the dictator; if you are as foolish as the sheep and will bleat as and when the ruling master instructs you, you support his totalitarianism. If the common people want liberty and justice, they have to be eternally vigilant against their ruler's tendency to transgress his powers. Thus, *Animal Farm* carries an eternal warning and a most potent lesson for the human societies, and therein lies one great secret of its appeal to the readers.

Humour and wit are an important factor in the enduring charm of *Animal Farm*. Although this book carries a very somber message yet its humour is irrepressible. Consider the behaviour of Mollie, for instance. A work shirker, she always finds some excuse for being late or absent from work. She is not bothered if under the animal rule there will now be more liberty; she only worries if sugar and ribbons will now be available. Like a vain woman, she stands on the pool bank, admiring her own image. A coward, she hides when it comes to fighting. Although Squealer's job is deceiving the animals through his clever words, yet he is a very amusing and funny character. A small, fat pig, with round cheeks, Squealer skips from side to side, whisking his tail as a means of adding to the persuasive effect in his argument. His defence of the appropriation of milk and apples by the pigs is downright funny:

We pigs are brain workers. The whole management and the organization of this farm depend on us. Day and night we are watching over your welfare. It is for your sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples.

Also, he tells the animals that apple-and-milk mash is absolutely necessary for the well-being of a pig. Squealer reminds us of the cunning politicians of our times who talk like that to the common people.

Napoleon's efforts to imitate the humans are humorous. He walks on his hind legs, with a hat on his head and pipe in his mouth. His efforts for self-aggrandisement are laughable. He orders the holding of 'Spontaneous Demonstration' to celebrate the struggles and triumphs of *Animal Farm*. He himself leads the procession, flanked by savage dogs. At the head of the procession walks a back cockerel who serves as Napoleon's trumpeteer, and so on. Much humour stems from the way Napoleon is outsmarted by Frederick in the sale of timber. A lot of fun lies in the way the animals try to learn A, B, C and so on, and from the funny names of the various committees that Snowball tries to organize.

There are, thus, many reasons for the enduring appeal of *Animal Farm*. The charm of its animal fable, the eternal relevance of its theme of power politics and the perils of autocracy, the wit and humour that bubble up every now and then, the compactness of its plot are such factors as make this book so appealing.

## **5.2 PLOT:**

### **5.2.1 Structure of *Animal Farm***

While analyzing the structure of *Animal Farm*, we have to remember that Orwell is depicting the process by which a rebellion occurs to topple a tyrannical rule, and how the ideals and objectives of that revolution are gradually modified, eroded and rejected, leading finally to the emergence and the setting up of another autocracy. This process accords to the structure of the novel a circular shape. In the story, two strands stand out distinctly. One is the blotting out of the past impressions of the animals about Snowball, once Napoleon's dogs have hounded him out. Snowball is used as a scapegoat on whom are blamed all the setbacks or disasters that occur in the farm. The second strand is the modifications which are made by Napoleon in the Seven Commandments and the justification offered for so doing. This process of the infringement of the commandments is the more significant because it is through this process that ultimately totalitarianism is reestablished.

In examining the problem of the compactness of plot in *Animal Farm* it is worthwhile to examine the progress of the plot and the allegorical meaning of the various incidents. Chapter I details the aims of the expected revolt against the tyrant. The guidelines announced by Major for the conduct of the animals represent the Communist Manifesto. Major symbolizes both Marx and Lenin, while Jones stands for both Capitalism and autocracy. We see that in Chapter II, Snowball and Napoleon rise as the two leaders of the animals who form a code of conduct called "Animalism". The rebellion is carried out as a reaction against Mr. Jones's cruelty

and oppression. The animals as masters now derive Seven Commandments from the code of "Animalism", and these are written down on the wall of the barns to guide the animals in their conduct. The rebellion against Mr. Jones symbolizes the Russian Revolution of October 1917. In Chapter III, a rivalry starts between Napoleon and Snowball. The sheep bleat the new maxim, "Four legs good, two legs bad," The principle of equality all animals is violated as the pigs appropriate the milk and windfall apples for themselves. A quiet action, which proves later to be full of evil, is Napoleon's taking charge of the new-born puppies to rear them according to his designs. With chapter IV comes Mr. Jones's attack to recapture the farm, but Snowball, Boxer and other animals repulse the attack in the battle of the Cowshed. The issue of the Windmill between Snowball and Napoleon comes to a head in chapter V. Driving Snowball out of the farm with the help of his savage dogs, Napoleon now becomes the only ruler on the Animal Farm. This parallels the expulsion of Trotsky from Russia by Stalin. The dogs stand for the secret police of Stalin. In Chapter VI, Napoleon decides to build the Windmill which he had previously opposed. Now he also makes trade links with the humans. This contravenes the Seven Commandments, stepping over another commandment, the pigs move into Mr. Jones's farmhouse, and start sleeping in the beds there. Chapter VII tells of the shortage of food on the *Animal Farm* and the danger of starvation. The rations of all the animals are reduced but not of the pigs and the dogs. All the setbacks on the farm are blamed on Snowball who, in reality, is nowhere there. Like Stalin's cruel purges of 1936-38, Napoleon gets many animals summarily executed for conspiring against him and various other crimes. In Chapter VIII Squealer announces inflated figures of food production while actually there is a shortage of food. The pigs transgress yet another commandment by taking whisky. Snowball is further denigrated and held responsible for all the mishaps on the farm. Boxer, the absolute loyalist and worker, hurts himself. Not at all thinking of his treatment, and knowing that he is now useless, Napoleon disposes him to the knacker. In chapter X, we witness the breach of yet another commandment when the pigs walk on their hind legs and carry whips in the trotters. Indeed, only one old commandment, in a changed form, remains on the barn wall: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." The name "Animal Farm" is changed to "Manor Farm". Napoleon has entered into friendly relations with humans, and has invited them to his farm, to dinner and drinks. At the game of cards, Napoleon and Pilkington try to cheat each other. The animals watching in extreme wonder cannot tell a pig from a human. The pigs are the new ruling class, with Napoleon as the unchallenged autocrat. The circle has been completed on the farm.



This brief resume shows how the events follow one another, naturally. Things do not look forced or laboured. No sub-plot is there that could disturb the unity of the plot. Every incident has a bearing on the main theme, which in the course a revolution may follow after the first flush of excitement and jubilation, to the inevitable impairing of the ideals which inspired the revolution, and then to the rise of a new dictatorship which starts exploiting the people the way it was done by the pre-revolutionary dictatorship.

All the time in his novel Orwell keeps the main ideas and threads in sight of the reader. For example, the views of Major are orchestrated again and again, 'Beasts of England' is sung repeatedly, quite often the sheep bleat "Four legs good, two legs bad", there are often made references to the pre-rebellion days' several times the fierce dogs silence the dissentient voices, and so on. And all this is done artistically. While these major strands of the story keep echoing and re-echoing, Orwell does not get involved with matters that would unnecessarily impede the progress of the plot. He does not, for instance, let the story stop in while trying to explain how the animals could defeat the armed humans, or how the engineering and technology involved in the construction of the windmill were managed by the animals. Orwell only hints at the difficulties involved and then continues with the main narrative, keeping the pace and progress of the story.

The structure of *Animal Farm* is based on the logic of cause and effect and this gets immediate approval from the reader as it makes an instant appeal to his rational sense and the feeling for symmetry. Events in the novel are inter-linked, each incident flowing from the preceding one. The various happenings and the conclusion of the novel carry an artistic sense of inevitability about them. Orwell's artistry comes up in the sequence of events and in their timing as well as the convincing motivation of the leader, Napoleon, who comes to be the unchallenged master of the farm. The novel has got the unity of the place, too. All the events take place on the *Animal Farm*. No important incident of the story takes place at any other place, though some of the places are mentioned in the story. In this way the structure of the novel is marked by economy, and there is nothing inessential in the story; there are no loose threads, no redundant details, whatsoever. This compact and well-woven plot produces a telling unity of effect and impression.

### **5.3 IN-TEXT QUESTIONS**

Dear students, so far you have read the nature and appeal of *Animal Farm*. You are also familiar with the structure of the novel. Now try to rite answer the questions given below in space provided for the purpose.

Q.No.1 Discuss the structure of *Animal Farm*.

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q.No.2 What do you understand by the nature and appeal of *Animal Farm*?

Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 5.4 SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

- Q.1 Explain how the original vision of a free animal world of Major was distorted by Napoleon.
- Q.2 How is Napoleon able to oust Snowball from the *Animal Farm* ?
- Q.3 Discuss the historical background of *Animal Farm*.
- Q.4 Critically examine Orwell's characterization in *Animal Farm* and discuss the character of Squealer.
- Q.5 Discuss *Animal Farm* as a satirical allegory.
- Q.6 Discuss critically the Stridine of *Animal Farm*.

#### 5.5 SUGGESTED SHORT NOTES (100 WORDS EACH)

1. Qualities of Benjamin.
2. Character of Mollie.
3. How did Snowball organize animals?
4. Why and how did the hens rebel?
5. Why were pigs, hens and sheep executed by Napoleon?
6. What special privileges were enjoyed by the pigs?

#### 5.6 SUGGESTED READING

1. Raymond Williams : George Orwell : A Collection of Critical Essays

#### 5.7 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson, you have read the nature and appeal of the novel and its structure. We hope you have understood easily.