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Page 5: *Pigs Type*, scene from the 1954 animated film of 'Animal Farm' adapted from the book by George Orwell (1903-50)
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Page 8: *Leon Trotsky* (b/w photo) by Russian Photographer, (20th century)
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Page 29: *To Our Dear Stalin, the Nation, 1949* (litho) by Russian School, (20th century)
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Page 40: *1st May, Stalin (1879-1953) Holds a Child in his Arms, 1952* (colour litho)
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Introduction to 'Animal Farm' and George Orwell

Animal Farm is about a revolution that went wrong

- *Animal Farm* is a novel about an animal uprising on a farm in England.
- Although it's fictional, it's based on real events — it's an allegory of the Russian Revolution.

The real events of the Russian Revolution

- 1) In October 1917, Vladimir Lenin led a revolution against the Russian government. He wanted the working classes to have more power.
- 2) After Lenin died, Stalin took power and became a dictator. Lenin's vision was completely destroyed.

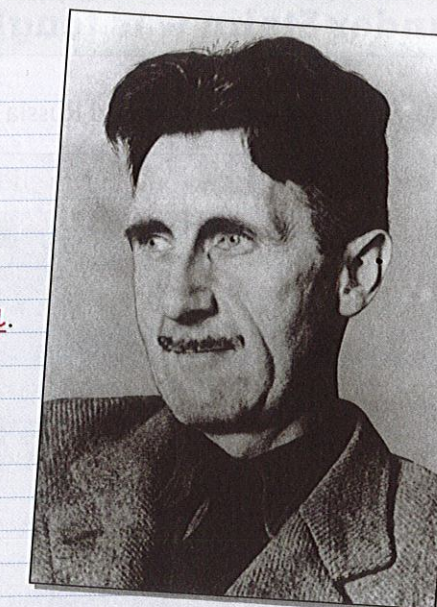
A picture showing the planning of the October Revolution, 1917



George Orwell believed in equality

- George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* in response to Stalin's corruption of communism. The Russian Revolution had failed and life in Russia wasn't equal.
- He wanted to show that a revolutionary leader could be corrupted by power and that this could happen in any country, not just in Russia.

1903	Born in India as <u>Eric Arthur Blair</u> .
1907	Moved to England.
1922	Joined the Indian Police in Burma.
1927	Returned to England.
1933	Published his <u>first book</u> , 'Down and Out in Paris and London' under the name <u>George Orwell</u> .
1945	Published <u>Animal Farm</u> . Several publishers refused to print it because it was so <u>controversial</u> . After publication it became a <u>huge success</u> .
1949	Wrote '1984' — another <u>political novel</u> .
1950	Died, aged 46 from <u>tuberculosis</u> .

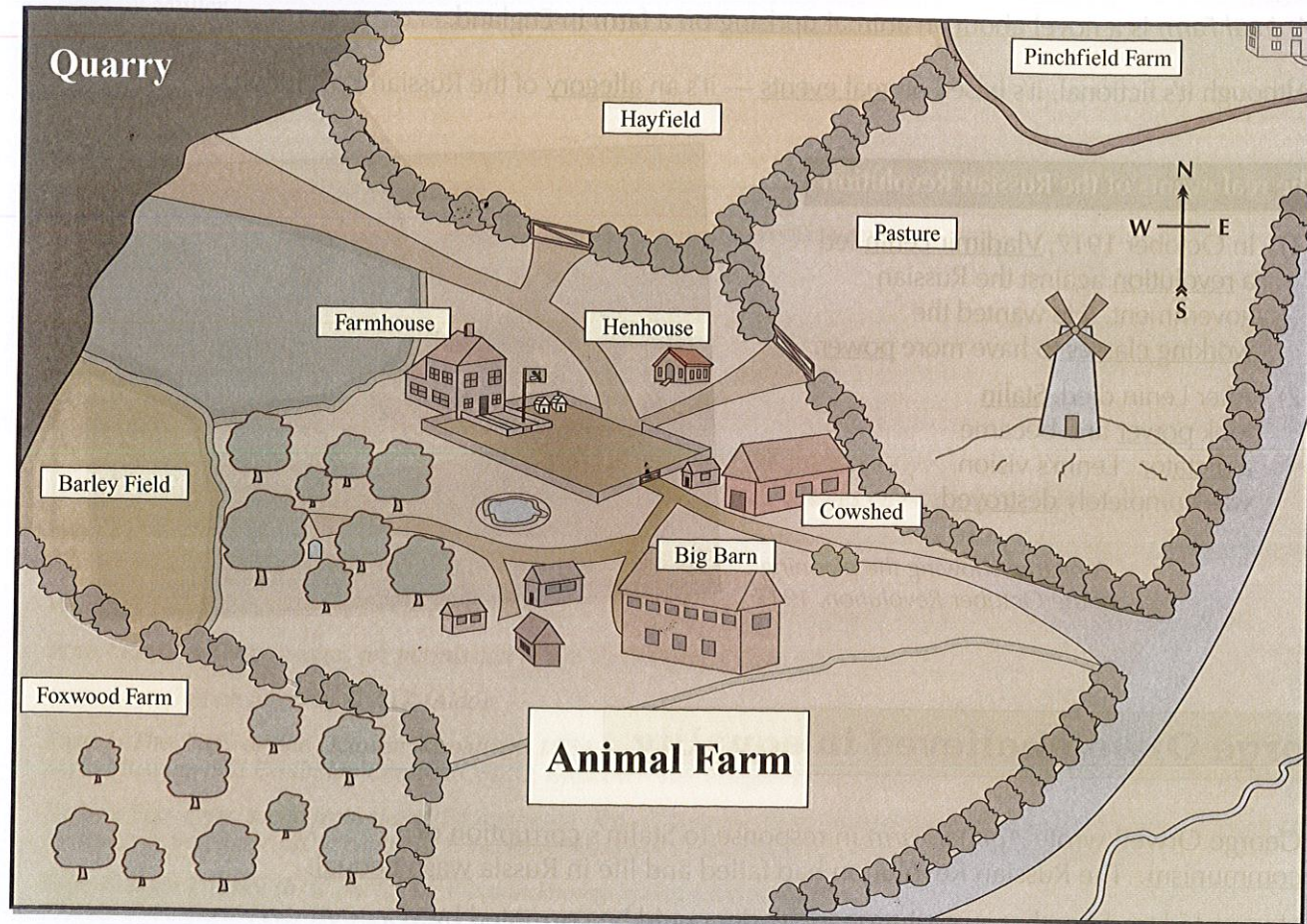


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Background Information

Animal Farm is set somewhere in England

Here are the **key locations** in the novel:



Life under Stalin was tough

- Stalin was a **dictator** — he ruled Russia **alone** and had **absolute power** over the Russian people.



Forced Labourers in Russia

- He used **fear** to stay in **control** — people were arrested, imprisoned or executed **without warning**.
- He used **propaganda** to develop a '**cult of personality**' — this meant that he created an idealised **public image** to increase his **popularity**.
- The Russian people **worked harder** and **suffered more** under Stalin, but **benefited less**.

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Who's Who in 'Animal Farm'



© iStockphoto.com/Christopher Mansfield

Napoleon...

...is a fierce boar who always gets his own way. He leads the revolution, but the power goes to his head.



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Squealer...

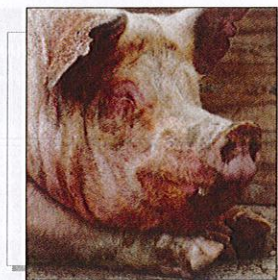
...is Napoleon's right-hand man and is in charge of propaganda. He's a very persuasive speaker.



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Snowball...

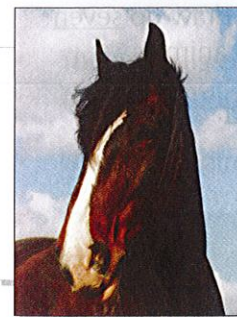
...is clever, brave and enthusiastic. Napoleon thinks Snowball is a threat and chases him off the farm.



© iStockphoto.com/Nancy Nehring

Old Major...

...is the principled old boar who starts the revolution.



© iStockphoto.com/Russell Du parcq

Boxer...

...is a hard worker but a slow thinker. He tries to solve problems by working harder, and never doubts Napoleon.



© iStockphoto.com/Ivonne Wierink-vanWetten

Benjamin...

...is a cynical donkey who does no more than he has to on the farm.



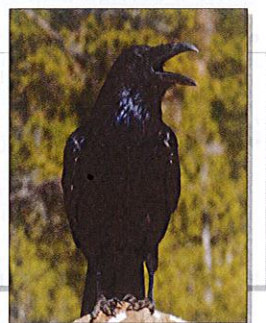
© HALLMARK/TNT/ANIMAL FARM PRODUCTION COURTESY THE KOBAL COLLECTION

Mollie...

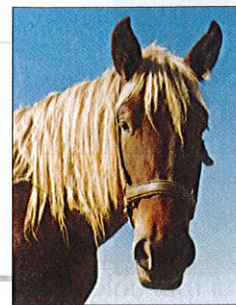
...is a vain, pretty horse who cares more about herself than the revolution.

Moses...

...is a religious raven who tells the animals tales of 'Sugarcandy Mountain'. The pigs call him a liar but let him stay on the farm.



© iStockphoto.com/step2626



© iStockphoto.com/Sylvia Kachel

Clover...

...is a kind, motherly horse. She worries about the other animals on the farm.



Mr Jones...

...is a cruel, drunken farmer. His animals rebel against him, chasing him off his farm.

Context: Russia before the Revolution

This section gives you a bit of context to *Animal Farm*. Orwell isn't just writing about an evil talking pig who starts wearing clothes, drinking whisky and playing cards. His message is much deeper than that...

Animal Farm is an allegory

- 1) *Animal Farm* is an **allegory**, which means that the main characters and events of the story **represent real people** and **events** in Soviet Russia. Orwell **simplifies** events in *Animal Farm* to make his message **clearer**.
- 2) The story is based on **Russian history**, from around **1917 to 1943**, four years before the **Cold War**.

Farmer Jones represents the unpopular Tsar

- 1) Tsar Nicholas II had ruled Russia since 1894. He was **powerful**, **unpopular** and had **absolute authority**.
- 2) Most of the country's wealth and land was owned by a **small noble class**. Most of the rest of the population were **peasants**.

Farmer Jones

- Farmer Jones has **absolute control** over the animals. This represents the Tsar's **power** over the Russian people.
- Jones lives in **luxury** while the animals work hard for his **benefit**.



Lenin sweeping away the unpopular Tsar and the ruling classes.

Old Major represents Lenin's revolutionary ideas...

- 1) A **radical** party called the Bolsheviks wanted to **end** this **inequality**.
- 2) This group was led by Lenin (see p. 7). He wanted a **revolution** to **overthrow** the Tsar and called for an **end** to capitalism (see below). He wanted to take **power** on behalf of **the workers**.

Old Major

Old Major also tells the animals to **rise up** against their **human** masters.

...and Marx's view on capitalism

- 1) Capitalism is an economic system based on **business** — it's selling things to make a **profit**.
- 2) **Marx**, a political thinker, said this was **wrong** because those who did the work were poor while the business owners were getting rich. He said that a **workers' revolution** would end inequality. After the revolution, **production** would benefit everyone and everything would be **shared** — this is called **communism**.

Old Major

- Old Major also warns of the **dangers** of **trading** with humans.
- He's proven **right** in the end — when Napoleon decides to **trade** with Frederick, Frederick pays him in **forged** bank notes.



Think about the historical background...

I know you're probably thinking "but I didn't sign up for history..." — unfortunately, you need to know the context to understand the plot and Orwell's message. On the upside, Russian history is really juicy.

Context: Lenin and the Revolution

Lots of the characters in *Animal Farm* link to Russia in some way. In the novel, Major is a mixture of Marx and Lenin. Two parts, that's just greedy — but then, what else can you expect from a pig...

Like the Russian people, the animals rebel

- 1) The Tsar **gave up the throne** in February 1917 because the Russian people were **rioting**. A **provisional government** was set up to replace him.

The Rebellion

- Just like the Russian people, the animals **rebel** against their ruler.
- Jones is taken **by surprise** and the animals **quickly** defeat him.

- 2) Lenin thought the **Bolsheviks** were the best people to **lead** Russia. Later that year, they seized **power** and overthrew the ruling classes without much **opposition**.
- 3) An **election** was held for a new parliament, but when the Bolsheviks **failed to win** a majority vote they **closed down** the Assembly.
- 4) The Bolsheviks became the **Communist Party**, the only legal party in Russia.

Orwell **simplifies** events in Russia to make his message about revolutionary leaders **clearer** — remember it's **an allegory, not a history book**.

The Pigs

- The Bolsheviks quickly became the **only** political party. Soon after the rebellion, the pigs also **take charge** of running the farm.
- At first, the animals **seem** to be **equal** — but as time goes by, Napoleon gets rid of any **opposition**. It's the end of **democracy**.

Old Major shares lots of Lenin's key strengths

- 1) Lenin's **organisation** and **leadership** transformed the Bolshevik party. He had a **sensible** and **realistic approach** to problems.
- 2) When Lenin died in 1924, Stalin put Lenin's body on **public display** to associate himself with Lenin's ideas.
- 3) Lenin had a **right-hand man** called **Trotsky**, who seemed the obvious choice to be Lenin's successor, but Stalin **pushed him out**.

Old Major

- Old Major shares lots of Lenin's **qualities** — he **encourages** the animals to **rebel** and his memory **comforts** the animals.
- Like Stalin, Napoleon puts **Major's skull** on public display.
- **Snowball** represents **Trotsky** in *Animal Farm* — after Major's death, Snowball seems to be the **likely** leader of the farm.



A statue of Lenin



Make sure you closely link the context to the novel...

Don't just randomly write about things that happened in Russian history — leave that stuff to the historians. The examiner doesn't want to hear Lenin's biography — but the way he's mirrored in Old Major is important.

Context: Trotsky

Trotsky held many important roles in the Communist Party, but his most famous role was as leader of the army. Snowball represents Trotsky, and it's quite funny really, because he's got trotters. Hahahahaha... oh dear.

Trotsky was a brilliant leader and so is Snowball...

- 1) After the revolution, there was a **civil war** between the **Bolsheviks** and people still **loyal to the Tsar**.
- 2) Trotsky proved that he was a **good** leader by organising a **powerful** army. Under **Trotsky's leadership**, the Bolsheviks **won** the civil war.

Battle of the Cowshed

- This should ring some (cow) bells — it's the **Battle of the Cowshed**.
- When Jones returns to **seize** the farm, Snowball's strategies mean that the animals are **prepared**. Snowball is an **organised, resourceful** military leader.

...but they both have a ruthless streak

- 1) When a **mutiny** broke out on a Russian naval base, Trotsky sent in the **army**.
- 2) The army **attacked**, and **captured** the base in a brutal battle. Many rebels were **killed**.

Snowball

- Snowball's **commitment** to Animalism means that he can be **coldhearted**.
- He tells Boxer that "War is war. The only good human being is a dead one."

There was a power struggle in Russia

- 1) **Trotsky** was capable and **popular** with the **army** and **Party members**. His **main rival** was Joseph **Stalin**, who had built a power base 'behind the scenes' in his work as **General Secretary** of the Party.
- 2) **Lenin** said **Trotsky** was **arrogant** but **good** at his job, and that **Stalin** should be **removed from office** because he was **too rude** and **ambitious**.



Trotsky at his desk

Napoleon and Snowball

The **power struggle** between Stalin and Trotsky is mirrored in the **leadership battle** between Napoleon and Snowball after Major dies. Snowball's **popular** campaign is no match for Napoleon's **violent tactics**.

- 3) After Lenin's death, Stalin went on to **seize power** from right under Trotsky's nose, simply through **clever organisation** and **planning**. Trotsky didn't even realise Stalin was a threat until it was **too late**.

A mutiny is a rebellion or uprising against people in authority, usually on a ship.



"As usual, Snowball and Napoleon were in disagreement."

The constant disagreements between Snowball and Napoleon represent the power struggle between Trotsky and Stalin. For all Trotsky's merits, his arrogance was ultimately his downfall — he underestimated Stalin.

Context: Stalin

Stalin was the outsider in the leadership battle — Lenin didn't even like him. Yet he managed to seize control. This page will tell you how. If you hadn't guessed yet, Napoleon = Stalin. Yup, they're both big meanies...

Napoleon represents Stalin in the allegory

- 1) Stalin was an **organiser**. He was **General Secretary** of the Communist Party — he could **control** who was given government roles, and chose people **loyal** to him.
- 2) His **rivals** didn't have the same **support** and by the late 1920s, they **were all voted out** of power.

Napoleon

- It might not seem like Napoleon **does much** at first — but he's secretly **training** the puppies.
- He **surrounds himself** with **loyal followers** in a similar way to Stalin, leaving Snowball **isolated**.

Stalin used his position to remove Trotsky

- 1) Trotsky was **thrown out** of the Party and forced to **leave** Russia in 1929.

Napoleon **expels** Snowball from the farm.

- 2) Trotsky became a '**non-person**' — his name was **removed** from history books and his picture was rubbed out of photos.

Napoleon **blames** any problems on Snowball and **spreads rumours** that Snowball's been working for Jones.

- 3) Stalin created a '**cult of personality**'. Photographs were **altered** to show Stalin and Lenin as friends. Stalin spread **propaganda** about his own **great leadership** and banned **criticism** against him. He **rewrote** history so that he played a more **important part** in the **revolution**.

Squealer spreads **propaganda** about Napoleon's **great leadership** and **rewrites history**.



Lenin and Stalin sitting together on a bench. Stalin was keen to spread such images.

Napoleon's regime symbolises Stalin's dictatorship

- 1) By 1929, Stalin was in **complete control** of the Communist Party and Russia. His policies were often completely different from **communist ideas**.
- 2) Even though he was **undisputed leader** of Russia, he became terrified that others wanted to overthrow him. However, most people lived in **fear** and were **unable** to speak out.

Napoleon

- Like Stalin, Napoleon becomes a **dictator**. He has **absolute power** on Animal Farm.
- He **undermines** the **commandments** one by one and changes them to suit him.
- The animals become increasingly **scared** but can't, or won't, **stand up** to him.



"Snowball was in league with Jones from the very start!"

Here's a prime example of Squealer spreading Napoleon's propaganda — Snowball is used as a scapegoat. Using propaganda and scapegoats are just some of the similarities between Napoleon and Stalin.

Context: Life Under Stalin

It's hard to say which would be worse — living under Stalin or Napoleon. They're both evil dictators, power mad, paranoid and pompous. But choosing which one I'd rather have in my sausages, that's a bit easier.

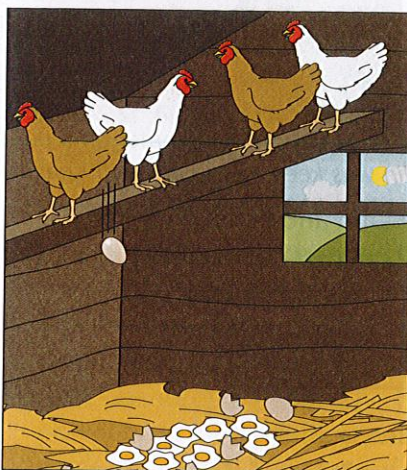
Orwell uses Napoleon to criticise Stalin's violence

- 1) Stalin ordered a purge of people he believed were part of a conspiracy against him.
- 2) Many 'old' communists were accused of plotting with the exiled Trotsky, and were arrested and charged in 'show trials'. They were forced by torture or threats to confess to betraying Stalin.
- 3) Anyone suspected of disloyalty to Stalin was taken away by the NKVD (the new secret police) and shot or sent to labour camps. As many as 10 million people died.

Napoleon and the Executions

- Napoleon holds similar trials when Snowball is said to be plotting against him in exile.
- He forces animals to admit to working with Snowball, then executes them in public.
- Even if Napoleon knows that the animals aren't conspiring against him, he wants to prove his power and scare anyone who might try to rebel.

Like the Russian peasants, the hens are treated badly



- 1) Russian peasants were forced to collectivise — everything was to be shared with the state.
- 2) They resisted, especially the kulaks (richer peasants).
- 3) Stalin sent troops to attack them. Many burned their own crops and killed livestock in protest. This led to a famine in the 1930s.

The Hens

- When the hens are told to sell their eggs to help the farm, they smash the eggs in protest.
- Napoleon starves the hens until they give in.

Like Napoleon, Stalin tried to create alliances

- 1) In 1939, Stalin signed a pact with Hitler to form an alliance between Russia and Germany, but Hitler betrayed Stalin and invaded Russia in 1941. Russia stopped the invasion but many Russians suffered.
- 2) After the war, Russia signed a pact with Britain and the US to protect their interests. The US and Britain also thought that such a deal would benefit their countries.

An alliance is an agreement of friendship between two countries.

The Pigs and the Humans

This reflects the relationship between the pigs and the farmers. They start as enemies — but they become friends. At the end of the book they fall out again over cheating at a card game...



Show how 'Animal Farm' reflects life under Stalin...

A good example to talk about is inequality. In Russia, communism was supposed to be all about equality, but those high up in the Party got the best goods and services. This inequality is echoed in *Animal Farm*.