



[Animal Farm](#), by George Orwell

In A Nutshell

Published in 1946, *Animal Farm* is one of George Orwell's most famous works, a political satire about animals and the oppressive humans they overthrow. The tale mirrors the Russian Revolution of the early twentieth century, as the working class (animals) overthrows the leadership (humans) to run the farm themselves, only to find that their new leaders are more oppressive than the old. This scathing parable mounts a hugely poignant attack on political idealism, making its points through humor, not to mention the talking animals.

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Big Picture Study Questions

- 1 George Orwell put a subtitle (*A Fairy Story*) underneath the title of *Animal Farm*. This story is a parallel to the Russian Revolution. Why would Orwell choose to make it such a "fairy story"? Or is this truly ironic, as in fact the book is the opposite of a "fairy story"? Why use animals and exaggeration instead of just writing a political essay?
- 2 Orwell's tone in the text is very tongue-in-cheek, and presumes innocence as he details what is obvious to us, his readers. What is the effect of such a tone? How does it add to our experience of reading the story?

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- 3 What might *Animal Farm* say about our own time? You might answer this question on a large scale or on a smaller one (for example, our country, government, our world, *or* your own personal life and the events in it ...or both).

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