

## **Animal Farm – Reading List**

This document contains the assessment question, foci for reading the novel to develop subject knowledge, and further reading links.

We hope you find this document useful in preparation for teaching *Animal Farm*.

### **Assessment Question:**

#### **Why does *Animal Farm* fail?**

There will be a single tier assessment. This question will allow students to write about a range of ideas that are explored while studying the novel, from the pigs' manipulation of history, propaganda and exploitation to the refusal of the other animals to take action against the pigs as they become more and more corrupt.

### **Reading group:**

One of the best ways to prepare for teaching the novel is to ensure you know the story, as well as the historical context that informed the writing of the novel.

Here are some things to consider as you read *Animal Farm*:

**Perspective** – the novel is written in the third person, but focusses on the actions of the common animals instead of the pigs. This means that we do not see the exact machinations and decisions the pigs are making – only their announcement and impact on the other animals. This means students will need to consciously infer what the pigs are doing and how this means they are better able to consolidate power.

**Structure** – the pigs slowly break ever commandment they make until only one remains – 'All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others'. There is foreshadowing in the novel – and the animals do not take any actions to stamp out the corruption as they see it occurring. There are also two battles which neatly mirror each other. The fallout from both of the battles contrast with each other starkly.

**Context** – Orwell's life is fascinating as is the historical context surrounding the publication of the novel. Orwell struggled for two years to find someone to print the novel as publishers were afraid of offending the USSR. The UK had begun to foster a friendly relationship with Stalin towards the end of WWII as they too were antagonised by Nazi Germany, even after USSR and Hitler signed a non-aggression pact early in the war. *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* remain banned in North Korea.

### **Animal Farm: Further reading**

Here are some links to help develop your subject knowledge of *Animal Farm* and its historical context:

**Animal Farm character map** <http://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/animal-farm/character-map>

**Orwell on the pigs' corruption**

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2013/07/11/animal-farm-what-orwell-really-meant/>

**Animal Farm – full text** <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks01/0100011h.html>

**Animal Farm – context** – these BBC clips give excellent, succinct guidance on the context of *Animal Farm* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/z8khfrd/resources/1>

**BBC Bitesize – Animal Farm** – lots of useful context and biographical information <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/z8khfrd>

**The Real George Orwell** – Lots of useful and interesting biographical information on George Orwell <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01pyzoz>

**George Orwell, ‘The Freedom of the Press’** – Orwell's Proposed Preface to *Animal Farm* [http://orwell.ru/library/novels/Animal\\_Farm/english/efp\\_go](http://orwell.ru/library/novels/Animal_Farm/english/efp_go)

**Orwell's Preface to Ukrainian translation of ‘Animal Farm’** – Orwell himself discusses some of the factors that influenced him as he was writing *Animal Farm* [http://orwell.ru/library/novels/Animal\\_Farm/english/epfc\\_go](http://orwell.ru/library/novels/Animal_Farm/english/epfc_go)

**‘Animal Farm: A Note on the Text’, Peter Davison** [http://orwell.ru/library/novels/Animal\\_Farm/english/eint\\_pd](http://orwell.ru/library/novels/Animal_Farm/english/eint_pd)

**McGraw Hill – Orwell study guide** – A good passage from the McGraw Hill book on *Animal Farm*, with some good guidance notes on Orwell and some good ideas for activities as well. [http://www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/litlibrary/pdf/animal\\_farm.pdf](http://www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/litlibrary/pdf/animal_farm.pdf)

**George Orwell – complete works** <http://www.orwell.ru/>

**George Orwell ‘Such, Such Were The Joys’** – Orwell's autobiography on his childhood [http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/joys/english/e\\_joys](http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/joys/english/e_joys)

**Animal Farm essay questions** – some good questions here to help direct your reading of the novel <http://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/animal-farm/study-help/essay-questions>

**‘We the People, and the Republic we must reclaim’** – TED talk on ‘corruption at the heart of American politics’ [http://www.ted.com/talks/lawrence\\_lessig\\_we\\_the\\_people\\_and\\_the\\_republic\\_we\\_must\\_reclaim](http://www.ted.com/talks/lawrence_lessig_we_the_people_and_the_republic_we_must_reclaim)

**British Library, ‘Depicting the Enemy’** – BL information on propaganda through the ages <http://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/depicting-the-enemy>

**British Library, George Orwell** – Biography and links to other pages <https://www.bl.uk/people/george-orwell>

**British Library, ‘Introduction to Animal Farm’** Images and introduction to *Animal Farm* with some interesting biographical insights <https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/articles/an-introduction-to-animal-farm>

**British Library, ‘Nineteen Eighty Four and the politics of dystopia’** – ‘Roger Luckhurst describes the political environment in which George Orwell wrote and published Nineteen Eighty-Four, and analyses its different – and often opposing – interpretations.’  
<https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/articles/nineteen-eighty-four-and-the-politics-of-dystopia>