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You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. How is Animal Farm an allegory? Animal Farm is a political allegory published by George Orwell in 1946. Like his other major work, 1984, this novella paints the picture of a world in which political control goes too far and personal freedoms are threatened. Animal Farm is more digestible, however, than 1984 because it is presented in the form of a fable with animals living on a farm serving to portray a boiled-down version of the rise of the Soviet Union and communism in Russia. Some of the characters are based on important political figures of that time such as Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky.Animal Farm Literary ElementsAuthor: George OrwellType of Work: NovellaGenres: Dystopian fiction; historical/political allegory; fable, satire Published Date: 1946Setting: The time frame is undefined, but since it alludes to the Russian Revolution, one might assume that it occurs at the same time (1917-1945). The place setting is a fictitious farm in England called Animal Farm.Main Characters: Napoleon, Snowball, Boxer, Mr. JonesProtagonist: Any animals who have to fight for freedom amongst corrupt political revolutionAntagonist: Any figure or group who represents or contributes to a corrupt political group Major Thematic Elements: The corruption brought on by communism; the inevitability of a social class structure; the inherent naivety of working-class individuals; rhetoric as a political toolMotifs: songs; ritualsExposition: Old Major gathers the animals to tell them about his dream of all the animals on Animal Farm working together free of human rulership and oppression. He encourages the animals to consider working together to make his dream a reality.Plot: Linear/chronologicalMajor Symbols: Animal Farm; the windmill; the barnClimax: Napoleon has his trained dogs run Snowball off the farm after Snowball has given an impassioned speech. Napoleon declares that the power of Animal Farm lies in his and the other pigs hands.Literary Significance of Animal FarmAlthough short, Animal Farm packs a big punch. As an overtly political novella, it uses the classic format of Aesop's Fables in order to have animals deliver the story and its message. Essentially, this novella tells a boiled-down version of the Soviet Unions rise to power in post-tsarist Russia. Napoleon focuses on the dangers of communism for the ordinary working-class people. Although Orwell himself was a supporter of socialism, he was vastly critical of the Soviet Unions policies and saw the revolutions there to be poor representations of what a true socialist society could look like. As can be seen in Animal Farm, Orwell was an overt critic of both communism and capitalism and both forces are portrayed as harmful in this novella.Animal Farm attacks the idea of Communist Party rule in any government but bases itself around the 1917 abdication of Tsar Nicholas II from the Russian throne and the ensuing political mess that occurred for many years afterwards. Various socialist and communist leaders found themselves gunning for political control of Russia including Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Leon Trotsky, etc. Stalin eventually gained control and made the Communist Party the ruling agent for Russia. All of this gives Animal Farm enormous inherent historical worth because it provides a unique context for studying the effects of this revolutioneven though Orwell himself was English, the effects of the revolution ended up being worldwide.Animal Farm Book SummaryThe novel opens as Mr. Jones, the proprietor of Animal Farm, has returned home for the day. All of the animals convene in the barn in order to listen to Old Major, a prize boar, deliver a speech about his dream that Animal Farm can exist in prosperity without human rulership. Old Major is a well-respected animal who knows that his life is about to end, and he wants to express his dream and his wisdom so that the other animals can benefit. His speech shows the other animals that their life purposes are all to work hard and then debut he believes that there can be a better way of living. Old Major says that the humans, and Mr. Jones in particular, are to blame and once they are removed from the picture, the animals will be able to all live luxuriously. Three nights later, Old Major has died, and the animals begin to make secret plans to carry out a revolution against the humans. The pigs, being the cleverest animals, are tasked to teach and organize other animals. At this point in chapter two, Napoleon and Snowball emerge as leaders and they enlist the help of another pig, Squealer, to spread their political message across the farm. They come up with a political philosophy called Animalism and they begin encouraging everyone to refer to each other as Comrade. Many of the animals find the concept of Animalism to be difficult to understand but the pigs encourage them that their lives under human rulership are not happy lives and that with a revolution they will be able to live fuller and happier lives. Once all animals are primed, the Rebellion occurs and Mr. Jones is driven off his farm. The animals destroy all items they see as tools of oppression such as halters, whips, etc. and they back in their accomplishments. It is revealed that the pigs have learned to read, and they name their new human-free farm Animal Farm. Snowball and Napoleon create seven commandments for Animalism and paint them on the barn wall.Chapter three sees the animals working hard all summer to keep the farm running. The pigs devise ways for animals to use human tools and the farm keeps running much in the same way it was beforehand hard work and specific duties. The years harvest winds up being greater than any year before it and the pigs deem their new farm successful. On Sundays, the animals hold a flag-raising ceremony and in the mornings, the animals meet for democratic meetings in which issues are raised and policies are created for the common good. Snowball and Napoleon remain in leadership roles, but their opinions begin to clash more and more. Later in the chapter, the other animals realize that the pigs have been keeping all of the milk and apples for themselves. They justify it by saying that since the pigs are the smartest, they need the milk and apples in order to think clearly and keep making good decisions for the farm. They threaten that if the pigs intend fails, Mr. Jones will come back to take over the farm.Chapter four sees the effects of the animal overthrow on Mr. Jones beyond just his own farm. His neighbors, Mr. Pilkington and Mr. Frederick, fear that ideas will spread to animals on their own farms. However, the two farmers have a strong rivalry which prevents them from working together. Their animals begin to hear the propaganda from Animal Farm. Mr. Jones rallies other farmers and attempts to take his farm back. The animals ambush the men and they are swiftly defeated.About halfway through the novella, Snowball and Napoleons disagreements grow larger. Snowball and Napoleon continue to deliver speeches to the animals, rallying for support of their ideas. Finally, after a passionate speech, Napoleon has his trained dogs run Snowball off the farm and Napoleon announces that he will be the sole leader of Animal Farm and that meetings will only be held for ceremonial purposes from that point forward rather than democratic ones. Animal growing confusion, Squealer explains away any issues and Napoleons threatening dog, Boxer, terrify animals into submission.Moving forward into chapter six, the animals work hard to keep up with the farm and to build a windmill. Napoleon cuts animal rations and conditions grow more and more uncomfortable for the animals. Napoleon hires a human solicitor to get items for the farm that they cannot produce themselves and the other animals are shocked to see Napoleon working with a human. They also notice that as the pigs have moved into the farmhouse, some of the Animalism commandments have changed with no explanation as to why.The animals endure a harsh winter and hear rumors that Snowball has been breaking onto the farm at night and sabotaging their efforts. Napoleon calls a meeting in which he forces several animals to falsely admit that they have been conspiring with Snowball and then has his dogs rip out their throats in front of all the others.In chapter eight, Mr. Frederick attacks Animal Farm with armed men and they blow up the windmill that the animals all worked so tirelessly to build. The animals start to blame themselves for the misfortunes that are starting to fall on the farm. They are unable to put two and two together to see that corruption coming from the pigs in power is what is causing all of their problems.Wearily, the animals set about rebuilding the windmill. They are running out of food and rations. Napoleon and the other pigs continue to spread propaganda about Snowball and actively works to brainwash the animals. Boxer dies and Napoleon says that he died at a hospital. However, they later get a big shipment of glue in but Squealer denies that Boxer was sold to slaughter so that the farm could have glue.In the final chapter, it is shown that years have passed and that not many animals currently on the farm are able to remember the Rebellion in its true form. The farm is prosperous but only the pigs seem to benefit from this. Squealer and Napoleon beg to walk upright their hind legs and whip the other animals into submission. The final commandment of Animalism has been amended from all animals are equal to all animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others. The pigs become more and more human-like to the point where the animals lose track of who is human and who is a pig. Orwell may have subtitled his novel "A Fairy Tale," but we're thinking it's more like a fable.Who's get some terms straight. An allegory is basically an extended metaphorical picture, poem, or story in which everything stands for something else, like how The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe is an allegory about Christianity, or Twilight can be read as an allegory for Mormon marriage. (True fact, Google it.) A fable, meanwhile, is just a short animal allegory with a clear moral. Remember the story about the tortoise and the hare? The grasshopper who sang all summer? The wolf in sheep's clothing? The goose and the golden egg? (If not, you can brush up here.) In all those stories, the animals stand in for people or behaviors: the slow and steady tortoise who laps the ADD hare; the lazy grasshoppers who don't store food for the winter; and greedy men who kill the goose to get all the eggs at once without realizing that you kind of need the goose alive to get the eggs. (These fables, BTW, go way back to Aesop, a Greek slave who wrote these bad boys down during his life between 620-560 B.C.E.)Orwell's novel is a traditional animal fable, but it's also a more complex allegory for the events leading up to and following the Russian Revolution. Like Aesop's fables, Orwell's story is full of personified animals. It's simply told and has a few clear morals: power corrupts, utopian visions are doomed, don't beat the horse. This simplicity makes Animal Farm easy: it has a point to make, and it makes it clearly and concisely. Sure, there are points to debatelike why Napoleon is able to take over so efficiently, and just why Benjamin doesn't seem to get that the pigs are going to betray Boxer until he actually sees the van. But, in general, it's easy and, even without all the details of Russian history, everyone can get it. That's the whole point of an allegory. No wonder you're required to read it. 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