

# Honors 9 Summer Reading Packet

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Students in Grade 9 Honors English, you are required to complete this packet in its entirety. All of your work **MUST BE TYPED** on a Word document and saved. On page one of the Word document, do not forget to include your name, date, the type of assignment you are required to complete (in this case it would be Animal Farm Packet), and the subject course in which you are enrolled. Do not forget to follow all of the instructions for each section of the packet. **This packet is due the end of the first week of school. If you enrolled in Honors 9 after the start of school, your packet is due two weeks after your first day in Honors 9.**

## Background Information

- On the most basic level, *Animal Farm* is an entertaining story with a strong plot line, good character development, and a clear sense of place. But it is also a political treatise, a satire, and an allegorical novel that attacks Soviet communism. An allegory is an artistic device in which the characters and events of the story represent something else. Most of the characters in *Animal Farm* can be compared to representative groups of people in society: the ruling class, the working class, the scapegoat, etc.
- Communism is a political/economic system. Within this system, all factories, farms, real estate, and other means of economic production are owned and controlled by the community for the benefit of all. Each member of the community is expected to work to his or her ability and subsequently receives benefits from society according to his/her needs. Although the ultimate goal of communism is the abolishment of government, in fact, it has been associated with repressive, dictatorial regimes.
- The two economic theories that compete with communism are capitalism and socialism. In a capitalistic system, the means of production are privately owned and managed for profit. A free market system is governed by supply and demand. In a socialistic system, the means of production, as well as the means of distribution of goods and services, are owned by the state and managed for the welfare of society as a whole.

**\*Students should not only read the novel on a literal level, they should also read it on an allegorical level. It would be a wise choice to read about communism and the Bolshevik Revolution before reading *Animal Farm*.**

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**Do not forget that all activities in this packet are to be typed. Make sure that all questions are answered under the heading of that Activity. Ex: “Activity 1 – Building Background”.**

## Activity 1- Building Background

**Directions: Complete this activity before reading the novel. In *Animal Farm*, mistreated farm animals overthrow their human leader in order to create an animal utopia. However Napoleon, a Berkshire boar, uses lies and manipulation to become a powerful dictator. Answer these questions about power and what it means to you and our society. Answers should be in complete sentences.**

1. What characteristics define a good political leader?
2. What characteristics define a poor political leader?
3. Define dictator.
4. Do you think a leader should ever have absolute power? Why?
5. How does a dictatorship affect the members of that society?
6. How can a society maintain a balance of power?

## Activity 2 - Key Definitions

**Directions: Complete this activity before reading the novel. Copy each term below and list its corresponding definition.**

Define the following terms: cynical, cryptic, ignominious, cowered, contemptuous, oration, and taciturn.

## Activity 3 - Reading Guide (Chapters I – III)

**Directions: Read the questions below before reading Chapters I – III. After you have finished reading said chapters answer the questions below in order and remember to number them appropriately. Answers should be in complete sentences. Do not write the question.**

1. Why does old Major gather all the animals together in the barn?
2. How do the animals react when the pigs first explain the principles of Animalism to them?
3. How do the animals succeed in overthrowing Mr. Jones during the Rebellion?
4. Why does Snowball reduce the Seven Commandments to a single maxim, *Four legs good, two legs bad*?
5. What does Snowball do to improve the lives of the animals after the Rebellion? What does Napoleon do?
6. How does Squealer explain why the pigs get milk and apples in their diet and the other animals do not?
7. Although the goal of the Rebellion was equality for all animals, the pigs are already receiving better treatment. Is it possible to have a society in which all members are equal? Why?

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## Activity 4 - Reading Guide (Chapters IV - VII)

**Directions:** Read the questions below before reading Chapters IV – VII. After you have finished reading said chapters answer the questions below in order and remember to number them appropriately. Answers should be in complete sentences. Do not write the question.

1. How do Mr. Pilkington and Mr. Frederick feel about the rebellion at Animal Farm?
2. Describe the Battle of the Cowshed.
3. How does Mollie feel about the new way of life on Animal Farm? What finally happens to her?
4. Why does Napoleon expel Snowball from the farm?
5. Why is Boxer so important to Napoleon’s success?
6. What is happening to the Seven Commandments?
7. Why are the animals forbidden to sing “Beasts of England”?
8. Napoleon and his propagandist, Squealer, continue to insist that all decisions are made for the good of the animals. Does it seem this way to you? What do you think is really going on?

## Activity 5 - Reading Guide (Chapters VIII - X)

**Directions:** Read the questions below before reading Chapters VIII - X. After you have finished reading said chapters answer the questions below in order and remember to number them appropriately. Answers should be in complete sentences. Do not write the question.

1. What is the lumber deal that Napoleon makes?
2. How does Boxer feel after the Battle of the Windmill? Why doesn’t he stand up for himself against Napoleon’s regime?
3. Why is Squealer so important to the success of Napoleon’s reign?
4. What becomes Boxer’s sole ambition?
5. What happens to Boxer?
6. What human habits have the pigs acquired?
7. Why does Napoleon change the name of Animal Farm to The Manor Farm?
8. Is there any moral difference between the mistreatment of the animals by the pigs and the mistreatment of the animals by the humans? Why or why not?

## Activity 6 - Turning Point

**A turning point is a moment when something changes significantly. In a story, it might be the general direction in which a story is going that changes or it might be a character’s attitude or feeling. You may have detected a turning point beginning in Chapter IV that progresses into Chapter V.**

**Directions:** Answers should be in complete sentences. Do not write the question.

1. How do Napoleon and Snowball get along during the Meeting held by the animals each Sunday?
2. Why is Snowball given the decoration, “Animal Hero, First Class,” after the Battle of the Cowshed?
3. How does Napoleon express his disdain for Snowball’s plans to build a windmill?
4. At what moment do you suspect that Napoleon is going to do something terrible to Snowball?  
How is the expulsion of Snowball from Animal Farm a turning point in the story?
5. How might you expect Napoleon to act differently from now on? What effect could this have on the story as a whole?

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## Activity 7 - Allegory

**Animal Farm is an allegorical novel written to reveal basic truths about humanity and society through fictional characters. Consider the deeper allegorical meaning of each character and event when responding the questions below.**

**Directions: Answers should be in complete sentences. Do not write the question.**

1. The Seven Commandments of animalism are gradually changed throughout the novel. What deeper allegorical meaning do you think the author is trying to express about whom laws benefit in a totalitarian government?
2. Though the animals actually witness Boxer being taken to the glue factory by the knacker, they soon accept Squealer's lie that Boxer died happily in the hospital in Willingdon. What allegorical message do you think Orwell is trying to convey about the hardworking common people in a totalitarian government and the role they play in contributing to their own circumstances?

## Activity 8 - Author's Purpose

**Writing can serve many purposes. It can entertain readers, give them information, or persuade them to take action. Why do you think George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*?**

**Directions: Copy the questions below before answering. Answers should be in complete sentences.**

1. Orwell called *Animal Farm* a "fairy story." How does *Animal Farm* compare to the fairy tales you are familiar with?
2. What does Orwell want you, as the reader, to discover about political power and how it affects those who have it?
3. Do you think it is important for people to read books like *Animal Farm*? What can people gain from such books?

The information and questions incorporated above are taken verbatim from the following resource: Novel Ideas Skills - Animal Farm, Sundance, A Haight Cross Communications Company.