

ANIMAL FARM :

None of the other animals on the farm could get further than the letter A. It was also found that the stupider animals, such as the sheep, hens, and ducks, were unable to learn the Seven Commandments by heart. After much thought, Snowball declared that the Seven Commandments could be reduced to a single maxim, namely: "Four legs good, two legs bad." This, he said, contained the essential principle of Animalism. Whoever had thoroughly grasped it would be safe from human influences. The birds at first objected, since it seemed to them that they also had two legs, but Snowball proved to them that this was not so.

"A bird's wing, comrades," he said, "is an organ of propulsion and not of manipulation. It should therefore be regarded as a leg. The distinguishing mark of man is the *hand*, the instrument with which he does all his mischief."

The birds did not understand Snowball's long words, but they accepted his explanation, and all the humbler animals set to work to learn the new maxim by heart. FOUR LEGS GOOD, TWO LEGS BAD was inscribed on the end wall of the barn, above the Seven Commandments and in bigger letters. When they had once got it by heart, the sheep developed a great liking for this maxim, and often as they lay in the field they would all start bleating "Four legs good, two legs bad! Four legs good, two legs bad!" and keep it up for hours on end, never growing tired of it.

Napoleon took no interest in Snowball's committees. He said that the education of the young was more important than anything that could be done for those who were already grown up. It happened that Jessie and Bluebell had both whelped soon after the hay harvest, giving birth between them to nine sturdy puppies. As soon as they were weaned, Napoleon took them away from their mothers, saying that he would make himself responsible for their education. He took them up into a loft which could only be reached by a ladder from the harness-room, and there kept in such seclusion that the rest of the farm soon forgot their existence.

The mystery of where the milk went to was soon cleared up. It was mixed every day into the pigs' mash¹. The early apples were now ripening, and the grass of the orchard was littered with windfalls². The animals had assumed as a matter of course that these would be shared out equally; one day, however, the order went forth that all the windfalls were to be collected and brought to the harness-room for the use of the pigs. At this some of the other animals murmured, but it was no use. All the pigs were in full agreement on this point, even Snowball and Napoleon. Squealer was sent to make the necessary explanation to the others.

"Comrades!" he cried. "You do not imagine, I hope, that we pigs are doing this in a spirit of selfishness and privilege? Many of us actually dislike milk and apples. I dislike them myself. Our sole object in taking these things is to preserve our health. Milk and apples (this has been proven by Science, comrades) contain substances absolutely necessary to the well-being of a pig. We pigs are brainworkers. The whole management and organization of this farm depend on us. Day and night we are watching over your welfare. It is for *your* sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples. Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back! Yes, Jones would come back! Surely, comrades," cried Squealer almost pleadingly, skipping from side to side and whisking his tail, "surely there is no one among you who wants to see Jones come back?"

George Orwell, *Animal Farm*, 1945

1. mash: purée, bouillie, pâtée, ou pulpe

2. windfall: fruit abattu par le vent

- 1) Where does the scene take place? Quote from the text.
- 2) Name each character, mentioned or present, and tell:
 - a. who they are
 - b. what their role is in the text
- 3) L3: What are the Seven Commandments?
- 4) L5: In your own words, what does the maxim "Four legs good, two legs bad" mean?
- 5) Which type of animal seems to be superior to the others? Justify your answer
- 6) Which character do you think is the leader/the mastermind/the one who is in control? Justify your answer.
- 7) How do the animals feel about humans? Justify your answer.
- 8) a. What name do the animals always refer to each other as? (In other words, what is the name that the animals call each other?)
 - b. What does this name reveal?
- 9) L20-28: Why did Napoleon take the puppies away from their mothers?
- 10) L29-36: What happened to the milk and apples?
- 11) L37-end: What was the purpose of Squealer's speech?
- 12) L45: Who do you think Jones is? Where is he?
- 13) Do you think the other animals accepted or rejected Squealer's speech? Justify your answer.
- 14) Circle as many adjectives as possible that best describe both Snowball and Squealer's speeches. Justify by quoting from the text:

clever / quiet / worried / confident / persuasive / ignorant
- 15) Using the text as your only guide, summarize what the book is about. (30 words)