

## College Prep English II, Summer Reading Study Guide

Welcome 10th graders! I am very excited to get to meet and know you this year.

Your summer reading is *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. You must have this short novel complete before our first day of classes and must bring a novel with you to class for the assessment week 1.

Below you will find some guiding reading questions which should help you with annotating the novel- these questions are not required written work and the answers will not be "handed in," however, they will help you focus on important content and think critically about the text you are reading.

Some form of some of these questions will make up your final summer reading assessment in August for this novel.

Blessings, and I will see you soon!

-Mrs. Johnson

*Animal Farm* Essential Questions:

1. What is an allegory? What is the purpose of allegory?
2. What are some examples of symbolism in *Animal Farm*?
3. How do authors use literature to critique historical people and events? How does George Orwell do this in *Animal Farm*?
4. What is propaganda? How is language (and propaganda) used to influence or manipulate various characters in this book?
5. What does it mean to be free? Are true freedom and equality attainable? Does this novel support your answer- use examples from the text to answer yes or no.
6. What are the responsibilities of those in power? What happens when power is taken advantage of? How do we see this in the novel?
7. What are the dangers of being a "follower"? What happens when people blindly follow others? How do we see this play out in the novel?
8. Who are the main characters in this novel and what role do they play in the story's progression and outcome?

Notes on novel background and author:

- Orwell once wrote: "Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism" (Orwell, "Why I Write"). This purpose shines through in *Animal Farm*, as its central theme is a warning against the political corruption of people in power, and the human tendency to manipulate others (often through language/rhetoric and propaganda) for their own gain. Orwell directly criticizes Stalin's Soviet Union, but he also critiques totalitarianism in general.
- Text Structure: The structure of *Animal Farm* is cyclical. It starts and ends with totalitarian leaders who oppress the lower, working class. Although much happens in the middle, the purpose of the cyclical structure is to show that totalitarianism (disguised as a socialist pursuit for "equality") regimes will always leave their people oppressed, manipulated, and worse off than before. The author uses third-person omniscient narration.
- Real World Connections: Many of the characters and plot events in *Animal Farm* represent real people and events from the Russian Revolution. Additionally, the themes, including the dangers of totalitarianism, political corruption, abuse of power, and the importance of independent, critical thought are very relevant in the world today.