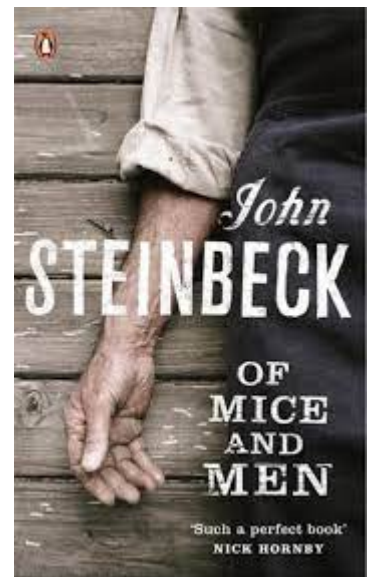
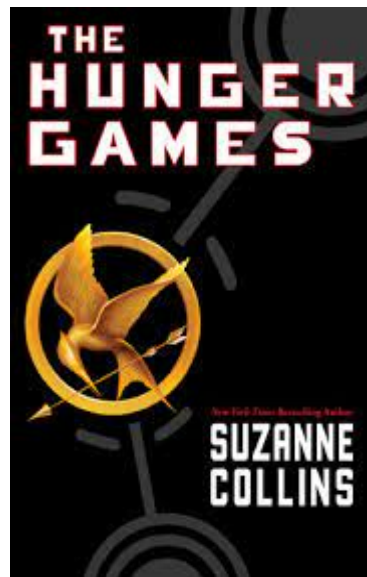


3eme SI Syllabus - 2021/2022

Unit	Texts
Summer reading	<i>Animal Farm</i> by George Orwell
Unit 1	<i>The Hunger Games</i> by Suzanne Collins + various non-fiction texts + poetry
Unit 2	<i>Of Mice and Men</i> by John Steinbeck + short stories + poetry
Unit 3	Fractured fairy tales

Please do the following prior to the first 3eme SI literature class:

- Purchase the novels listed above.
- Purchase a folder. Bring the folder to class. This folder will be used to collect artifacts for your Brevet dossier throughout the school year.
- Read the following introductory materials provided in this packet (background information on *Animal Farm*) and complete the comprehension tasks while reading the novel:
 - "Meet George Orwell"
 - "Introducing the Novel"
 - "Introduction to Satire"
 - "Introduction to Fables"
 - "Introduction to Allegory"
 - "Introduction to Propaganda"
 - Complete quote journal **as you read the novel**
 - Complete "Animalism Guide" **as you read the novel**



Meet George Orwell



Liberty is telling people what they do not want to hear.

—George Orwell

In the years since the publication of *Animal Farm* and *1984*, both of which conjure visions of modern government's dangerous power, critics have studied and analyzed George Orwell's personal life. Orwell was a man who had a reputation for standing apart and even making a virtue of his detachment. This "outsider" position often led him to oppose the crowd.

Orwell began life as Eric Arthur Blair (George Orwell was a pen name he adopted later for its "manly, English, country-sounding ring.") He spent his early years in India as a lonely boy who liked to make up stories and talk with imaginary companions. He began to "write" before he even knew how, dictating poems to his mother, and perhaps saw this outlet as an alternative to the human relationships he found so difficult. Refuge in words and ideas became increasingly important when Orwell's parents sent him, at age eight, to boarding school in England.

Later, instead of going on to university, he decided to take a job in Burma with the Indian Imperial Police. Orwell wrote about this experience in *Burmese Days* (1934) and in the essay "Shooting an Elephant." At odds with British

colonial rule, Orwell said he "theoretically—and secretly, of course . . . was all for the Burmese and all against their oppressors, the British."

Returning to England to recover from a bout of the chronic lung illness that plagued him all his life, Orwell began his writing career in earnest. Over the next two decades, he wrote newspaper columns, novels, essays, and radio broadcasts, most of which grew out of his own personal experience.

Orwell's beliefs about politics were affected by his experiences fighting in the Spanish Civil War. He viewed socialists, communists, and fascists as repressive and self-serving. Orwell patriotically supported England during World War II, but remained skeptical of governments and their willingness to forsake ideals in favor of power.

With each book or essay, Orwell solidified his role as the outsider willing to question any group's ideology. Orwell spoke his mind with *Animal Farm*, in which he criticized the Soviet Union despite its role as a World War II ally of Great Britain. At first, no one would publish the novel, but when *Animal Farm* finally appeared in 1945 it was a success. It was later adapted both as an animated film and as a play.

In explaining how he came to write *Animal Farm*, Orwell says he once saw a little boy whipping a horse:

It struck me that if only such animals became aware of their strength we should have no power over them, and that men exploit animals in much the same way as the rich exploit the [worker].

Orwell said it was the first book in which he consciously tried to blend artistic and political goals. Orwell's final novel, *1984*, continued that effort with a grim portrayal of a world totally under government control.

Orwell pursued his writing career faithfully, although it was not always easy. In his final days he made the statement, "Writing . . . is a horrible exhausting struggle . . . One would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven . . ."

Introducing the Novel

Animal Farm is written on many levels. It is already a children's story in its own right. . . . [It] is also a lament for the fate of revolutions and the hopes contained in them. It is a moving comment on man's constant compromise with the truth.

—John Atkins, *George Orwell*

On the publication of *Animal Farm* in 1945, George Orwell discovered with horror that booksellers were placing his novel on children's shelves. According to his housekeeper, he began traveling from bookstore to bookstore requesting that the book be shelved with adult works. This dual identity—as children's story and adult satire—has stayed with Orwell's novel for more than fifty years.

Animal Farm tells the story of Farmer Jones's animals who rise up in rebellion and take over the farm. Tired of being exploited solely for human gain, the animals—who have human characteristics such as the power of speech—vow to create a new and more just society.

Though the novel reads like a fairy story, and Orwell subtitles it as just that, it is also a satire containing a message about world politics and especially the former Soviet Union in particular. Since the Bolshevik revolutions of the early 1900s, the former Soviet Union had captured the attention of the world with its socialist experiment. Stalin's form of government had some supporters in Britain and the United States, but Orwell was against this system.

In a satire, the writer attacks a serious issue by presenting it in a ridiculous light or otherwise poking fun at it. Orwell uses satire to expose what he saw as the myth of Soviet socialism. Thus, the novel tells a story that people of all ages can understand, but it also tells us a second story—that of the real-life Revolution. Many critics have matched in great detail the story's characters to historical persons—for example, linking the power struggle between Napoleon and Snowball to the historical feuding between Joseph Stalin and Leon Trotsky for control of the Soviet Union. Critics

also believe that Old Major represents Karl Marx, who dies before realizing his dream. Other comparisons include Moses as the Russian Orthodox church, Boxer and Clover as workers, the sheep as the general public, Squealer as Stalin's government news agency, the dogs as Stalin's military police, and Farmer Jones as Czar Nicholas II. The farm's neighbors, Pilkington and Frederick, are said to represent Great Britain and Germany, while Mollie suggests the old Russian aristocracy, which resists change.

A tremendous success when published, *Animal Farm* has since become part of school curriculums and popular literary culture. Readers and critics alike have enjoyed its imaginative premise and the engaging charm of its animal characters. Orwell's straightforward language draws readers into the farm's world, while the witty underlying satire invites serious analysis. In *George Orwell: A Personal Memoir*, T. R. Fyvel writes:

[Orwell] turned the domestic animals on the farm into immediately recognizable and memorable and sometimes lovable characters.

Animal Farm is more than a fairy story. It is a commentary on the the relevance of independent thought, truth, and justice.

THE TIME AND PLACE

An allegory is a narrative that can be read on more than one level. Critics often consider *Animal Farm* to be an allegory of the Russian Revolution. In the early 1900s, Russia's Czar Nicholas II faced an increasingly discontented populace. Freed from feudal serfdom in 1861, many Russian peasants were struggling to survive under an oppressive government. By 1917, amidst the tremendous suffering of World War I, a revolution began. In two major battles, the Czar's government was overthrown and replaced by the Bolshevik leadership of Vladimir Lenin. When Lenin died in 1924, his former colleagues Leon Trotsky, hero of the early Revolution, and Joseph Stalin, head of the Communist Party, struggled for power. Stalin won the battle, and he deported Trotsky into permanent exile.

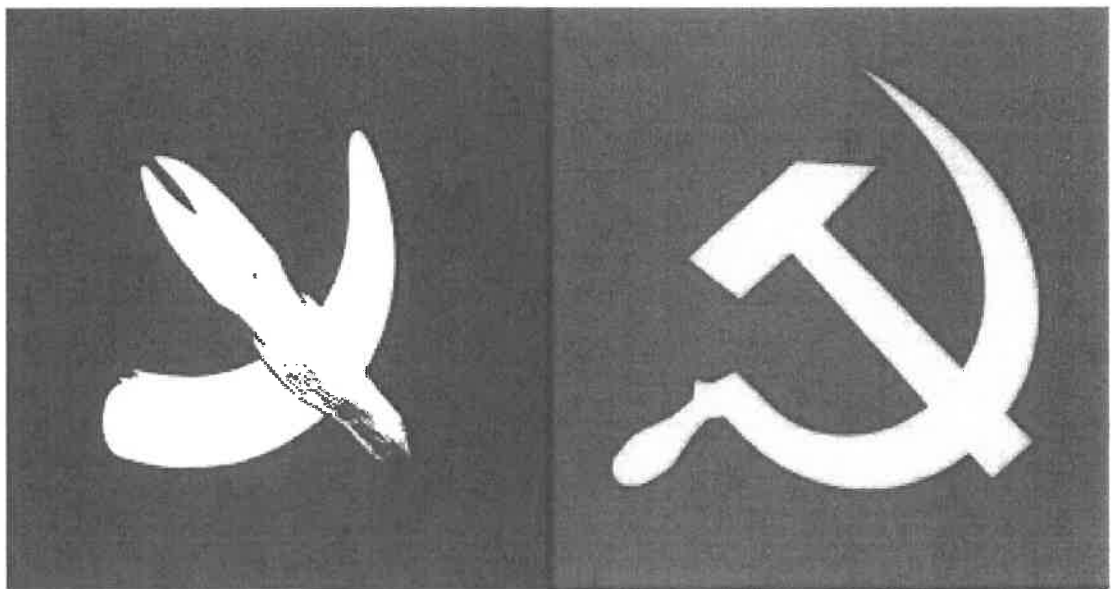
Once in power, Stalin began, with despotism and exalted nationalism, to move the Soviet Union into the modern industrial age. His government seized land in order to create collective farms. Stalin's Five Year Plan was an attempt to modernize Soviet industry. To counter resistance

(many peasants refused to give up their land), Stalin used vicious military tactics. Rigged trials led to executions of an estimated 20 million government officials and ordinary citizens. The government controlled the flow and content of information to the people, and all but outlawed churches.

Did You Know?

Orwell initially struggled to find a publisher for *Animal Farm*. Many liberal intellectuals in Europe admired the Soviet experiment with socialism. They believed socialism would produce a society in which everyone—workers and employers—was equal, and in which there were no upper, middle, or lower classes. In Orwell's words "they want[ed] to believe that, somewhere, a really Socialist country does actually exist." Also, British publishers were hesitant to publicly criticize their Soviet allies as World War II came to a close. The book was published in 1945, after Germany surrendered.

Orwell believed that the basis for society was human decency and common sense, which conflicted with the ideals for society that were prevalent at the time: socialism, capitalism, communism, and fascism, to name a few. As an individualist who believed that his own experiences should guide his philosophy, he was often at odds with these popular ideas. He believed that governments were encroaching on the individual's freedom of choice, love of family, and tolerance for others. He emphasized honesty, individuality, and the welfare of society throughout his writings.



**Flag of
Animal Farm**

**Flag of the
Soviet Union**

Introduction to Satire

Ever read a political cartoon that mocks a politician or policy? Ever watched *The Daily Show* or *The Colbert Report*? They make you laugh by pointing out the ridiculousness of social issues, people, vices, decisions, etc.. These are modern, popular examples of satire, a literary technique that has been around for centuries.

By definition, **satire** is the use of humor, exaggeration, ridicule, sarcasm, irony, and/or a number of other literary devices to expose and criticize foolishness, corruption, or general social problems with the intent to promote social change. In short, satire inspires change by making something or someone look stupid in a humorous manner.



Effective Satire

In order for satire to work, the object of the satire cannot be a victim, but must somehow be responsible for the flaws being satirized. If not, then the satire will just seem mean rather than funny.

But remember, laughter is not the final goal of satire, but the means by which it can achieve its end. In fact, some satires are not funny at all. The goal of satire is always a change or new awareness of some sort.

Tone is also important in satire. It should be obvious that the tone is mocking or angry as well as laughable. This is where sarcasm can prove helpful.

Some (but not all) Satire Techniques

Satire usually employs various literary devices. **Similes and metaphors**, for example, are great ways to draw ridiculous parallels. In its use of animals as stand-ins for people, *Animal Farm* uses metaphor in its satire.

Another example would be **hyperbole (exaggeration)**. Blowing something into ridiculous proportions to make it seem laughable, or making something seem insanely specific. In comic strips, corrupt business men are often depicted with huge stomachs - the exaggeration implies their greedy appetite.

Another popular satire device is the **parody**: taking serious subject matter and lampooning it by means humorous imitation. The *Scary Movie* films, for example, are parodies of the horror genre of film. They draw attention to some of the absurdities of the genre by emphasizing them.

Introduction to Fables

A fable is a short story, typically involving animals, intended to convey a useful moral or truth. The animals in fables generally represent people “types” (the greedy businessman, the braggart, the idiot) or personality traits, like gullible, hardworking, or melancholy (think Eeyore from Winnie the Pooh).

Most of us know the story about the tortoise and the hare:

There once was a speedy hare who bragged about how fast he could run. Tired of hearing him boast, Slow and Steady, the tortoise, challenged him to a race. All the animals in the forest gathered to watch.

Hare ran down the road for a while and then paused to rest. He looked back at Slow and Steady and cried out, "How do you expect to win this race when you are walking along at your slow, slow pace?"

Hare stretched himself out alongside the road and fell asleep, thinking, "There is plenty of time to relax."

Slow and Steady walked and walked. He never, ever stopped until he came to the finish line.

The animals who were watching cheered so loudly for Tortoise, they woke up Hare.

Hare stretched and yawned and began to run again, but it was too late. Tortoise was over the line.

After that, Hare always reminded himself, "Don't brag about your lightning pace, for Slow and Steady won the race!"



The story is one of over 655 other fables written by the author Aesop around 550 BCE. It is a brief tale that uses animals associated with definite traits (tortoise=slow; hare=fast) to communicate an easily understood moral: overconfidence leads to failure. Many other authors, including George Orwell, have written in the fable tradition over the years. It remains a simple way for even young children to understand a variety of life lessons through animals meant to represent single characters or character traits.

Introduction to Allegory

An allegory, put most simply, is a story that can be read on two levels: literally and symbolically. For example, on the literal level, Aesop's fable about the tortoise and the hare can be read **literally** as a story about a rabbit and a tortoise having a race during which the rabbit takes a nap thinking he has a safe lead, though the tortoise eventually overcomes the hare during his nap and wins the race.

However, as we have discussed, the fable is also meant to be read **allegorically**, meaning the characters can represent abstract qualities (personality traits: clever, caring, depressed) or ideas (justice, morality), or historical figures/events (Martin Luther King, the American Civil War).

The hare represents overconfidence. It's belief in its inherent superiority proves its downfall. Conversely, the tortoise makes it to the finish line and wins because of his *steady* resolve to finish, and thus the famous moral is established: "slow and steady wins the race." The instructional element of the fable comes from its **allegorical** nature - the playing out of these character traits in characters.

Orwell's *Animal Farm* is an allegory, too. While literally a story about animals taking over a farm, it is also allegorical of the Russian Revolution. The characters and events of the story match in a 1:1 ratio some of the major historical figures and events of the Russian Revolution. For example, Old Major represents Karl Marx, the man commonly known as the father of Communism, the civil structure known as "Animalism" in the story.



Introduction to Propaganda



While you might not yet recognize it, you see propaganda every time you see a commercial on TV or an advertisement on the web. At its heart, propaganda is persuasion - it is advertising.

By definition, propaganda is any information (usually of a biased or misleading nature) used to promote or publicize a particular campaign, political cause, or point of view. As they matter more in Orwell's *Animal Farm*, we will focus more on the political elements of propaganda rather than the daily advertising elements, though you will undoubtedly note overlap.

The poster to the left is an artifact of propaganda. Captain America is in the forefront of the scene in his red white and blue while trusty US soldiers follow behind. The words tell readers to fight and be a part of the victory. Pretty obvious, yes, but propaganda works on a more subtle level. The poster is trying to get readers to do something based on some assumptions that it communicates: "because Cap is on our side and leading the charge, of course the US

will the battle, so come be a part of the winning team."

Contrarily, propaganda can be used to condemn something deemed undesirable just as well as it can be used to promote or praise. The poster to the right is an example of such propaganda. It pictures a shady figure in black with a dastardly grin who seems to be skulking away; its words imply that the man is a secret Communist trying to infiltrate a capitalist state. Just as Napoleon makes the farm animals paranoid of Snowball by telling them that Snowball is trying to destroy Animal Farm and was working with Jones, this poster is meant to spread fear of a hidden enemy. It's purpose is probably the same: to make it so people can reasonably blame their problems on something else, and to make it seem like the good guys are fighting a malicious foe who would otherwise destroy everything...or something like that.



Quote Journal:

As you read, keep track of one significant quote from each chapter. These quotes can consist of important plot events, reveal essential aspects of character, explore an important theme* (a topic that pervades a text or an important message conveyed), foreshadow future events, etc. After you record the quote, elaborate on the context, and then explain why you feel the quote is significant.

*Possible themes:

- ★ Oppression
- ★ Revolution and rebellion
- ★ Class warfare
- ★ Language as a form of power and manipulation
- ★ Abuse of power
- ★ Tyranny and control

Quote + page number	Context (the set of circumstances or facts that surround a particular event, situation, etc.)	Explanation of significance Theme, character, plot, literary techniques (foreshadowing, symbolism)
EXAMPLE: Chapter 1 "The life of an animal is misery and slavery: that is the plain truth. But is this simply part of the order of nature? Is it because this land of ours is so poor that it cannot afford a decent life to those who dwell up on it? No, comrades, a thousand times no!" (page 7)	Old Major has gathered the animals of Mr. Jones's farm for a meeting. He is speaking to the animals about his dream.	Old Major is expressing his frustration about the life of animals and the misery animals across England feel as a result of the oppression they live under. He is laying the groundwork for a new way of thinking and leading the animals to realize they don't have to accept their current situation; this strong and persuasive use of language galvanizes the other animals to rebel.
Chapter 1		
Chapter 2		
Chapter 3		

Quote	Context	Explanation of significance
Chapter 4		
Chapter 5		
Chapter 6		
Chapter 7		
Chapter 8		
Chapter 9		
Chapter 10		

