



Education activities

BASED ON STATE THEATRE COMPANY'S PRODUCTION OF *ANIMAL FARM*

DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN RESPONSE

"A people that elect corrupt politicians, imposters, thieves and traitors are not victims... but accomplices." - George Orwell

"The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history." - George Orwell

Choose one of the above quotes from author George Orwell. As a group, pair or in writing, discuss how the chosen quote aligns with the story and characters of *Animal Farm*. Draw on specific examples from the text or play to strengthen your argument.

WRITTEN RESPONSE

Write a review of State Theatre Company's production of *Animal Farm*. For guidelines on how to write a review, see our Review Writing resource linked in the *Animal Farm* drop-down menu at statetheatrecompany.com.au/education-program

WRITTEN RESPONSE

What were the central themes of *Animal Farm*? Identify one or two themes (e.g. power, corruption, leadership, equality, control, etc.) and explain how and where they were used in the story. Use specific examples.

DISCUSSION OR WRITTEN RESPONSE

How do the themes of *Animal Farm* relate to the world we live in today? Connect an issue we face today with an issue discussed in the play/book. For example:

- Bullying and peer pressure -- behaviour of the pigs and response of the animals
- "Fake news", politics and ideas about truth, particularly in the media -- Squealer's persuasive speeches, rule changes and how these are communicated to the other animals

STUDENT SCHOOL ACTIVITY OR WRITTEN RESPONSE

In a group or individually, imagine that the teachers at your school have been overthrown by a group of students, supported by all students at the school. You are one of the leaders of the group who organised the rebellion. How do you run the school?

Keeping in mind what you have learned from *Animal Farm*, think about and answer the following questions:

RULES & DISCIPLINE

- What rules or commandments will you enforce at the school? What if you need to change these at a later date?
- How will you keep order with teachers gone?
- How will you ensure students continue to attend classes and learn?
- What will you do with students who do not follow the rules?

LEADERSHIP

Are you going to have leaders in your school after overthrowing the teachers?

If yes:

- How will you decide who takes on leadership roles?
- Will leaders be given any benefits that regular students are not given?
- What leadership positions do you think need to be filled? What name will you give you leaders?
- How will leaders deal with any complaints?

If no:

- How will decisions be made?
- Will you create rules? How?
- How will rules be enforced?
- How will you ensure students continue to participate in student life?

LOGISTICS

- How can you make more money at the school? How might you save money?
- How might you attract new students?
- Where will your students live? At the school or elsewhere?
- How will you convince outsiders to accept your student-run school? What will you do if they try to destroy the school or force you to accept adult teachers?
- What, if any, school tasks will you get rid of? Think about classes, lunch and recess breaks, etc.

Remember to include reasons for all of your answers, drawing on the events and characters of *Animal Farm* to support your points.



ACTIVITY

Pick one or two characters from *Animal Farm*. What are the key differences between the chosen character(s) and the other characters in the story? How might they be similar to other characters?

List their physical features, their emotions and what they are aiming for in the story. Think about how they might talk and what body parts they might emphasise most (e.g. a jutting jaw, a strong stride, hunched shoulders, etc.).

Choose a particular event in the story. For example, overthrowing Mr Jones or the Battle of the Cowshed. Write a diary entry from the point of view of your chosen character(s) as they reflect on this event.

Perform the diary entry as a monologue. Remember to keep the list of their physical features, emotions and other characteristics in mind in your performance.

ACTIVITY

The design for State Theatre Company's production of *Animal Farm* is mostly abstract, rather than drawing on the setting of the original book.

Choose a type of design to focus on - set, costume, lighting or sound. Think about what sort of design you might choose. Would it reflect design elements that could be found on a farm? Would you give it a different real life setting, like a cafe, a school or a business? Would you choose something abstract, and what would this be like?

Create a mood board for your design - focus on a particular scene if that is helpful. For set, costume and lighting design, find or draw images and diagrams related to your vision. For sound design, find sounds or songs to create the feel you are looking for.

Explain why you have made these choices and how your design connects with the story of *Animal Farm*.