After Old Major had finished his speech, this moment there was a tremendous uproar [See Note 1]. While he was speaking four large rats had crept out of their holes and were sitting on their hindquarters [See Note 2], listening to him. The dogs had suddenly caught sight of them and it was only by a swift dash for their holes that the rats saved their lives. Old Major raised his trotter for silence.

“Comrades,” he said, “here is a point that must be settled. The wild creatures, such as rats and rabbits—are they our friends or our enemies? Let us put it to the vote. I propose this question to the meeting: Are rats comrades?”

The vote was taken at once, and it was agreed by an overwhelming [See Note 3] majority that rats were comrades. There were only four dissentients, the three dogs and the cat, who was afterwards discovered to have voted on both sides.

Old Major continued: “I have little more to say. I merely repeat, remember always your duty of enmity [See Note 4] towards Man and all his ways. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.

“And remember also that in fighting against Man, we must not come to resemble [be compared to] him. Even when you have conquered [win the battle] him, do not adopt his vices [immoral or evil habits]. No animal must ever live in a house, or sleep in a bed, or wear clothes, or drink alcohol, or smoke tobacco, or touch money, or engage in trade. All the habits of Man are evil.

“And, above all, no animal must ever tyrannise [abuse of authority or power] over his own kind. Weak or strong, clever or simple, we are all brothers. No animal must ever kill any other animal. All animals are equal.
“And now, comrades, I will tell you about my dream of last night. I cannot describe that dream to you. It was a dream of the earth as it will be when Man has vanished. But it reminded me of something that I had long forgotten.

“Many years ago, when I was a little pig, my mother and the other sows [female pigs] used to sing an old song of which they knew only the tune and the first three words. I had known that tune in my infancy [very young], but it had long since passed out of my mind. Last night, however, it came back to me in my dream.

“I am certain they were sung by the animals of long ago and have been lost to memory for generations. I will sing you that song now, comrades. I am old and my voice is hoarse [weakness in speech], but when I have taught you the tune, you can sing it better for yourselves. It is called ‘Beasts of England’.”

Old Major cleared his throat and began to sing. As he had said, his voice was hoarse, but he sang well enough, and it was a stirring [exciting or thrilling] tune. The words ran:

Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland, Beasts of every land and clime [climate], Hearken to [hear] my joyful tidings [happy news] Of the golden future time [successful future]. Soon or late the day is coming,

Note 1: To lurch is the act of staggering, or awkwardly swaying from side to side when drunk.

Note 2: A lantern has a portable transparent case to protect the flame light and was used before electricity for light.

Note 3: Stirring is lively movement. Fluttering is to flap a bird’s wings rapidly.

Note 4: A platform is a raised area above the level of the barn floor.

Note 5: A piece of wood used to support the structure of the barn.

Note 6: A horse’s height is measured in hands.

Note 7: A compartment in a stable, shed or barn.

Note 8: Repetitive tasks that requiring a lot of work.
Tyrant Man shall be overthrown,
And the fruitful fields of England
Shall be trod [walked over] by beasts alone.

Rings shall vanish [be removed] from our noses,
And the harness [straps on a animal] from our back,
Bit and spur [See Note 5] shall rust forever,
Cruel whips [to beat with a strap] no more shall crack.

Riches more than mind can picture,
Wheat and barley, oats and hay [grains of cereal],
Clover, beans, and mangel-wurzels [food for livestock]
Shall be ours upon that day.

Bright will shine the fields of England,
Purer shall its waters be,
Sweeter yet shall blow its breezes
On the day that sets us free.

For that day we all must labour,
Though we die before it break;
Cows and horses, geese and turkeys,
All must toil [work hard] for freedom’s sake.

Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland,
Beasts of every land and clime,
Hearken well and spread my tidings
Of the golden future time.

The singing of this song threw the animals into the
wildest excitement. Almost before Major had reached
the end, they had begun singing it for themselves.
Even the stupidest of them had already picked up the
tune and a few of the words, and as for the clever
ones, such as the pigs and dogs, they had the entire
song by heart [remembered without having it written
down] within a few minutes.

And then, after a few preliminary [to introduce
something] tries, the whole farm burst out into ‘Beasts
of England’ in tremendous unison [sang together]. The
cows lowed it, the dogs whined it, the sheep
bleated it, the horses whinnied it, the ducks quacked

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**lesson analysis**

**ANIMALISM**

When Old Major dies three
nights after the meeting, the
more intelligent animals begin
to approach life differently. They
now anticipate the Rebellion.

The pigs take on the task of
organising and teaching the
other animals because they are
“generally recognised as being
the cleverest of the animals”.

Snowball, Napoleon and
Squealer will take charge
and they have expanded
Old Major’s concept into a
“complete system of thought”
called Animalism.

They hold frequent meetings
in the big barn to espouse the
views of Animalism to the other
farm animals.

At first, the animals are not
convinced that they should
follow Animalism. Some feel
loyalty to Mr. Jones. Not being
very intelligent, Clover and
Boxer (the horses) memorise
simple pro-Animalism
arguments that they pass on to
the others.
They were so delighted with the song that they sang it right through five times in succession [five times without stopping], and might have continued singing it all night if they had not been interrupted.

Unfortunately, the uproar awoke Mr. Jones, who sprang out of bed, making sure that there was a fox in the yard. He seized [picked up abruptly] the gun which always stood in a corner of his bedroom, and let fly a charge [shot the gun] of number 6 shot into the darkness.

The pellets [like bullets but softer, used with a shotgun] buried themselves in the wall of the barn and the meeting broke up hurriedly. Everyone fled to their own sleeping places. The birds jumped on to their perches, the animals settled down in the straw, and the whole farm was asleep in a moment.

Three nights later old Major died peacefully in his sleep. His body was buried at the foot of the orchard [where apples are grown]. During the next three months there was much secret activity. Old Major’s speech had given to the more intelligent animals on the farm a completely new outlook on life.

They did not know when the Rebellion predicted by Old Major would take place, they had no reason for
thinking that it would be within their own lifetime, but they saw clearly that it was their duty to prepare for it. The work of teaching and organising the others fell naturally upon the pigs, who were generally recognised as being the cleverest of the animals.

Pre-eminent among the pigs were two young boars [same as a pig but wilder] named Snowball and Napoleon, whom Mr. Jones was breeding up for sale. Napoleon was a large, rather fierce-looking boar. He was not much of a talker, but had a reputation for getting his own way. Snowball was a more vivacious pig than Napoleon, quicker in speech and more inventive, but was not considered to have the same depth of character.

All the other male pigs on the farm were porkers [pigs that were being fattened for their meat to be sold]. The best known among them was a small fat pig named Squealer, with very round cheeks, twinkling eyes, nimble movements, and a shrill voice. He was a brilliant talker, and when he was arguing some difficult point he had a way of skipping from side to side and whisking his tail which was somehow very persuasive. The others said of Squealer that he could turn black into white.”

These three had worked out with great care Old Major’s teachings into a complete system of thought, to which they gave the name of Animalism. Several nights a week, after Mr. Jones was asleep, they held secret meetings in the barn and expounded [detailed in statements] the principles of Animalism to the others.

At the beginning they met with much stupidity and apathy [without passion or emotion]. Some of the animals talked of the duty of loyalty to Mr. Jones, whom they referred to as “Master”, or made elementary [simple] remarks such as “Mr. Jones feeds us. If he were gone, we should starve to death.” Others asked such questions as “Why should we care what happens after we are dead?”

• Lesson analysis

NAPOLEON

While Mr. Jones’ tyranny can be somewhat excused due to the fact that he is a dull-witted drunkard, Napoleon’s can only be ascribed to his blatant lust for power.

The very first description of Napoleon presents him as a “fierce-looking” boar “with a reputation for getting his own way.”

His method of “getting his own way” will involve a combination of propaganda and terror that none of the animals can resist.

As the revolution is won, Napoleon’s first action is to steal the cows’ milk for the pigs. Clearly, the words of Old Major inspired Napoleon not to fight against tyranny, but to seize the opportunity to establish himself as a dictator.

Of the many crimes he will commit against his own comrades, including forced confessions from innocent animals and then having them killed before all the animals’ eyes, he is replacing Mr. Jones with a tyranny of his own.
“If this Rebellion is to happen anyway, what difference does it make whether we work for it or not?”, and the pigs had great difficulty in making them see that this was contrary to the spirit of Animalism [what is meaning and actions regarding the new word].

Their most faithful disciples [followers of the ideas of others] were the two cart-horses, Boxer and Clover. These two had great difficulty in thinking anything out for themselves, but having once accepted the pigs as their teachers, they absorbed [deeply interested in and learnt] everything that they were told, and passed it on to the other animals by simple arguments. They were unfailing in their attendance [never missing] at the secret meetings in the barn, and led the singing of “Beasts of England”, with which the meetings always ended.

Now, as it turned out, the Rebellion was achieved much earlier and more easily than anyone had expected. In past years Mr. Jones, although a hard master, had been a capable farmer, but of late he had fallen on evil days.

He had become much disheartened after losing money in a lawsuit [a case in court], and had taken to drinking more than was good for him. For whole days at a time he would lounge in his chair in the kitchen, reading the newspapers, drinking, and occasionally feeding his raven on crusts of bread soaked in beer.

His men were idle [lazy] and dishonest, the fields were full of weeds [a valueless plant growing wild], the buildings wanted roofing, the hedges were neglected [forgotten about and left to grow without any care and attention], and the animals were underfed.

- **lesson analysis**

**SNOWBALL**

Snowball is the animal most clearly attuned to Old Major’s thinking, and he will devote himself to bettering the animals in intellectual, moral, and physical ways.

He will brings literacy to the farm so that the animals can better grasp the principles of Animalism by reading the Seven Commandments he paints on the barn wall.

He also reduces the Commandments to a single precept (“Four legs good, two legs bad”) so that even the least intelligent animals can understand the farm’s new philosophy.

The “thinker” of the Rebellion, Snowball shows a great understanding of strategy and, while his various committees may fail, he reveals the degree to which he wants to better the animals’ lives.

Eventually, his expulsion at the hands of Napoleon suggests that force—not good intentions for the animals—will govern the farm.
Questions on the story (try and give answers of at least 10 words)

Question 1: “In Beasts of England”, which animals learn the song quickly and who are the smartest animals?

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________________________________________
________________________________________

Question 2: When talking of the Rebellion, some animals were scared as they had been under the “care” of Farmer Jones. How could they survive?

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________________________________________
________________________________________

Question 3: The pigs are recognised as the cleverest of all the animals. What human traits are given to them?

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Question 4: What do you think the idea of Animalism is really all about? Is it a socialist society?

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Question 5: What had become of Mr. Jones and his men after he lost money in court?

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