Name

Class, Period

Animal Farm Expository Essay

**Prompt:** In the novel Animal Farm, how does George Orwell communicate the conditions of Communist Russia to his readers?

**The Beasts of England**

According to George Orwell, animal and man aren’t that different. Orwell’s novel Animal Farm is an allegory. An allegory is a symbolic representation of real life events or people. The author uses animals to represent real people during Communist Russia. Animals such as Napoleon, Snowball, and Boxer are meant to represent people or groups like Joseph Stalin, Leon Trotsky, and the working class. The author does a brilliant job of depicting historic figures and events by using animals on a very chaotic farm setting. Orwell communicates the conditions of Communist Russia by making his story an allegory and using the animals and their situation to represent the political, social, and economic conditions of Russia during that time.

The situation involving Mr. Jones and the animals on the farm is very similar to an event in Russian history. The animals on the farm overthrow Mr. Jones just as Vladimir Lenin led the Bolsheviks to overthrow Czar Nicholas II. The novel states, “Jones and his men suddenly found themselves being butted and kicked from all sides. The situation was quite out of their control (page 19).” Although Czar Nicholas II was overthrown by the Bolsheviks, he wasn’t expecting it, and it came out of nowhere. Karl-Marx—who is portrayed by Old Major in the novel—provided the inspiration for the rebellion that took place in Russia. He gave people hope for a better society—one that would be entirely equal—that would allow for a better life. This is partly what spawned the rebellion by Lenin, and this is similar to the animal rebellion on the farm. Even though Orwell focuses on the political aspects of Communist Russia in this book, he also shines a light on the social aspects of the society.

The novel gives the reader information about Russia’s social impact by focusing on Joseph Stalin’s actions. Joseph Stalin ruled Russia by employing fear and intimidation, so it’s only appropriate to have him represented by a power-hungry pig. In the text it states, “But suddenly the dogs sitting round Napoleon let out deep menacing growls, and the pigs fell silent and sat down again (page 54).” The tactic of fear suppresses people who can potentially speak out. Even though some of the animals on the farm are articulate, they refrain from speaking out, and they lose what little power they have. Joseph Stalin was known for silencing his critics, opponents, and those who questioned him, and this is exactly what Napoleon begins to do. Since Joseph Stalin ruled by fear, this ultimately impacted the economic conditions for the citizens of Russia.

Russia’s economic conditions—namely those involving food shortages—are also represented in the book. At the start of practicing Animalism, the animals on the farm begin to have a surplus of food, but the food becomes scarce when Napoleon’s grip on power tightens. The author writes, “In January food fell short. The corn ration was drastically reduced, and it was announced that an extra potato ration would be issued to make up for it […] For days at a time, the animals had nothing to eat but chaff and mangels. Starvation seemed to stare them in the face (page 74).” This scenario is very similar to Russia’s conditions under Communist rule. While Joseph Stalin increased production, he is also responsible for causing one of the largest famines in history. The author points this specific detail out in the book to illustrate the adverse impact that Stalin’s increase in production had on the economy. Even though the production was increased nationwide in Russia, people were still starving to death, and Stalin made no attempt to assist his citizens much in the same way Napoleon didn’t help the other animals.

Orwell’s allegory Animal Farm depicts the political, social, and economic conditions of Communist Russia. George Orwell gives attention to Russia’s turn of political power from Czar Nicholas II. Napoleon and the other animals overthrow the farm’s owner, Mr. Jones, and assume control of the farm. After the farm is in control of the animals, Napoleon begins to gradually increase his role as leader, and this eventually leads him to being a tyrant. Joseph Stalin’s intentions for Russia might have begun well, but he ultimately turned into a dictator. As a result of his dictatorship, Russia’s economy nearly collapsed. Despite how hard the animals worked on the farm, they still were not acquiring food for themselves like the citizens under Stalin’s rule. The novel Animal Farm properly illustrates the conditions Russian citizens faced under Stalin’s Communist Rule.

**Word Count: 755**

**Check List**