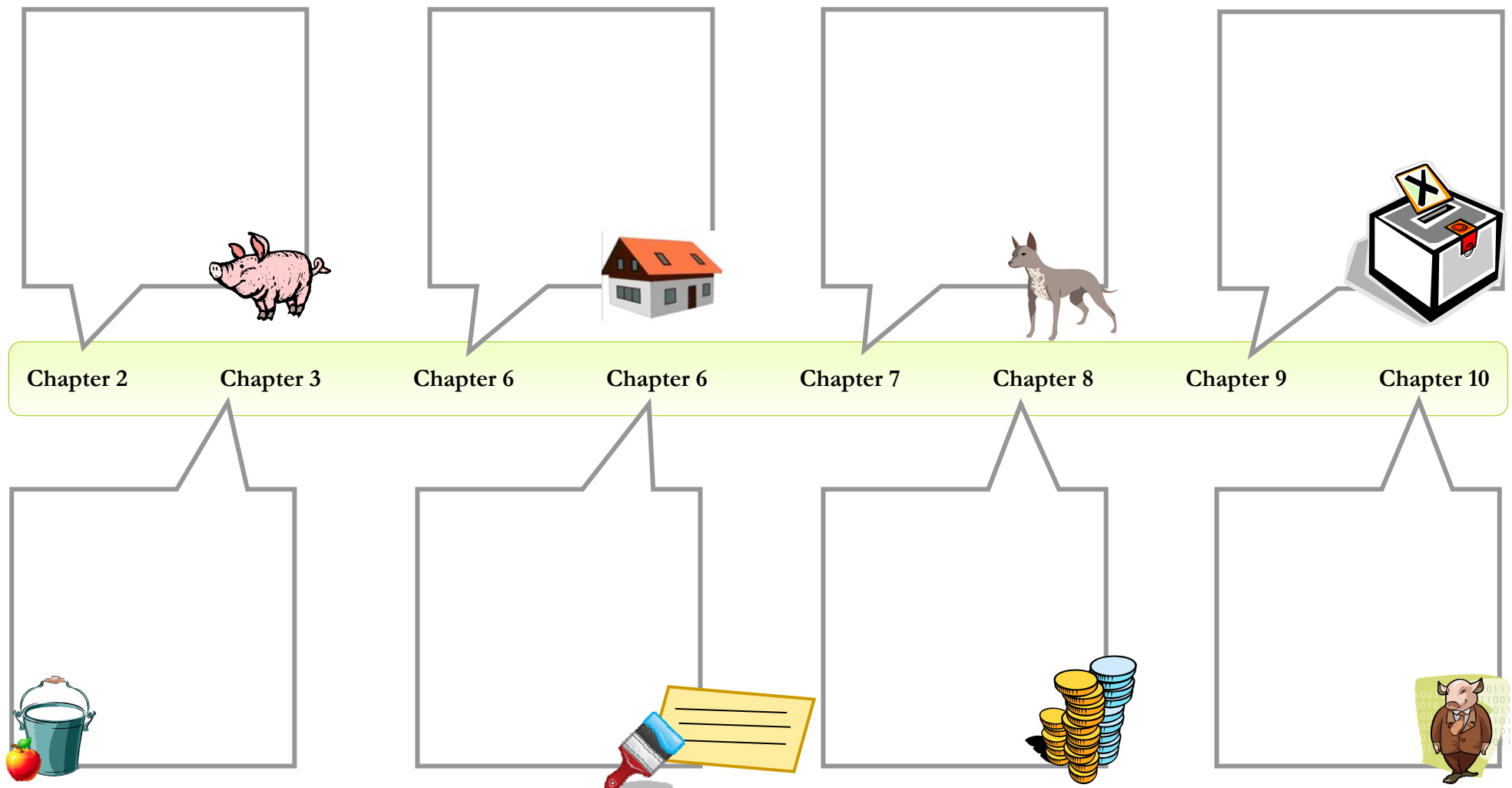


Theme: corruption of ideals

# Timeline: the pigs' rise to power



## How to use the timeline

The theme of getting and keeping power is the main idea in *Animal Farm*. The timeline of events should help you to see how this happens.

In each box write a description of a particular stage in the pigs' rise to domination of the farm. The pictures should give you a clue. The questions below should also help you to complete the timeline boxes, but do write the events in your own words.

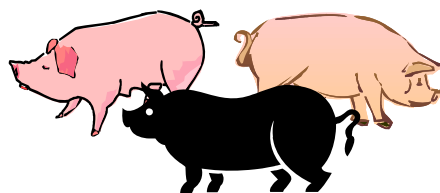
- Who was responsible for teaching and organising the other animals? Why? (Chapter 2)
- What happened to the milk that disappeared and to the apples from the orchard? (Chapter 3)
- Who moved into the farmhouse, unexpectedly? Why did this upset the other animals? (Chapter 6)
- What happened to the seven commandments at this point, and at intervals afterwards? Why? (Chapter 6)
- What happened to the four young pigs who protested about the Sunday meetings being banned? What did they confess to and why? (Chapter 7)
- Why did Napoleon start negotiations with his human neighbours? How did he go about this? (Chapter 8)
- What change of status did Animal Farm undergo by decree of Napoleon? What position did he take in this new state? (Chapter 9)
- What changes happen at the end of the book to make the pigs the same as their human neighbours? (Chapter 10)

If you prefer, you could work in groups to draw the timeline on a large piece of sugar paper or display paper. You could add pictures of your own and you could add other events if you wish, such as the expulsion of Snowball, the banning of debates and of 'Beasts of England', the pigs' use of alcohol and the betrayal of Boxer. These could then be displayed on the walls of your classroom for reference and discussion.

Theme: leaders and followers

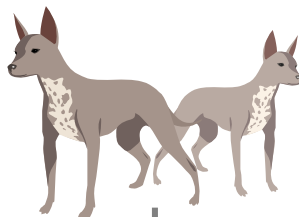
## The hierarchy

The government or the intelligentsia (brain workers)  
represented by the pigs



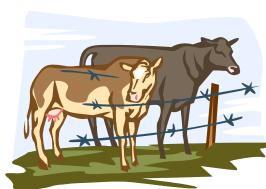
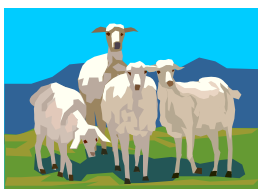
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The police and army who enforce the will of the government  
represented by the dogs



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The workers who make things and keep the state running  
represented by the other animals



At first the animals work together under the commandments which declare 'All animals are equal'. They are united against a common enemy – man.

Consider how you would classify the different groups of animals. Are they all blind followers of Napoleon or do some of them try to think for themselves? What happens to those who rebel against the 'government' of the pigs?

Unquestioning followers	Animals who rebel	Others

Put the following characters into one of the three boxes:

- |                       |                  |                 |                 |                |              |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| <b>Clover</b>         | <b>Muriel</b>    | <b>Moses</b>    | <b>Benjamin</b> | <b>Molly</b>   | <b>Boxer</b> |
| <b>the young pigs</b> | <b>the sheep</b> | <b>the hens</b> | <b>the cows</b> | <b>the cat</b> |              |

Give your reasons for including them in a particular category.

## All themes are equal ...

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**Theme:** manipulation of language

One of Orwell's main themes, both in *Animal Farm* and *1984*, is the way those in power use and corrupt language in order to keep others subservient.

Old Major uses rhetoric and idealism to propose his vision of freedom and equality for all the animals. The pigs then turn this into a coherent philosophy which they call 'Animalism'. They then reduce this to a set of seven commandments which are easily understood and remembered and then further to a 'slogan' – 'Four legs good, two legs bad'.

### Work in pairs and tackle the following bullet points:

- Find quotations that show how the pigs used Old Major's speech to create the seven commandments.
- Which parts of Old Major's speech are not included? Write another three commandments that you think should have been part of 'Animalism.'
- What problems are created for the animals (other than the pigs) by not including these other ideas in the list of commandments?

### Now answer the following questions as fully as you can:

- What happens to the seven commandments as the pigs become more powerful? Why?
- What happens to the commandment 'All animals are equal'? Why?
- What does the slogan 'Four legs good, two legs bad' turn into towards the end of the novel? Why?



## All themes are equal ...

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One of the ways in which the pigs control the other animals is by convincing them that things are getting better all the time. They use pseudo-science and statistics to support their assertions. Squealer is especially good at this. He is rather like the Soviet newspaper, *Pravda*, a name which, ironically, means 'truth'. This newspaper published articles sanctioned by the Stalinist government about grand Soviet projects (the equivalent of the building of the windmill) and production reports and statistics showing how much better off everyone was under the communist state.

## Activity

**Work in pairs or small groups to produce an 'Animal Farm' version of *Pravda*. You should include the following:**

- a headline and sub-heading about the building of the windmill as a great undertaking
- pictures of Napoleon studying the plans and an artist's impression of the finished windmill
- a motivational article by Comrade Napoleon urging everyone to complete it as soon as possible
- an editorial praising Napoleon's foresight and saying how grateful the farm is for his leadership etc.
- possibly a cartoon satirising Snowball as a thief and traitor
- some invented interviews with various 'workers' saying what an honour it is to work for the glory of Napoleon and the farm etc.

**You should use Squealer's speeches to source information for your journal, especially those in:**

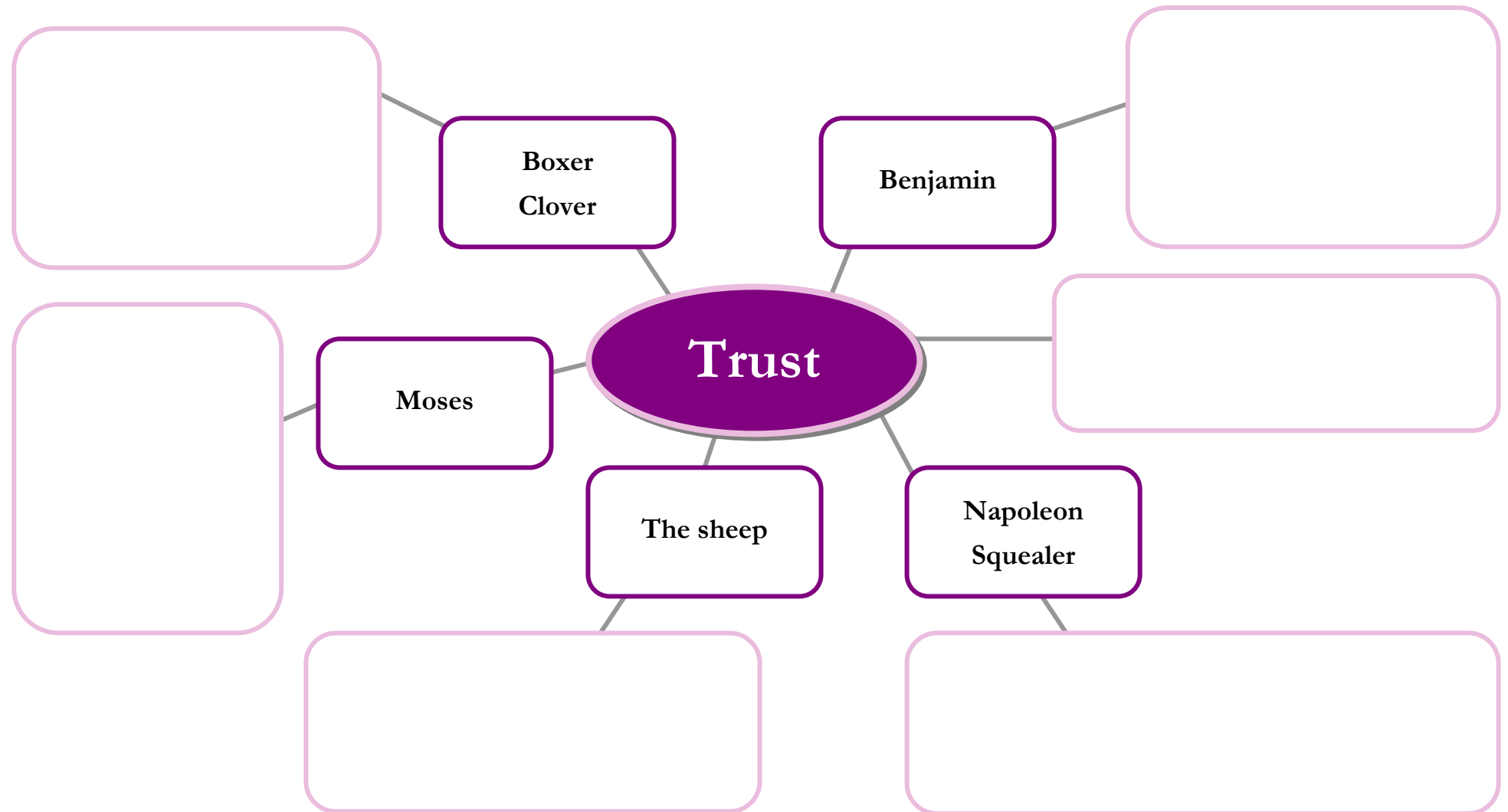
- Chapter 3 – where he explains why the milk and apples should belong to the pigs
- Chapter 5 – following Snowball's expulsion and the banning of debates; then explaining how the windmill was really Napoleon's idea
- Chapter 6 – where he explains about the decision to trade with humans; also where he explains why the pigs are now living in the farmhouse and sleeping in the beds
- Chapter 7 – where he convinces the animals that Snowball is behind all the misfortunes at the farm; then where he explains the banning of 'Beasts of England'.
- Chapter 8 – where he reads the production figures as part of the 'spontaneous demonstration' each week
- Chapter 9 – where he tries to explain away Boxer's departure
- Chapter 10 – where he tells the animals how hard the pigs work.

You can find more information about the original newspaper here:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pravda>

**Theme: trust**

Work in pairs to complete the spider diagram below relating to the theme of trust in the novel. You should think about the difference in educational levels of the animals and why they might want – or be forced to – trust the pigs. Add extra boxes if you wish.



**Theme:** religion and belief

The idea of religion in the novel is represented by Moses the raven, with his talk of Sugarcandy Mountain – a paradise that the animals will go to after death. Karl Marx referred to religion as ‘the opium of the masses’. By this he meant the way in which promises that the poor would go to heaven after death, if they were obedient during their lives, was a way of repressing dissent and revolution. Moses begins as an agent of Jones, but, after an absence of several years, he returns as an agent of the pigs.

Old Major’s speech is also about a future paradise, but one on earth, where equality and fairness would prevail and, in Karl Marx’s words, ‘the workers would own the means of production’. This is what happens just after Jones is expelled from the farm, but it is very short-lived.

## Activity

**You are going to make notes for a speech based on religion and belief as shown in *Animal Farm*. You will need to include the following:**

- why the animals should not believe Moses and his promises about Sugarcandy Mountain
- how Old Major’s dream fails to work because of the greed of some animals and the passive stupidity of others
- what you consider to be Orwell’s purpose in presenting these ideas
- your own opinion of what would make a society fit to live in.

Your speech should last approximately five or ten minutes.

**You should make it as persuasive as you can, remembering to include rhetorical features such as:**

- tripling (the rule of three)
- anecdotes (short stories that illustrate your point) – these can be taken from the book
- inclusion (the use of ‘we’, ‘us’, ‘our’ etc.)
- compare and contrast
- the idea of setting up your opponents’ views and then knocking them down.

You could watch the series of videos on Youtube at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVb\\_RoxEepA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVb_RoxEepA) which have useful advice on how to make a speech.