

Characters

Napoleon



What we know about Napoleon

- Napoleon is a large, boar who becomes the ruler of Animal Farm.
- He is Snowball's power-hungry rival.
- He uses violence and his army of dogs to control the other animals.
- He uses propaganda (Squealer) and changes the commandments to persuade and bully the animals into following his leadership.
- Napoleon is greedy. He sees financial potential in the windmill project. Orwell shows that there will always be those in positions of power who exploit the labour of others.
- Eventually, he becomes so similar to the human farmers it is impossible to tell them apart.
- Named after one of Europe's most famous revolutionaries, Napoleon turns a popular uprising into a dictatorship.
- If we take *Animal Farm* as an allegory of the Russian Revolution, Napoleon represents Stalin.

Napoleon helps to plan and deliver the Rebellion

In Chapter 2, Napoleon works with Snowball and Squealer to translate old Major's vision into Animalism. After the Battle of the Cowshed, Napoleon takes on the role of provider and hands out food to the animals. This makes him seem like a fair leader, but is he manipulating the animals?

Here are two students writing about Napoleon at the start of *Animal Farm*.

Student answer A

Orwell presents Napoleon as a strong but fair leader to begin with. He works well with Snowball and it is clear that he wants the farm to succeed. He is also considerate as he feeds the animals immediately after the battle 'double rations of corn to everybody'. Together, Snowball and Napoleon 'battered the door' of the farmhouse open, which shows they work together to lead the other animals. Napoleon is a confident leader who gives clear orders: 'Forward, comrades! The harvest is waiting', which shows he understands the importance of strong direction. This ensures the animals feel secure and guided in their actions.