

# Animals, Unite!

**Grade Level:** 8th grade

**Presented by:** Tonya Anderson, language arts, Susan Kallan, Marsha Yoder, Lakeland Middle Academy, Lakeland, FL

**Length of Unit:** Approximately 3 weeks

## I. ABSTRACT

An exciting way to teach *Animal Farm* to 8th graders while integrating language arts and social studies in the *Core Knowledge Sequence*. Students will address the elements of literature in addition to learning the stages of revolutions as applied to the novel and to historical events.

## II. OVERVIEW

### A. Concept Objectives

1. Students will gain an understanding of the stages of revolution.
2. Students will apply the stages of revolution to *Animal Farm*.
3. Students will gain an understanding of various Core Knowledge literary elements.
4. Students will apply the stages of revolution to various historical and contemporary world events.

### B. Core Knowledge Sequence Content

1. *Animal Farm*
2. Expository writing
3. Elements of fiction
4. Literary term: irony
5. Review of Russian Revolution (7th grade Core Knowledge)
6. Break-up of the USSR

### C. Specific Skills

1. Defining vocabulary (language arts and social studies terms)
2. Identifying the stages of revolution
3. Comparing the novel to various genres of literature (i.e. fables, fairy tales, science fiction)
4. Identifying examples of symbolism
5. Creating a map of the farm.
6. Developing a timeline of significant events in the novel
7. Participating civilly and productively in cooperative learning groups
8. Creating a character sketch.

## III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

### A. Teachers

1. *Contemporary Classics: Animal Farm*, Perfection Learning Corporation, Logan, Iowa, 1990.
2. James, Jennieve. *A Teaching Portfolio: Animal Farm*. Cliffs Notes, Inc., Lincoln, Nebraska, 1989.

3. "The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union" a teacher-created interactive unit from the *History Alive* series. Teachers' Curriculum Institute, P.O. 50996, Palo Alto, California 94040 Phone: 1-800-497-6138 Fax: 1-650-856-0199.

B. Students

1. American Revolution - 1st and 4th grades
2. French Revolution - 6th grade
3. Russian Revolution - 7th grade
4. Aesop's Fables and Fairy Tales - grades K-5
5. "Shooting an Elephant" George Orwell essay - grade 7

**IV. RESOURCES**

A. Books

1. *Alternative Assessment: Animal Farm*, Perfection Learning Corporation, Logan, Iowa, 1990.
2. *Animal Farm*, an Alternative Assessment Guide. Perfection Learning Corporation, Logan, Iowa, 1996.
3. *Yertle the Turtle*, Dr. Seuss.

B. Video Tapes

*Animal Farm*, video. 72 minutes. VIDEO YESTERYEAR, Box C, Sandy Hook, CN 06482.

**V. LESSONS: Language Arts**

NOTE: Several of the Sunshine State Standards are used throughout the entire unit often through study questions or class discussions: LA.A.1.3.2, LA.A.1.3.3, LA.A.2.3.4, LA.A.2.3.1, LA.B.2.3.1, LA.C.3.3.2, LA.E. 1.3.5.

**A. Lesson One: Introduce Fables**

1. Objectives: Students will be able to comprehend and identify characteristics of fables and the characteristics of the animals in the stories.
2. Materials: *Aesop's Fables*, chart paper, markers, copies of the vocabulary
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Prior to beginning the lesson on fables, teacher distributes a copy of the vocabulary sheet and instructs students to begin defining a few words each day.
  - b. Teacher reads several fables to the class.
  - c. Class discusses characteristics common to fables (animals have human traits, each fable has a moral, etc.)
  - d. Teacher divides students into groups, gives each group chart paper and markers, and assigns each group an animal. Students draw a sketch of the group's animal and jot down words and phrases associated with the animal.
  - e. Students post their pictures and explain their words and phrases.
  - f. Class discusses how *Animal Farm* might be considered a fable.
  - g. Homework: Students write a fable of their own including the characteristics discussed in class. Students will define a few vocabulary words.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student products, discussion
5. Sunshine State Standard Links: LA.B.1.3.1, LA.B.1.3.2, LA.B.1.3.3, LA.B.2.3.3, LA.C.2.3.1, LA.D.2.3.3., LA.A.1.3.2

**B. Lesson Two: Introduce *Animal Farm***

1. Objectives:

- a. Students will learn about the author and his background.
- b. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the author's style and purpose.
- c. Students will develop an understanding of satire.
- d. Students will begin reading the novel.
2. Materials: *Animal Farm* novel for each student, definition and example of satire (*Bunnacula* by Deborah and James Howe)
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Teacher introduces the author, sharing some of his experiences.
  - b. Class discusses how these experiences might affect a person and how they affected George Orwell in particular.
  - c. Teacher defines satire and reads an example.
  - d. Class compares and contrasts fables and satire.
  - e. Class discusses the satire in *Animal Farm*, the plot summary and the intended message of the novel.
  - f. Homework: Students read chapter one, completing study questions as they read. Students need to continue to define the vocabulary.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Discussion
5. Sunshine State Standard Links: LA.A.2.3.2, LA.B.2.3.1, LA.D.1.3.2, LA.E.1.3.1, LA.E.2.3.4, LA.A.1.3.2

### **C. Lesson Three: Chapter One**

1. Objectives:
  - a. Students will develop an understanding of literary elements: setting, conflict, characterization, plot.
  - b. Students will comprehend *utopia*.
  - c. Students will make predictions about the events in the novel.
2. Materials: *Animal Farm* novel for each student, personality chart, definition of utopia
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Review chapter one.
  - b. Class discusses the main characters, the setting, the conflict, and the events.
  - c. Teacher distributes chart of personality types. Students designate each of the main characters as one of the four personality types, noting page references that support their ideas.
  - d. Students share their responses with the class.
  - e. Teacher defines *utopia*. Students discuss their own ideas of what elements constitute a *utopia*.
  - f. Students predict how the animal's way of life will change throughout the novel.
  - g. Teacher assigns timeline project: Students should work on the rough draft of this as they read the novel. The timeline should contain the major events of the novel in chronological order.
  - h. Homework: Students read chapter two, completing study questions as they read. Students continue to define the vocabulary.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Discussion
5. Sunshine State Standard Links: LA.A.1.3.1, LA.A.1.3.2

### **D. Lesson Four: Cooperative Learning Activity - Commandments for Education**

1. Objectives: Students will work with others to develop their own commandments regarding the education system.

2. Materials: *Animal Farm* novel for each student, chart paper, markers
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Review chapter two.
  - b. Teacher places students in cooperative learning groups.
  - c. Each group develops a name and their own commandments regarding the education system. These commandments should be modeled after the ones in the novel.
  - d. Teacher distributes chart paper and markers so students can illustrate and display their work.
  - e. Students present their commandments to the class, answering questions and offering explanations when needed.
  - f. Homework: Students read chapter three, completing study questions as they read.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, discussion
5. Sunshine State Standard Links: LA.C.3.3.3, LA.E.2.3.2, LA.A.1.3.2

#### **E. Lesson Five: Chapter Three**

1. Objectives:
  - a. Students will develop an understanding of manipulation and propaganda techniques.
  - b. Students will identify examples of manipulation and propaganda in the novel.
2. Materials: *Animal Farm* novel for each student, notes on manipulation/propaganda
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Review chapter three.
  - b. Teacher places students in seven cooperative learning groups.
  - c. Teacher gives each group a particular manipulation method (see notes) and the same scenario: All eighth graders in the school can drink Pepsi with lunch but *all* students are required to drink Pepsi; if one person does not, then none of the eighth graders will be given this privilege.
  - d. Students use the assigned "manipulation style" to coerce the group members into agreeing to drink Pepsi.
  - e. Students role play the "manipulation styles" in their groups for the whole class.
  - f. Students take notes about the various techniques presented.
  - g. Students discuss which techniques the animals used in chapter three and evaluate the results. Students also use the personality chart from Lesson Three to predict which characters would be likely to use some of these methods.
  - h. Homework: Students read chapters four and five, completing study questions as they read. Students continue to define vocabulary.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, observation
5. Sunshine State Standard Links: LA.A.2.3.3, LA.C.1.3.3, LA.C.2.3.2, LA.C.3.3.1, LA.C.3.3.3, LA.A.1.3.2

#### **F. Lesson Six: Chapters Four and Five**

1. Objectives: Students will understand the use of propaganda in the novel.
2. Materials: *Animal Farm* novel for each student, notes on propaganda, Squealer's speech activity sheet
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Review chapters four and five.

- b. Review the definition of propaganda.
  - c. Teacher distributes the propaganda worksheet. Students will read Squealer's speech and identify examples of propaganda techniques used in the speech.
  - d. Homework: Students should study the vocabulary definitions for chapters one through five and be prepared for a quiz.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, observation
  5. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: LA.A.1.3.4, LA.B.2.3.2, LA.A.1.3.2

#### **G. Lesson Seven: Chapter Six**

1. Objectives:
  - a. Students will define selected words from the novel using context clues.
  - b. Students will participate in oral reading.
  - c. Students will understand symbolism.
  - d. Students will identify symbols used in the novel.
2. Materials: *Animal Farm* novel for each student, vocabulary quiz, notes on symbolism
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Students will complete the quiz on the vocabulary for chapters one through five.
  - b. Review chapter five.
  - c. Read orally chapter six and answer study questions.
  - d. Discuss symbolism. Students will brainstorm examples of symbolism found in the novel.
  - e. Homework: Students read chapter seven and complete study questions. Students continue to define vocabulary.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, observation
5. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: LA.A.1.3.3, LA.A.2.3.5, LA.E.1.3.3, LA.A.1.3.2

#### **H. Lesson Eight: Chapter Seven**

1. Objectives:
  - a. Students will connect *Animal Farm* to the Russian Revolution.
  - b. Students will create their own symbols to be used on a group flag.
2. Materials: *Animal Farm* novel for each student, notes on symbolism, construction paper, markers, handout on symbolism
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Review chapter seven.
  - b. Teacher places students in cooperative learning groups.
  - c. Each group completes the handout on symbolism.
  - d. Each group designs a flag with symbols which represent their education system created in lesson four.
  - e. Homework: Students need to update their timeline and character profile sheet. Students continue to define vocabulary.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, observation
5. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: LA.A.2.3.5, LA.D.2.3.5, LA.E.1.3.3, LA.A.1.3.2

#### **I. Lesson Nine: Chapter Eight**

1. Objectives:
  - a. Students will participate in oral reading.

- b. Students will explain symbolism.
- 2. Materials: *Animal Farm* novel for each student, student-made flags
- 3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Students will present their group flags to the class and explain the symbols used.
  - b. Review chapter seven.
  - c. Read chapter eight orally and complete the study questions.
  - d. Homework: Students read chapter nine and complete the study questions. Students continue to define vocabulary.
- 4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, observation
- 5. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: LA.A.1.3.4, LA.B.2.3.2, LA.A.1.3.2

#### **J. Lesson Ten: Chapters Nine and Ten**

- 1. Objectives:
  - a. Students will participate in oral reading and class discussion.
  - b. Students will reflect back to the characteristics of fables and write a moral for *Animal Farm*.
- 2. Materials: *Animal Farm* for each student, notes on fables
- 3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Review chapter nine.
  - b. Students will read chapter ten orally and complete the study questions.
  - c. Class discussion will serve as a wrap up.
  - d. Homework: Students will write a moral for *Animal Farm* similar to the ones discussed in lesson one. They also need to review the vocabulary words for chapters six through ten for a quiz.
- 4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, observation
- 5. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: LA.A.1.3.2

#### **K. Lesson Eleven: Characterization**

- 1. Objectives:
  - a. Students should be able to use context clues in order to define vocabulary words used in *Animal Farm*.
  - b. Students will write a five-paragraph essay following the Florida Writes format.
- 2. Materials: *Animal Farm* for each student, personality profile sheet, writing prompt, vocabulary quiz
- 3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Students will share the morals written for homework and the class will discuss them.
  - b. Students will take a quiz on the vocabulary for chapters six through ten.
  - c. Homework: Students will develop a prewriting and write the rough draft of a five-paragraph essay in which they compare themselves with one of the characters in *Animal Farm*.
- 4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, observation
- 5. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: Florida Writes, LA.B.1.3.1, LA.B.1.3.2

#### **L. Lesson Twelve: Peer Editing**

- 1. Objectives: Students will peer edit the essays on characterization.
- 2. Materials: Prewritings, rough drafts of essays, highlighter, red pen, plot diagram
- 3. Procedures/Activities:

- a. Teacher will assign each student a writing partner.
  - b. Students will peer edit the essays.
  - c. Students will revise the essays and write a final draft.
  - d. Homework: Students will use events from the timeline and complete a plot diagram of *Animal Farm*.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, observation
  5. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: Florida Writes, LA.E.2.3.1, LA.B.1.3.3, LA.B.2.3.3

**M. Lesson Thirteen: Review**

1. Objectives: Students will analyze the plot diagrams.
2. Materials: *Animal Farm* for each student, timeline, plot diagram
3. Procedures/Activities: Students will share the plot diagrams with the class as a review for the test.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Student product, observation
5. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: LA.E.2.3.1

**N. Lesson Fourteen: Unit Test**

1. Objectives: Students will apply the elements of literature as they demonstrate what they have learned in this unit.
2. Materials: Unit Test
3. Procedures/Activities: Students will complete the unit test.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Accurate response to the test questions.
5. Standardized Test/State Test Connections: LA.E.2.3.1, LA.A.2.3.1

**VI. LESSONS: Social Studies**

**A. Lesson One: What Is Revolution?**

1. Objectives: Student will define revolution and be able to give reasons as to why people revolt.
2. Materials: Notebook paper, chalkboard
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Personal Insight. Students will respond individually and in writing to the following prompt:  
Adolescence is a time of change and of developing independence. Sometimes parents and teens disagree. Identify several issues that might cause conflict.
  - b. As a class, list the issues on the board. Discuss. What happens when parents and teens absolutely cannot agree? List possibilities (compromise, teen submits but harbors anger, parents lose authority, teen runs away, violence, etc.)
  - c. Discussion: What happens when nations disagree? What happens when people within a nation disagree? Give examples. How can disagreements be resolved? In the worst case scenario what may occur?
  - d. Whether in the home or on a national or an international level, if things get bad enough, people will revolt. When life becomes so painful and/or intolerable, people will demand change. Give examples.
  - e. Define *revolt* as refusing to submit to authority, refusal to obey rules, customs, government, etc. Define *revolution* as a complete or radical change OR the overthrow of a government or social system, with another taking its place.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Participation in discussion.

5. Sunshine State Standards: SS.A.4.3.3

**B. Lesson Two: Stages of Revolution**

1. Objectives: Students will understand the five stages universal to all revolutions. Students will be able to apply the stages to *Animal Farm*, the Russian Revolution, and the Fall of the Soviet Union.
2. Materials: Charts on the Stages of Revolution, Russia & *Animal Farm*
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. The teacher will introduce the Stages of Revolution using the Russian Revolution as an example. This is an important connection as George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* as a parody of the Russian Revolution. Also, the teacher will be building on prior knowledge of the Russian Revolution from 7th grade.
  - b. The teacher will present the information in the form of whole class lecture and discussion putting a blank chart on the overhead and having students fill in the notes on their own charts. See "Stages of Revolution - Russia Answers."
  - c. Follow the discussion on the Stages of Revolution with the *Animal Farm* chart. (to be completed AFTER reading *Animal Farm*). This time ask students to identify the five stages (on the "steps") and write in the definition IN THEIR OWN WORDS. In pairs, have them analyze the story and pick out the stages of revolution the animals went through and record them on their chart. Have students compare their responses to the "Stages of Revolution - Animal Farm Answers" chart for accuracy.
  - d. As a final application of their knowledge and understanding, students will identify the stages of revolution as they apply to the 1991 Fall of the Soviet Union. This is the portion of the social studies *Core Knowledge Sequence* that should be taught in conjunction with *Animal Farm*. See Resource list for suggested materials and sources of information.
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Accurate completion of charts on the Stages of Revolution, Russia & *Animal Farm*.
5. Sunshine State Standards: SS.A.1.3.3, SS.C.1.3.2

**C. Lesson Three: Map of Animal Farm**

1. Objectives: Student will create a map of *Animal Farm*.
2. Materials: Notes from *Animal Farm* study guide (Language Arts)  
*Animal Farm* video  
Sketches from *Animal Farm* video  
Poster board, markers, etc OR Neighborhood Map Machine
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. As students read the book *Animal Farm*, they will identify places, buildings, and physical features mentioned in each chapter and record in their study guide.
  - b. Each day in social studies, students will watch the portion of the video covered in Language Arts (ex: Chapter 2 is due on Monday, section of video covering Chapter 2 events shown in social studies on Tuesday). As students watch video excerpt, they sketch the layout of the farm.
  - c. Upon completion of the book and video, students will be assigned small groups. In their groups, students will compile a list of items to be included on their map of *Animal Farm*. Students will share individual sketches/perspectives of the farm. As a group, students will create a map of *Animal Farm*. The map could be hand-

drawn on poster board or created electronically using Neighborhood Map Machine.

4. Evaluation/Assessment: Completion of *Animal Farm* map. See "Animal Farm Map Evaluation" rubric for grading criteria.
5. Sunshine State Standards: SS.B.1.3.1, SS.B.1.3.2

#### **B. Lesson Four: Stages of Revolution Culminating Project**

1. Objectives: Students will demonstrate their understanding of the five stages of revolution.  
Students will synthesize their knowledge of the Russian Revolution and the Fall of the Soviet Union to apply the five stages of revolution.  
Students will work cooperatively to complete a project.
2. Materials: Poster board, markers, old magazines to cut from
3. Procedures/Activities:
  - a. Divide the class into five groups.
  - b. Each group will be responsible for creating a visual to illustrate one of the stages of revolution (Group 1 = Preliminary Unrest, Group 2 = Defection of the Intellectuals, etc.).
  - c. Students will work cooperatively to create a visual based on the Culminating Project diagram. They may want to jot their ideas down in the spaces using the diagram as a worksheet.
  - d. Each visual should have the stage printed in the center circle, the definition with an illustration in one quadrant and the application of the stage for *Animal Farm*, the Russian Revolution, and the Fall of the Soviet Union in the remaining three quadrants. All should be illustrated (can be with a drawing, picture from magazine, etc.)
4. Evaluation/Assessment: Completion of the culminating project. See "Stages of Revolution Culminating Project Evaluation" rubric.
5. Sunshine State Standards:SS.A.1.3.3, SS.C.1.3.2

### **VII. CULMINATING ACTIVITY**

- A. See lessons thirteen and fourteen for language arts.
- B. See lesson four for social studies.

### **VIII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS**

- A. Vocabulary (language arts)
- B. Study Questions (language arts)
- C. Personality Profiles (language arts)
- D. Character Traits (language arts)
- E. Symbolism (language arts)
- F. Propaganda (language arts)
- G. Understanding the Plot (language arts)
- H. Stages of Revolution (social studies)
- I. Map Evaluation Rubric (social studies)
- J. Stages of Revolution Culminating Activity (social studies)
- K. Stages of Revolution Culminating Activity Rubric (social studies)

## IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WEB SITES

### *Animal Farm*

A teacher-created website with lesson plans for teaching the novel. Lots of related links, esp. on the Russian Revolution.

**<http://outreach.rice.edu/~dstruitt/Lessons/Orwell/obj.html>**

### *Comparison of characters to Russian Revolution*

An excellent summary.

**<http://www.globalseve.net/~glamont/afrmruss.html>**

### *The George Orwell Homepage*

More information on George Orwell.

**<http://www.k-1.com/Orwell/animf.htm>**

### *The Orwell Reader*

One person's fascination with George Orwell and his writings.

**<http://www.recede.com/orwell/default.htm>**

### *Orwell the Man*

**<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/isa/orientation/AnimalFarm/index.htm>**

*Animal Farm, A Satirical Fable*: A PowerPoint presentation on Animal Farm and the Russian Revolution

**<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/isa/orientation/AnimalFarm/sld001.htm>**

### *Th UN-Official Homepage of ANIMAL FARM*

This website was created by 2 students as a project for a language arts class. Has good information and students will especially like the animals who morph into their Russian counterparts!

**<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~jchance/frames.html>**