

CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY

The animals spend a laborious summer harvesting in the fields. The clever pigs think of ways for the animals to use the humans' tools, and every animal participates in the work, each according to his capacity. The resulting harvest exceeds any that the farm has ever known. Only Mollie and the cat shirk their duties. The powerful and hard-working Boxer does most of the heavy labor, adopting "I will work harder!" as a personal motto. The entire animal community reveres his dedication and strength. Of all of the animals, only Benjamin, the obstinate donkey, seems to recognize no change under the new leadership.

Every Sunday, the animals hold a flag-raising ceremony. The flag's green background represents the fields of England, and its white hoof and horn symbolize the animals. The morning rituals also include a democratic meeting, at which the animals debate and establish new policies for the collective good. At the meetings, Snowball and Napoleon always voice the loudest opinions, though their views always clash.

Snowball establishes a number of committees with various goals, such as cleaning the cows' tails and re-educating the rats and rabbits. Most of these committees fail to accomplish their aims, but the classes designed to teach all of the farm animals how to read and write meet with some success. By the end of the summer, all of the animals achieve some degree of literacy. The pigs become fluent in reading and writing, while some of the dogs are able to learn to read the Seven Commandments. Muriel the goat can read scraps of newspaper, while Clover knows the alphabet but cannot string the letters together. Poor Boxer never gets beyond the letter *D*. When it becomes apparent that many of the animals are unable to memorize the Seven Commandments, Snowball reduces the principles to one essential maxim, which he says contains the heart of Animalism: "Four legs good, two legs bad." The birds take offense until Snowball hastily explains that wings count as legs. The other animals accept the maxim without

argument, and the sheep begin to chant it at random times, mindlessly, as if it were a song.

Napoleon takes no interest in Snowball's committees. When the dogs Jessie and Bluebell each give birth to puppies, he takes the puppies into his own care, saying that the training of the young should take priority over adult education. He raises the puppies in a loft above the harness room, out of sight of the rest of Animal Farm. Around this time, the animals discover, to their outrage, that the pigs have been taking all of the milk and apples for themselves. Squealer explains to them that pigs need milk and apples in order to think well, and since the pigs' work is brain work, it is in everyone's best interest for the pigs to eat the apples and drink the milk. Should the pigs' brains fail because of a lack of apples and milk, Squealer hints, Mr. Jones might come back to take over the farm. This prospect frightens the other animals, and they agree to forgo milk and apples in the interest of the collective good.