In 1945, Orwell's *Animal Farm* was published. A political fable set in a farmyard but is based on Stalin's betrayal of the Russian Revolution.

**Author**

*George Orwell* (1903-1950) was a British journalist and author, who wrote two of the most famous novels of the 20th century, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Born Eric Arthur Blair in eastern India, he was educated in England and after he left Eton, joined the Indian Imperial Police, Burma. He resigned in 1927 to become a writer. In 1928, he moved to Paris and his experiences are described in his first book, *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933). He took the name George Orwell, shortly before its publication. An anarchist in the late 1920s, by the 1930s he had begun to consider himself a socialist. Late in 1936, Orwell travelled to Spain to fight for the Republicans against Franco's Nationalists, fleeing from Soviet-backed communists turning him into a lifelong anti-Stalinist. From 1941 to 1943, Orwell worked in propaganda for the BBC and in 1943 became literary editor of the *Tribune*, a weekly left-wing magazine.
Suggested Book Club Questions

1. Anyone who wants to understand the twentieth century will still have to read Orwell, New York Review of Books. Do you agree? Why? Discuss.

2. Orwell’s chilling fairy story is a timeless and devastating satire of idealism betrayed by power and corruption. Do you agree? What do you understand by satire? Provide examples from Animal Farm.

3. Irony features throughout this novel in all its forms. The very fact that Orwell uses animals with pigs as the leaders is one obvious example. Provide other examples. Discuss Orwell’s use of language and his writing style.

4. All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others, and Four legs good, two legs better! as the pigs become more human. Through the revision of the commandments, Orwell demonstrates how simply political dogma can be turned into malleable propaganda. Discuss. Do you agree? Are there any modern examples of this in our society?

5. Do you agree that Snowball is perhaps one of the most intriguing characters in this story? It seems that Snowball’s actions in the novel relate directly to what Trotsky did during the Russian Revolution. Discuss all the characters in the novel.

6. If you studied this novel at school or university has your re-reading of Orwell’s classic novel changed or affected your appreciation and understanding of the book? Why? Discuss.