

**ANIMALS**  
**ANIMALISTIC**  
**ANIMAL CHARACTERS**  
**ANIMAL CHARACTERISTICS**  
**HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS**  
**HUMAN CHARACTERS**  
**CHARACTERISTIC**  
**HUMANS**

Usually, children's novels use animal characters and, taken at face value, the novel Animal Farm is simply a story about animals. However, George Orwell has used animal characters in his novel Animal Farm to make a point about human characters. In particular, he uses the idea of the farm and animals to tell another story, that of the Soviet Union, its politics, its people and leaders.

When a story has two meanings, a surface, literal meaning and a hidden, deeper meaning, this is called **allegory**. Many **fables** are allegorical.

Writers have long used animals to **satirise** human beings. In fact, many political cartoons use **satire** in this way. Scan the newspapers and see if you can find some examples.

If you worked as an illustrator for a national newspaper, how would you satirise the following famous people? What animals would you compare them to?

Remember, satire is used to attack, mock and ridicule so your choices need to be witty, sarcastic and / or humorous. Be prepared to feed back and explain your choice of animal to the rest of the class.

Human	Animal	Human	Animal
Donald Trump			
Angela Merkel			
Vladimir Putin			
Teresa May			

What you've probably found is that you've focused on ONE aspect (the most prominent and overriding) of their character. Your satire could have been inspired by: personality, appearance, ideas, speech, actions and behaviour, etc.

In the same way, many animal-based **similes** and **metaphors** will focus on the animal's overriding and distinctive trait or characteristic.

### **SIMILES**

	<b>Animal Simile</b>	<b>Trait / Characteristic</b>

1	as _____ as a peacock	busy
2	as _____ as an owl	mEEK
3	as _____ as a bat	hairY
4	as _____ as an ox	sly
5	as _____ as a mouse	fat
6	as _____ as an eel	brave
7	as _____ as a lark	strong
8	as _____ as a gorilla	proud
9	as _____ as a kitten	quiet
10	as _____ as a fox	slow
11	as _____ as a lamb	blind
12	as _____ as a bee	playful
13	as _____ as a snail	wise
14	as _____ as a lion	happy
15	as _____ as a pig	slippery

PS. Never use any of these similes or metaphors in your own writing; they are well worn, tired old clichés! They've only been used here in order to revise / consolidate your understanding.

## METAPHORS

1. If you've got everything to look forward to, the world is said to be your \_\_\_\_\_.
2. A person in a vulnerable situation is a sitting \_\_\_\_\_.
3. A person in a strange, unfamiliar situation is a \_\_\_\_\_ out of water.
4. Someone you cannot trust is a \_\_\_\_\_ in the grass.
5. If you're all dressed up, you are the \_\_\_\_\_'s dinner
6. If you mock, humiliate someone, you make a \_\_\_\_\_ out of him or her.
7. If you ruthlessly con people out of money, you are a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. A cowardly person is a \_\_\_\_\_.
9. If you outwit or deceive someone, you \_\_\_\_\_ them.

fox	oyster	chicken
monkey	dog	snake
shark	duck	fish

In groups, discuss and explain the animal metaphors.

## VERBS (Animal Metaphors)

	Animal Metaphors	Animal (as verb)
1	If you tell on someone, you _____ on that person.	clam
2	Someone who nags incessantly is said to _____ you.	pig
3	When you try to get in on the act, you _____ your way in.	badger
4	A person who gulps their food is said to _____ it down.	rat
5	Someone who fools and messes about is said to _____ around.	horse
6	If you eat excessively, you _____ out.	worm
7	If you stop talking abruptly, you _____ up.	wolf

## ASSOCIATIONS & SYMBOLS

What animals do you associate with the following traits or characteristics?

Trait	Animal	Trait	Animal
power		patience	
freedom		intelligence	
bravery		stupidity	
cowardice		speed	
weakness		loyalty	
greed		courage	
strength		independence	
cunning		graceful	

In verse form, describe yourself in terms of an animal (animals?). Begin with the words, "I am a ..."

These similes, metaphors, associations and symbols largely depend our stereotyped interpretations. A **stereotype** is a person or thing that we have a fixed and generalised view about. Generally, a stereotype will focus on the negative.

What are the stereotyped impressions we have of the following?

blonde hair	skinheads	scars and tattoos
red hair	people who wear glasses	students
a football fan	Sharon / Tracey from Essex	the homeless
teenagers	politicians	the Welsh
the Scottish	the Irish	the English

George Orwell's use of animal characters made it easier for him to tell his story. Almost always in the novel the behaviour, personality and actions of the animals conform to our stereotyped notion of them. Whilst this means that the characters are somewhat one-dimensional, this simplification of character makes understanding the themes, ideas and messages much clearer.

## THE NAME GAME

Another way that authors help in the creation of character is the name that they give the character. Charles Dickens is as famous for this as is J. K. Rowling in the Harry Potter series.

The names that Orwell has given his characters also reflect the way that he wants us to view them.

Read the following list of names. They are all names from characters in the novel *Animal Farm*. What connotations do they carry? (For some of them, you might need to think about people from history.) Try and make predictions about their personalities. You can also try to guess the animal they might be.

NAME	CONNOTATIONS / PERSONALITIES	ANIMAL?
Boxer		
Napoleon		
Snowball		
Squealer		
Whymper		human
Clover		
Old Major		
Moses		
Mollie		
Pinchfield		a country: which one?
Foxwood		a country: which one?

