**Lesson 1: Introducing Animal Farm**

**Lesson Objective:** This lesson aims to introduce *Animal Farm* to the students and consider the central themes and motifs used in the text. By the end of the lesson the students should:

1. Understand the context of *Animal Farm* and the effect it has on the book
2. Be able to name at least three central themes of the book and explain the way in which these themes are explored and developed
3. Be able to confidently explain the notion of allegory and how it relates to the novel

**Plan:**

* Begin the class with a general discussion of the book. What did the students enjoy about the book? What did they not enjoy? What was interesting about the way the book was written? Ask the students to note down three things they liked and three things they did not and discuss this as a class
* Remind students of the concept of a semantic field. Brainstorm what would be in the semantic field encompassed within *Animal Farm,* what recurring symbols, themes and motifs can they find in the book (i.e. language, corruption, hierarchy)?
* Introduce the idea of an allegory. Ask the students if they have any idea of what period in history *Animal Farm* could be an allegory for. Encourage them to make an educated guess, using the themes and personalities within the novel to help them
* Leading on from the discussion about the book as an allegory, discuss the context of *Animal Farm.* Introduce some ideas on the Communist Manifesto and the works of Marx. Can they think how this connects to the novel? Does the language sound familiar?
* Now begin to introduce the students to the history of the Russian Revolution. Watch the video giving a short introduction to the events of the Russian Revolution and ask the students to note down any similarities with the book.
* Draw up a list of characters from the book and their historical counterparts, thinking about how Orwell uses satire to make points about certain political leaders
* Returning to the brainstorm made at the beginning of the lesson about themes, ask the students to pick one theme and find two different examples within the book where this theme is explored or developed. Demonstrate an example of this with the theme of “language”, using two extracts from the text to highlight the theme’s effect.
* Facilitate a discussion on what the class think Orwell was trying to say with *Animal Farm.* Thinking about the historical context, is there a particular message or moral that can be identified? How do they think Orwell felt about Communism or about the Russian Revolution? Is there anything in particular he is warning against?

**Homework:** What do you think George Orwell is trying to say in *Animal Farm* and why? Explain your answer with reference to the text and the wider historical context of early 20th century Russia. You can even do some research on George Orwell himself to help if you would like!

**Lesson 2: Exploring Style and Narrative**

**Lesson Objective:** This lesson aims to enable to students to think more broadly about the way in which *Animal Farm* is written. By the end of the lesson the students should:

1. Be able to talk confidently about narration and perspective in *Animal Farm* and its effect
2. Understand the way in which the key literary techniques of foreshadowing and symbolism are central to the plot and themes of *Animal Farm.*
3. Be able to conduct character analysis within the novel, thinking about the importance of symbolism given the book’s allegorical nature

**Plan:**

* **Start the lesson by watching the video on symbolism in literature. As they are watching, the students should be noting down ideas on why symbolism is a particularly important concept in *Animal Farm.***
* **Introduce a character profile of Boxer. What do the class think he could represent? How does his character arc throughout the story support this? What could his death represent? Analyse his character, focusing on its symbolic significance**
* **Now the students should try to identify as many other symbols from the novel as possible. As a class focus on the main symbols; milk and apples, the windmill, whiskey and the Commandments. Identify what each symbol is used to represent.**
* **Introduce the concept of foreshadowing. How could this be linked to the symbolism within the novel? How could this be linked to the nature of the book as an allegory?**
* **Put some key quotes up on the board that foreshadow later events in the novel. What event does each quotation foreshadow? Why might Orwell have used this technique?**
* **Discuss how the fact that the story is told by a third-person omniscient narrator feeds into the key ideas in the book. Why might Orwell have made this choice?**
* **Introduce the concept of ‘village voice’, thinking about how the collective narrative voice creates irony. Can the students think of a particular quote or scene which illustrates the power of collective voice in *Animal Farm***
* **Put some quotation “four legs good, two legs bad!” on the board. How does this connect to village voice? What is the role of this quotation within the book?**
* **As a finishing activity, create a character profile on the sheep. What could they represent? Think about the idea of collective perspective and try to apply it to other groups of animals, for example the pigs. What can we learn from analysing Orwell’s characters collectively? Why might he have made this choice in the novel?**

**Homework: Which animal’s perspective do you agree with the most in *Animal Farm?* Is there any particular character who shares your outlook on the events of the book?** Explain your answer with reference to the text and use quotations if you can.

**Lesson 3: Close Textual Analysis**

**Lesson Objective:** This lesson will aim to make students more comfortable with close textual analysis and how to incorporate it into their essays. By the end of the lesson the students should:

1. Be able to describe and replicate Orwell’s style, language and structure
2. Be able to use close textual analysis when analysing a speech from *Animal Farm,* linking their analysis to wider themes within the book
3. Be able to analyse & compare the central political ideas in the book to historical ones

**Plan:**

* Begin the lesson with a discussion on propaganda. Do any of the students know what it is? Explain the concept and then ask if they can identify any propaganda in the book? Can they identify any real life propaganda? What is the purpose of propaganda in *Animal Farm*?
* As a class, brainstorm and note down the main ideas of ‘Animalism’. How does this link to the wider themes in the book?
* Read Old Major’s speech from Chapter 1. What do the class think the speech is about? How much does this speech reflect what ‘Animalism’ eventually becomes?
* Analyse the speech (literary and persuasive techniques, imagery, word choice etc.) as a class, writing down any particularly persuasive and powerful words and phrases
* Now compare Old Major’s speech to one of Lenin’s (who Old Major represents in the book). What are the main similarities and differences that they can identify? They should consider the main political ideas in the speeches, as well as the tone and language used
* Ask the class to identify some of the key differences in the political ideas of Old Major, Snowball and Napoleon. Explain that this is based upon the real-life differences between Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin.
* Now thinking about all the animals on the farm, which animal’s ideas are they most sympathetic to? Each student should summarise this animal’s ideas of the ideal life
* Each student should now chose one character and should write a speech from their perspective to the other animals on the farm. They should go back to their analysis of Orwell’s language- how does he make it sound persuasive? How does he convey Old Major’s political ideas effectively? Mirroring the type of language and tone used in the novel, they should spend ten minutes writing their own political speeches.
* Invite some students to share their speeches and ask other students to give feedback on what was most effective about their speeches, responding to their characterisation, language and tone and commenting on their delivery of the speech
* For the last few minutes of the lesson, facilitate a wider discussion on what they have learnt from *Animal Farm,* what they think is the most powerful theme or message and why?

**Homework:** What are the similarities and the differences between the concept of ‘Animalism’ and the concept of Communism? Explain your answer with reference to the text and the wider historical context of the Russia Revolution.