

Squealer's speech

Propaganda

propaganda (prop-a-gan-da) n. The systematic spreading of information, especially in a biased or misleading way, in order to promote a political cause or point of view. The aim of propaganda is to persuade people to accept certain beliefs or facts without question.

When wars are being fought it becomes important to keep up the spirits and morale of your own side/country and at the same time persuade the enemy that they are fighting a lost cause without any hope of victory.

In *Animal Farm*, propaganda is used to trick and deceive. The propaganda extolled, becomes a twisted mass of lies and half-truths intended to hide the reality of the situation from the animals. It is used to confuse and bewilder them. And above all, to stop them thinking for themselves.

Squealer is in charge of all the propaganda for Napoleon. Every time something happens which makes the animals question the way the revolution is progressing, Squealer uses his skills with language to persuade them that everything is for the best.

Some of these are outlined below:

Selection

Out of a mass of complex facts, the propagandist selects only those which support his arguments and assertions.

Lying

Telling lies is always a major tool of the propagandist. Remember what Hitler said: 'If you tell a BIG LIE often enough and loudly enough people will begin to believe it.'

Repetition

If you keep repeating a statement again and again, it will eventually be accepted by your listeners.

Pinpointing the enemy

The propagandist often tries to find an enemy, real or imagined, to attack. This unites everybody against the 'enemy' and encourages them to stop thinking for themselves (and to avoid viewing the propagandist as the enemy).

Assertion

The propagandist rarely argues. He just makes bold statements that he asserts to be true - and goes on and on making them.

Rhetorical questions

The propagandist often peppers his speeches with questions which he intends to answer himself. He does not want his listeners to answer them because he does not want them to think. He will do their thinking for them.

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Squealer uses many of the techniques of propaganda listed here.

Go through the speech in fine detail and highlight then annotate the bits which match the appropriate headings in the boxes above. Here, Squealer is justifying the fact that the pigs are keeping the milk and apples for themselves.

“Comrades!” he cried. “You do not imagine, I hope, that we pigs are doing this in a spirit of selfishness and privilege? Many of us actually dislike milk and apples. I dislike them myself! Our sole object in taking these things is to preserve our health. Milk and apples (and this has been proved by Science, comrades) contain substances absolutely necessary to the well-being of a pig. We pigs are brain-workers. The whole management and organization of this farm depend on us. Day and night we are watching over your welfare. It is for your sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples. Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back! Yes, Jones would come back! Surely, comrades,” cried Squealer almost pleadingly, skipping from side to side and whisking his tail, “surely there is no one among you who wants to see Jones come back?”