

Animal Farm

George Orwell

UNIT 4

Preview

Bureaucracy

Have you ever been to the post office to send a letter to a friend in another city? Or maybe to the bank to open a new account or make a deposit? If you've had either of these experiences, I bet you had to fill out lots of paperwork. And I bet that paperwork needed lots of official stamps from important people in order to be "certified". I also bet that you were feeling a bit anxious, ready to get out of there, by the time the bank or post office employee posted the last official stamp and handed over your papers.

As governments and companies grow, they become burdened by something called **bureaucracy**. That's basically what I've just described above--the filling out of lots of paperwork for a simple request, the strict hierarchies of responsibility, the hoops one must jump through in order to advance in life.

Many writers (such as George Orwell in *Animal Farm*) who aim to critique modern political and social structures, often place a focus on the dehumanizing effects bureaucracy has on our daily lives. Chinese writer, Wang Xiaofang, recently took on **bureaucracy** as a theme in his book *The Civil Servant's Notebook*.

In this section of *Animal Farm*, watch how **bureaucracy** slowly begins to change life on the farm, benefitting some and disadvantaging others. Consider how power and the development of bureaucratic systems relate.

Vocabulary

Pension (n.)	A regular payment given to a retired person from savings they have from their old job.
Superannuate (v.)	To retire someone with a pension
Demeanour (n.)	The way someone acts; outward manner or

	bearing
Indignant (adj.)	Feeling or showing annoyance at what it perceived to be unfair treatment
Morose (adj.)	Sad and upset; ill tempered
Taciturn (adj.)	Someone who says little
Denounce (v.)	To publically declare wrong or evil
Frugal (adj.)	Sparing or economical with regard to food or money
Expulsion (n.)	The act of depriving someone of membership in an organization
Insoluble (adj.)	Impossible to solve
Trifle (n.)	A thing of little value or importance
Majestic (adj.)	Having or showing impressive beauty or dignity
Proprietor (n.)	The owner of a business or the holder or property
Malignant (adj.)	Very harmful or infectious
Subversive (adj.)	Seeking or intending to change an established system or institution