

Animal Farm

George Orwell

UNIT 3

Preview

Literary Analysis: Utopia v. Dystopia

Imagine a place that is as perfect as you can imagine. A place where there is no homework, no parents bugging you to practice piano, no people at school spreading rumors or lies. We could call this magical place **Utopia**. There are many books and stories that try to create this perfect world so that we might be able to escape the harsh realities of the world we inhabit, if only for a little while.

Sometimes, however, we can learn more by considering a world that was designed to be perfect, but is very far from it. We'd call this **dystopia**. It's a place where you'd imagine everything is wonderful (like when you hear a world where everyone is equal and gets exactly as much as they need) but in fact things are not as great as they should be. In a lot of ways already, we can see how *Animal Farm* is becoming rather dystopian.

As you read this next section, look for as many of the following characteristics of a dystopian society you can find:

- Propaganda is used to control
- Information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted
- A figurehead or concept is worshipped by the citizens of the society
- Citizens are under constant surveillance (or believed to be)
- Citizens have a fear of the outside world
- Citizens conform to uniform expectations (individuality and dissent are unacceptable)
- The society is an illusion of a perfect utopian world

Vocabulary

Infanticide (n.)	The killing of babies or infants
Thwart (v.)	To prevent someone from accomplishing something

Tumult (n.)	A loud, confusing noise caused especially by a large group of people
Tremendous (adj.)	Very great in amount, scale, or intensity
Treacherous (adj.)	Guilty of or involving betrayal or deception
Magistrate (n.)	Someone who administers the law, especially minor offenses
Cruelty (n.)	Callous indifference to pleasure or in causing pain and suffering
Nocturnal (adj.)	Done, occurring, or active at night
Heed (v.)	Pay attention to, take notice of
Refuge (n.)	Being safe or sheltered from danger or trouble
Decree (n.)	An official order