An **allegory** is a work of fiction in which characters, events, and actions have a symbolic, deeper meaning in addition to their literal meaning. Allegories are used for many purposes, including to teach lessons, share general truths, and critique politics.

Animal Farm is an allegorical novel that uses events and people involved in the Russian Revolution and the rise of a communist dictatorship in the Soviet Union to document not only what happened there, but also how authoritarian governments develop and take root in general. But while the events and characters in the book have distinct historical counterparts, they also have a much more universal symbolism. The animals all represent different types of people that can be found in societies all over the world and throughout history.

You will find two lists below. The list on the left names some of the characters from *Animal Farm.* The list on the right describes different types of people. Draw lines to match the characters with their allegorical counterparts.

After you complete the matching, answer the questions that follow.

Boxer the follower

Farmer Jones the monarch

Squealer the peasant

Mollie the totalitarian leader

Old Major the religious believer

Moses the working-class member

Snowball the spreader of propaganda

A dog the revolutionary

A sheep the upper-class member

A hen the scapegoat

1.	Do you think allegory is an effective literary tool? Why or why not?
2.	Does Orwell's use of allegorical figures help you understand or relate to the characters? Explain.
3.	Can you think of other examples of allegorical fiction you have read? If so, list the titles here.

RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

RL.g-10.9 Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

W.9-10.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

## **Answer Key**

Napoleon - the totalitarian leader

Boxer - the working-class member

Farmer Jones - the monarch

Squealer - the spreader of propaganda

Mollie - the upper-class member

Old Major - the revolutionary

Moses - the religious believer

Snowball - the scapegoat

A dog - the law enforcer

A sheep - the follower

A hen - the peasant