

• **Snowball** –

• **Squealer** –

• **Boxer** –

• **Moses** –

always sheds light on faults or problems present in the character or behavior of human beings. Thus, many fables often include covert criticism of particular human beings—or of the human race in general.

While this use of animals to represent humans or human characteristics is a form of *personification*, it is more accurately referred to as *anthropomorphism*, a common literary technique used in fables and children’s literature as well as allegories like *Animal Farm*.

Using animal characters in order to represent faults in humans has many advantages: readers are often more inclined to read criticism and consider the validity of the moral at the end of the story when they do not feel personally attacked by the author, because blame is not placed directly on the reader in particular or on human beings in general. By proxy, readers can choose to recognize the criticism, or they can alternatively choose to read the story literally, that is, as a story about animals and natural objects. In the case of *Animal Farm*, for example, most readers quickly recognize Orwell’s criticism of the abuse of socialist ideals and the threat of distorted communism. Yet, *Animal Farm* has likewise been marketed as a popular and humorous children’s story about animals. Since fables use animals and natural objects as main characters, they usually retain a sense of humor or light-heartedness, which makes them easy to read and comprehend on a literal level (hence *Animal Farm*’s association with children’s literature).