

Author Critique Answer Key

Sample Critical Responses (Acceptable Models)

Response 1 (Positive Critique)

Orwell's choice to use animals makes the message more powerful because it strips away human specifics and shows corruption as a universal truth. The phrase "more equal than others" is especially effective because it exposes the hypocrisy of leaders who twist language to justify power. Using animals allows readers to view dictatorship and betrayal from a fresh perspective.

Response 2 (Critical/Negative Angle)

While using animals creates a memorable story, it could also make the message less serious to some readers. The idea of pigs walking upright and carrying whips risks being seen as humorous instead of horrifying. In this way, Orwell's choice may reduce the emotional weight of real-world oppression, though the phrase "unable to tell the difference" still makes the warning clear.

Teacher Notes

- **Skill Focus:** Students practice **critique**, moving beyond summary to analyze **effectiveness** of author choices.
- **Scaffolding Idea:** Provide sentence starters such as "The author's choice to ____ was effective because ____" or "One weakness of the passage is ____."
- **Flexibility:** Both positive and negative critiques are acceptable as long as students provide **text evidence** and reasoning.
- **Extension:** Ask students to rewrite the passage in a realistic human context and compare whether the message changes.