

## RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HUMANS AND ANIMALS

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**Abstract:** Literature has always been a mirror reflecting the complex relationships between humans and the natural world, particularly the animals that share our planet. Throughout history, authors and storytellers have used animals to convey human experiences, emotions, and societal values. These literary portrayals of animals often transcend mere representation and delve into deeper symbolic, allegorical, and psychological realms. From ancient myths to contemporary novels, the relationships between humans and animals in literature offer insights into our own humanity and our interconnectedness with the animal kingdom.

**Keywords:** Relationships, humans, animals, literature, symbolism, anthropomorphism, nature, companionship, empathy, allegory, fables.

## ОТНОШЕНИЯ МЕЖДУ ЧЕЛОВЕКОМ И ЖИВОТНЫМИ

**Аннотация:** Литература всегда была зеркалом, отражающим сложные отношения между людьми и миром природы, особенно с животными, населяющими нашу планету. На протяжении всей истории авторы и рассказчики использовали животных для передачи человеческого опыта, эмоций и социальных ценностей. Эти литературные изображения животных часто выходят за рамки простого представления и углубляются в более глубокие символические, аллегорические и психологические сферы. От древних мифов до современных романов отношения между людьми и

животными в литературе дают представление о нашей собственной человечности и нашей взаимосвязи с животным миром.

**Ключевые слова:** Отношения, люди, животные, литература, символизм, антропоморфизм, природа, общение, сопереживание, аллегория, басни.

Ancient civilizations used animals as symbols and allegories in their myths and stories. In ancient Egyptian culture, animals like cats were revered as sacred beings, embodying qualities like mystery and independence. The goddess Bastet, often depicted as a lioness or woman with a lioness head, was a symbol of protection, fertility, and domesticity. These symbolic associations with animals showcased the interconnectedness between humans and the divine, and they influenced cultural practices and beliefs. Greek mythology also abounds with animal symbolism. The Minotaur, a creature with the head of a bull and the body of a man, represents both the animalistic and human aspects of human nature. This duality highlights the struggle within individuals to balance their more primal instincts with their rational, civilized selves. Similarly, Aesop's fables used animals as moral agents, imparting lessons about human behavior through animal characters. The tortoise and the hare, for instance, teaches us the value of perseverance and consistency.

**Animals as Reflections of Human Nature.** Literature often employs animals as mirrors that reflect various facets of human nature, allowing readers to explore their own emotions and behaviors. George Orwell's "Animal Farm" is a prime example of this. The novel uses a group of farm animals to satirize political systems and human tendencies toward corruption and power struggles. The pigs that initially seek equality eventually transform into tyrants, demonstrating the corrupting influence of power. In Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis," the protagonist wakes up one morning transformed into a giant insect. This physical transformation serves

as a metaphor for the alienation and estrangement that many people experience in modern society. The insect's struggles and isolation become a representation of the human condition itself, evoking empathy from readers.

**The Human-Animal Bond.** Beyond symbolism and allegory, literature also explores the genuine emotional connections between humans and animals. These connections highlight the universality of emotions and experiences shared between different species. Jack London's "The Call of the Wild" presents a strong bond between a dog named Buck and his owner, exploring themes of loyalty, survival, and the primal instincts that can resurface when faced with the wilderness. The novel taps into the idea that humans and animals share common instincts and desires in their quest for survival. A similar exploration of the human-animal bond can be found in E.B. White's "Charlotte's Web." The friendship between a pig named Wilbur and a spider named Charlotte delves into themes of friendship, sacrifice, and the inevitable cycle of life and death. Charlotte's efforts to save Wilbur demonstrate the depth of compassion that can exist between species, challenging the conventional boundaries of empathy.

**Animals as Guides and Catalysts for Change.** In literature, animals often serve as guides, catalysts, or mentors for human characters. They lead protagonists on transformative journeys, providing wisdom and insight. Herman Melville's "Moby-Dick" features the enigmatic white whale, Moby Dick, who becomes a symbol of obsession and revenge. Captain Ahab's relentless pursuit of the whale serves as a cautionary tale about the destructive nature of unchecked desires. J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy introduces various animal characters that aid the protagonists on their quest. From the loyal and wise Samwise Gamgee to the intelligent and mysterious Gollum, these characters represent different aspects of human nature. The relationships formed between the human characters and these

animal figures emphasize the importance of collaboration and understanding in times of adversity.

### **Conclusion**

Throughout the history of literature, the relationships between humans and animals have been portrayed in multifaceted ways, reflecting our evolving understanding of our place in the natural world. From ancient myths to contemporary novels, animals serve as symbols, mirrors, and companions that help us explore the complexities of human nature, morality, and our interconnectedness with the environment. These literary representations continue to challenge and inspire readers to examine their relationships with animals and consider the ethical and emotional dimensions of those connections. As literature evolves, so too will the ways in which animals are depicted and understood within the pages of our stories.

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