

Name _____



Different Perspectives

In *Charlotte's Web*, the human characters view the animals in different ways, and their perspectives shape the events of the story. Some humans, like Fern, see the animals as friends, while others, like Mr. Zuckerman, see them as farm animals meant to serve a purpose. These different viewpoints influence how the animals are treated and how the story unfolds.

Fern Arable, a kind and caring young girl, views Wilbur as more than just a pig—she sees him as a living being with feelings. When her father decides to kill Wilbur because he is a runt, Fern pleads for his life, insisting that it is unfair. Because of her love and empathy, Wilbur is given a chance to live. Fern continues to visit him at the barn, watching him grow and listening to the animals as if they were speaking to her. Her perspective allows readers to see the animals as more than just farm creatures; they have emotions, friendships, and fears.

Mr. Zuckerman, on the other hand, sees Wilbur as a farm animal with a specific purpose. He takes care of Wilbur, feeding him and providing a place for him to live, but he plans to butcher him when he grows big enough. His view of animals is more practical—pigs are meant to be food. However, when Charlotte spins words in her web that describe Wilbur as “Some Pig” and “Terrific,” Mr. Zuckerman begins to see Wilbur differently. He starts to believe that Wilbur is special, and this belief ultimately saves Wilbur’s life.

Other human characters, like the farmhands and fair judges, do not think much about the animals beyond their usefulness. They are amazed by the words in Charlotte’s web, but they do not realize that Charlotte herself is the true genius behind the miracle. This shows that humans often overlook the intelligence and importance of animals.

The way humans view the animals in *Charlotte's Web* affects the story’s events. Fern’s kindness saves Wilbur, Mr. Zuckerman’s changing perspective protects him, and the other humans’ amazement at the words in the web ensures that Wilbur will never be turned into bacon. Through these different perspectives, E.B. White reminds readers that how we see animals—and the world around us—can shape the future in unexpected ways.