

Rachel hijacks a plane and flies it into a skyscraper (this one was published in 2000)

Cassie, the most empathetic of the gang, masterminds a plan to intentionally trap a rogue morpher as a rat and exile him to an uninhabited island, rather than kill him outright

Ax turns out to be Tobias' uncle

While stranded in the Amazon, Rachel is knocked out and being devoured by ants, so Jake has to rip off parts of her flesh to lead the ants away

The gang all use their morphs as a means of dissociation regularly

Space God exists, and he's a gamer

Tobias kills Hitler

The gang gets drugged and nearly taxidermied by the residents of Atlantis

An ant accidentally gains the morphing power, partially morphs into Cassie and won't stop shrieking until a buffalo rips it in half in front of her

Marco rides the bus as a gorilla

When someone uses a smaller morph, their excess mass is teleported to extradimensional space as an incomprehensible blob of human mush; there's always a small chance of that mass being struck by a ship using that dimension for faster-than-light travel; that exact thing happens

The evolutionary origin of dogs is retconned

Area 51 is unknowingly guarding an alien toilet

Only a few books into the series, it's clear these middle schoolers are child soldiers with PTSD

By the end of the series, everyone in the gang except Cassie is a shell of their former self or dead

Jake is killed while crossing the Delaware with George Washington; Cassie, who is a dolphin at the time, pushes her way through bodies to find him with a hole through his head

Ancient aliens left behind ancient androids who live as humans using advanced holograms; one was Catherine the Great's hairdresser

The gang considers the ethics of weaponizing a drug that's dangerously addictive to Yeerks and drives them insane; that drug is instant ginger and maple oatmeal

Ax watches *The Young and the Restless*

Marco's dad, who has been a joyless mess of grief for years finally starts dating again and wants to remarry, but Marco can't blow his cover to tell his dad that his wife is still alive

The aliens we've been led to believe are allies have committed genocide and might do it again

Guess which of these outrageous animorphs facts are true or false



MAJOR SPOILERS AHEAD!



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A race of aliens called Taxxons experience constant insatiable hunger to the point of cannibalism. They are essentially giant worm-shaped wet paper bags who will eat themselves if they are injured whatsoever

The gang risks facing the existential crisis of losing all sense of self any time they morph hve insects

Rachel mops a carpeted floor as a bear

Marco quotes *Prince of Egypt* before attempting to murder his mom; it is an incredibly serious and dramatic emotional zenith; he is a mountain goat for all of this

Rachel is allergic to a crocodile morph, it is rejected from her body by crawling out of her back on the set of *Regis and Kathie Lee*; it promptly attacks Jonathan Taylor Thomas*, who is a Yeerk

Cassie performs alien brain surgery with the help of a dog android



Quick synopsis:
Five kids are given the ability to transform into animals by a dying alien (Elfangor), with the goal of stopping a secret invasion of parasitic mind-controlling aliens named Yeerks.

Jake: everyman reluctant leader
Rachel: mallrat turned blood knight
Tobias: orphaned sadboi trapped in hawk morph
Cassie: moral compass & environmentalist
Marco: comic relief with mommy issues
Ax: autistic-coded alien brother of Elfangor

*Asterisks denote off-brand versions of people. For example, Jeremy Jason McCole, teen heartthrob of *Powerhouse* is an obvious stand in for Jonathan Taylor Thomas of *Home Improvement*.

Keep in mind as you're reading this, these books are meant for middle grade readers.

Which facts are true or false? Reveal at the end by holding here and pulling up the alien on page 4.

Rachel, the pretty blond fashionista, uses her own severed arm to beat someone to death

Cassie finds a piece of flesh while fossing after ripping an alien's throat out as a wolf, proceeds to brush her teeth until her gums are raw and bloody

Marco discovers his mother *didn't* die in a late night boating accident years ago, and is in fact a host to one of the most powerful Yeerk leaders

Jake gets swatted as a housefly, and his friends—also flies—have to scoop up his viscera and fly them somewhere safe so he can demorph before he dies

Yeerks are slugs who crawl through ear canals and flatten themselves into the crevices of their host's brain to control them, the hosts remain completely aware but unable to act

Tobias intentionally causes the extinction of the dinosaurs

The process of morphing is painless but described as being awake during surgery with local anesthesia; bones are heard grinding, organs are felt shifting, some parts change size or shape before others unpredictably, often described in great detail

Since morphing uses DNA, the gang can be gruesomely dismembered or eviscerated in animal form and live through it if they revert to human quickly enough; this happens fairly often

Most, if not all, of the Animorphs have been eaten at some point

After breaking into AOL* headquarters, the gang meets Bill Gates*; he's a cannibal

Tobias attempts suicide in a mall before accepting his life trapped as a hawk; visceral descriptions of hunting prey follow

One of Ax's favorite foods is cigarette butts

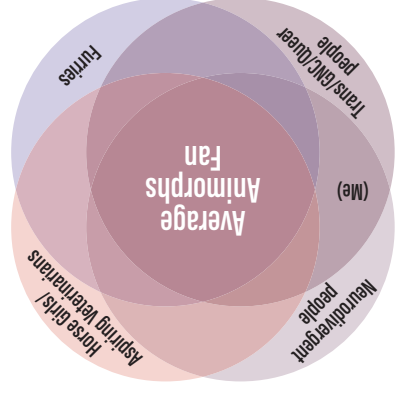
All of these things actually happened in the series. Somehow, there are still more absurd things that take place.

If you've never read the series, only read a few of them, or (god forbid) only seen the terrible TV adaptation, you might be surprised at the depths they reach. It's not above criticism by any means; it can be logically inconsistent, disability is handled terribly at times, certain aspects reek of late-90's neoliberalism, and a few of the ghostwritten filler books are trash. But it makes up for those things with complex characters, profound moral dilemmas, realistic depictions and criticisms of war and imperialism, and a great mixture of genuine comedy, horror, and self-awareness.

Yes, they're technically kids books, but they never pull punches.

Published September 15, 2025

This zine is unofficial commentary of the Animorphs book series and is in no way affiliated with Scholastic, K.A. Applegate, or the Animorphs brand. Please don't sue me, daddy Scholastic. Ya boy is already POOR.



K.A. Applegate is a pen name used by Katherine Applegate and her husband Michael Grant as a writing team. They genuinely seem like cool, decent people. They proudly love and accept their trans child (unlike certain other children's authors might have) and many people relate to Tobias as a trans allegory.

They have released the entire Animorphs series as PDFs online for free. Most of the books are short and could be read in a day or so. The standalone Chronicles books are a bit longer, and great outings that complement and tie into the main plot nicely. For your own sanity, don't bother with the choose-your-own-adventure books called Aftermath. It seems like some Scholastic intern was forced to skim a few books and throw something together.

Thank you for sharing in my nerdery!