



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Things Fall Apart

based on the book by  
Chinua Achebe

Written by  
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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR  
CHINUA ACHEBE

ACHEBE, Chinua 1930

Chinua Achebe was born on November 16, 1930, in Ogidi, Nigeria. He was raised in this traditional village, although his parents were Christians. Achebe considers himself part of a generation that is in transition between the old village ways and the modern world.

Mr. Achebe began his career with the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, where he worked from 1954-1966. After that he became a senior research fellow at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and then a professor of English. From 1972-75 he was a visiting professor of English at the University of Massachusetts, and was a visiting professor of English at the University of Connecticut in 1975-76.

*Things Fall Apart* was his first novel, published in 1958. This novel established him as a major contemporary novelist. Many adult and children's books followed his first success: *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *The Sacrificial Egg and Other Stories* (1962), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of People* (1966), *Chike and the River* (1966), *Beware Soul-Brother and Other Poems* (1971), *The Insider: Stories of War and Peace from Nigeria* (1971), *How the Leopard Got His Claws* (1972), *Girls at War and Other Stories* (1973), *Morning Yet on Creation Day* (1975), *The Flute* (1977), and *The Drum* (1977). Achebe is also the founding editor of the African Writers series published by Heinemann Books.

*Chike and the River*, published in 1966, was his first children's novel. It is about the adventures of a young boy. *The Flute* is a retelling of a traditional African folktale with some added details. *How the Leopard Got His Claws* is an animal fable which he wrote during the Biafran War.

Chinua Achebe has received many awards, including The Nigerian National Merit Award for intellectual achievement (1970), the Commonwealth Poetry Prize (1974), and the Lotus Award for Afro-Asian Writers (1975). He has honorary degrees from universities in the United States, Scotland, England, Canada, and Nigeria.

Mr. Achebe now lives in New York with his wife and four children. He and his wife both teach at Bard College.

## INTRODUCTION-*Things Fall Apart*

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, listening and speaking skills through exercises and activities related to *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe. It includes seventeen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to the novel through the use of a KWL worksheet. Students are also given the materials they will use during this unit and are shown how to use these materials.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 8 to 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. It might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 8 to 10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II gives students dictionary definitions of the words and has them match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete extra discussion questions, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the separate vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

Following the reading of the book, two lessons are devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding

of the novel. These questions are done as a **group activity**. Using the information they have acquired so far through individual work and class discussions, students get together to further examine the text and to brainstorm ideas relating to the themes of the novel.

The group activity is followed by a **reports and discussion** session in which the groups share their ideas about the book with the entire class; thus, the entire class gets exposed to many different ideas regarding the themes and events of the book.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is to **persuade**: students will take the role of a young clan member who wants to make a change in the way something is done. The second assignment is to **inform**: students will write a report from the point of view of the missionary. The third assignment is to express a personal **opinion**: students will write about a change in their own lives and how it affected them.

In addition, there is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Things Fall Apart*. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. During one class period, students make **oral presentations** about the nonfiction pieces they have read. This not only exposes all students to a wealth of information, it also gives students the opportunity to practice **public speaking**.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: all multiple choice-matching-true/false or a mixture of matching, short answer, and composition. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **unit resource section** includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. No other portion of this unit may be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.

## UNIT OBJECTIVES-*Things Fall Apart*

1. Through reading *Things Fall Apart*, students will analyze characters and their situations to better understand the themes of the novel.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: actual, interpretive, critical, and personal.
3. Students will practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
4. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the autobiography through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with it.
5. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Things Fall Apart*.
6. Students will practice writing through a variety of writing assignments.
7. The writing assignments in this are geared to several purposes:
  - a. To check the students' reading comprehension
  - b. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
  - c. To make students put those ideas into perspective
  - d. To encourage critical and logical thinking
  - e. To provide the opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
8. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

UNIT OUTLINE-*Things Fall Apart*

<b>1</b> Introduction PV 1-4	<b>2</b> Read 1-4 Study ?s 1-4	<b>3</b> PVR 5-7 Oral Reading Evaluation	<b>4</b> Quiz 1-7 PVR 8-10	<b>5</b> Writing Assignment 1
<b>6</b> Study ?s 8-10 PVR 11-13	<b>7</b> Study ?s 11-13 PVR 14-19	<b>8</b> Study ?s 14-19 Writing Assignment 2	<b>9</b> Writing Conferences	<b>10</b> PVR 20-25 Study ?s 20-25
<b>11</b> Extra Discussion Questions	<b>12</b> Writing Assignment 3	<b>13</b> Library Work	<b>14</b> Nonfiction Assignment	<b>15</b> Vocabulary Review
<b>16</b> Unit Review	<b>17</b> Test			

P= Preview Study Questions V=Do Vocabulary Worksheet R=Read

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET-*Things Fall Apart*

Date Assigned	Assignment	Completion Date
	Part One, Chapters 1-4	
	Part One, Chapters 5-7	
	Part One, Chapters 8-10	
	Part One, Chapters 11-13	
	Part Two, Chapters 14-19	
	Part Two, Chapters 20-25	



## LESSON ONE

### Objectives

1. To introduce the *Things Fall Apart* unit
2. To relate students' prior knowledge to the new material
3. To distribute books and other related materials (study Guides, reading assignments)
4. To do the prereading work for the Introduction, Preface, and Letters

### Activity #1

Show a map of Africa, focusing on the Niger River area. Have some pictures of the area and the tribes the way they were before England began colonizing the area, and some of modern Nigeria. Explain that this is the setting of the novel. Ask what students think the title could be referring to. Do a group KWL sheet with the students (form included.) Put any information the students know in the K column (What I Know.) Ask students what they want to find out and put that information in the W column (What I want to find out.) Keep the sheet and refer back to it after reading the novel, and complete the L column (What I learned.)

### Activity #2

Distribute the materials students will use in this unit. Explain in detail how students are to use these materials.

Study Guides Students should preview the study guide questions before each reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in that section. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

Reading Assignment Sheet You need to fill in the reading assignment sheet to let students know when their reading has to be completed. You can either write the assignment sheet on a side blackboard or bulletin board and leave it there for students to see each day, or you can "ditto" copies for each student to have. In either case, you should advise students to become very familiar with the reading assignments so they know what is expected of them.

Extra Activities Center The unit resource portion of this unit contains suggestions for a library of related books and articles in your classroom as well as crossword and word search puzzles. Make an extra activities center in your room where you will keep these materials for students to use. (Bring the books and articles in from the library and keep several copies of the puzzles on hand.) Explain to students that these materials are available for students to use when they finish reading assignment or other class work early.

Books Each school has its own rules and regulations regarding student use of school books. Advise students of the procedures that are normal for your school.

### Activity #3

Give students some background about the pre-British life of the African tribal clans, especially in Nigeria. Focus on the way of life before and after the colonization of the area. Provide information about current affairs in Nigeria.

### Activity #4

Show students how to preview the study questions and do the vocabulary work for Chapters 1-4 of *Things Fall Apart*. If students do not finish this assignment in class, they should complete it prior to the next class meeting.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENT 1 - *Things Fall Apart*

### PROMPT

Many changes happened in Okonkso's village and the surrounding areas. You, as a young member of the village, want to institute yet another change.

Your assignment is to think of a change you would make in the daily life/customs of the village. Present your ideas to the *egwugwu* to persuade them to approve of your idea.

### PREWRITING

The first thing you need to do is make a list of the ceremonies and traditions of the villagers. Include things like the number of wives the men have, how the bride-price is agreed upon, how the villagers settle disputes. Then think of something you would like to add or change. Perhaps you are a young girl who wants to choose her own husband, or a young boy who prefers cooking and watching the children to hunting and going to war.

Next, make a list of all of the reasons that your change is beneficial to you personally, and to the clan. Think about how you would implement your change. Tell what you think the results of the change would be.

### DRAFTING

Write as if you were at a village meeting, addressing the *egwugwu*. How would you bring up your subject? Use this as your opening paragraph. Then write one paragraph for each of your arguments, using the things that support your statements to fill out the paragraphs. What would you say in closing your speech to convince the *egwugwu* of the merits of your plan? Use that as your closing paragraph.

### PROMPT

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask another student to read it. After reading your rough draft, he/she should tell you what he/she liked best about your work, which parts were difficult to understand, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your paper considering your critic's comments, and make the corrections you think are necessary.

### PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper, double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.