

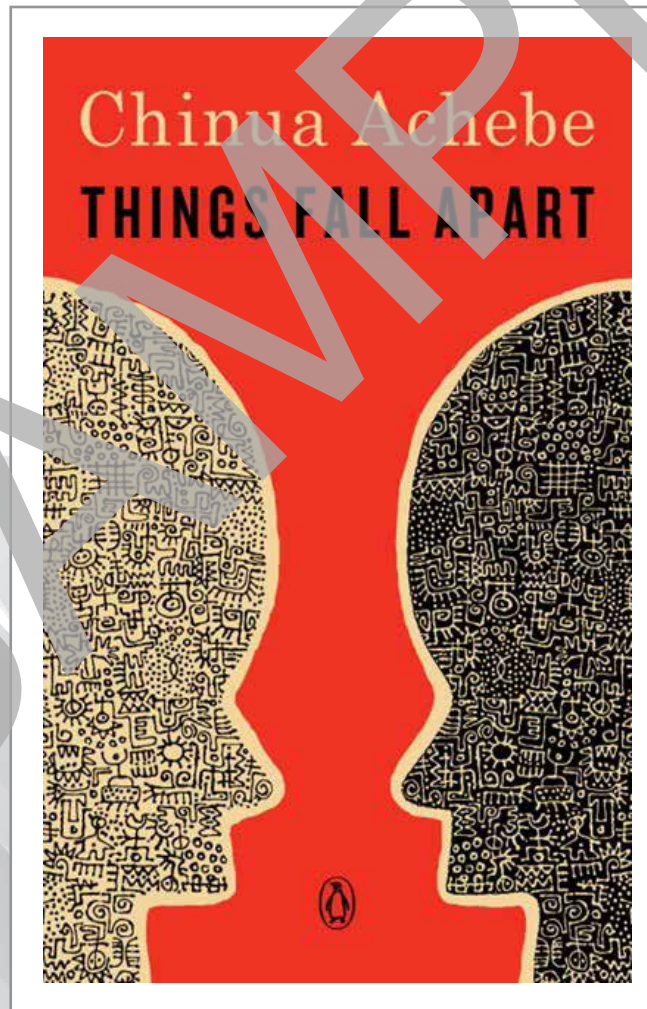


**STUDENT PACKET**

**GRADES 9-12**

# Things Fall Apart

Chinua Achebe



**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

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Chinua Achebe

## STUDENT PACKET

**NOTE:**

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Things Fall Apart*  
Study Questions  
Use During Reading

**Directions:** Write a brief answer to each study question as you read the novel at home or in class. Use the questions for review before group discussions and before your final test.

### Chapters 1-3

1. How did Okonkwo become famous even beyond the nine villages of Umuofia?
2. Why did Okoye come to see Unoka? Do you think Okoye was angry with Unoka?
3. How was Okonkwo able to become wealthy and famous when his father owed so much to everyone?
4. Judging from the last few sentences of Chapter 1, how important do you think Ikemefuna will be in this story? What do the words “doomed” and “ill-fated” tell you?
5. What important news does Ogbuefi Ezeugo bring the 10,000 men in the marketplace—and what action is taken?
6. What happened to the boy, Ikemefuna? How does he feel about his new home?
7. What is Okonkwo’s greatest fear?
8. How did Okonkwo find a positive side to the sad harvest?
9. **Prediction:** Will Ikemefuna be treated as a son or as a slave by Okonkwo and his family?

### Chapters 4-6

1. The oldest man at the kindred meeting thought that Okonkwo happened to have good luck and success. Do you think Okonkwo was “just lucky”?
2. How did Okonkwo treat Ikemefuna?
3. How did Okonkwo get in trouble with Ezeani?
4. Why does Okonkwo threaten to break Nwoye’s jaw, strangle him, break his head?
5. Do you find any irony in Okonkwo’s prayers to his ancestors (page 39) to “protect him, his children, and their mothers”?
6. On pages 40-41, what evidence do you see that the Ibo peoples’ lives are controlled by superstition?
7. How do you know Ezinma means everything to her mother?
8. What were the most exciting moments in the wrestling matches?
9. **Prediction:** Why will the villagers of Umuofia be delighted with an invasion of locusts?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Things Fall Apart*  
Activity #5 • Vocabulary  
chapters 7-13

**Directions:** For each of the following questions, check the “yes” or “no” box. Then write a brief explanation of your answer on the line beneath. Vocabulary words are **boldfaced**.

- |  | Yes                      | No                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Are there a lot of good hiking <b>entrails</b> in the Appalachian Mountains?                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____  |                          |                          |
| 2. Is an <b>audacity</b> part of your stereo system?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____  |                          |                          |
| 3. Are politicians often accused of making <b>specious</b> statements?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____  |                          |                          |
| 4. If you brought home a report card with straight A's, would your parents look at you with <b>approbation</b> ? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____  |                          |                          |
| 5. If you find some <b>pestles</b> in your cupboard, should you call an exterminator?                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____  |                          |                          |
| 6. Might a person's material success be <b>manifest</b> in her 4,000-square-foot mansion?                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____  |                          |                          |
| 7. Do computer programmers speak an <b>esoteric</b> language?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____  |                          |                          |
| 8. Do crops grow on <b>plantains</b> ?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| _____  |                          |                          |

**Directions:** for the words below, write your own questions to ask your classmates.

**harbingers**  
**guttural**

**copiously**  
**prophecy**

**devoid**  
**inadvertent**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Things Fall Apart*  
Activity #11 • Critical Thinking  
Use After Reading

**Directions:** Place each character below in one or more of the boxes. Discuss in a small group why you think the characters in a given box belong together:

**Characters:**

Okonkwo  
Ezinma  
Uchendu  
District Commissioner  
Ikemefuna

Unoka  
Obiageli  
Rev. Smith  
Mr. Kiaga  
Ojiugo

Ekwefi  
Obierika  
Enoch  
Okoli  
court messengers

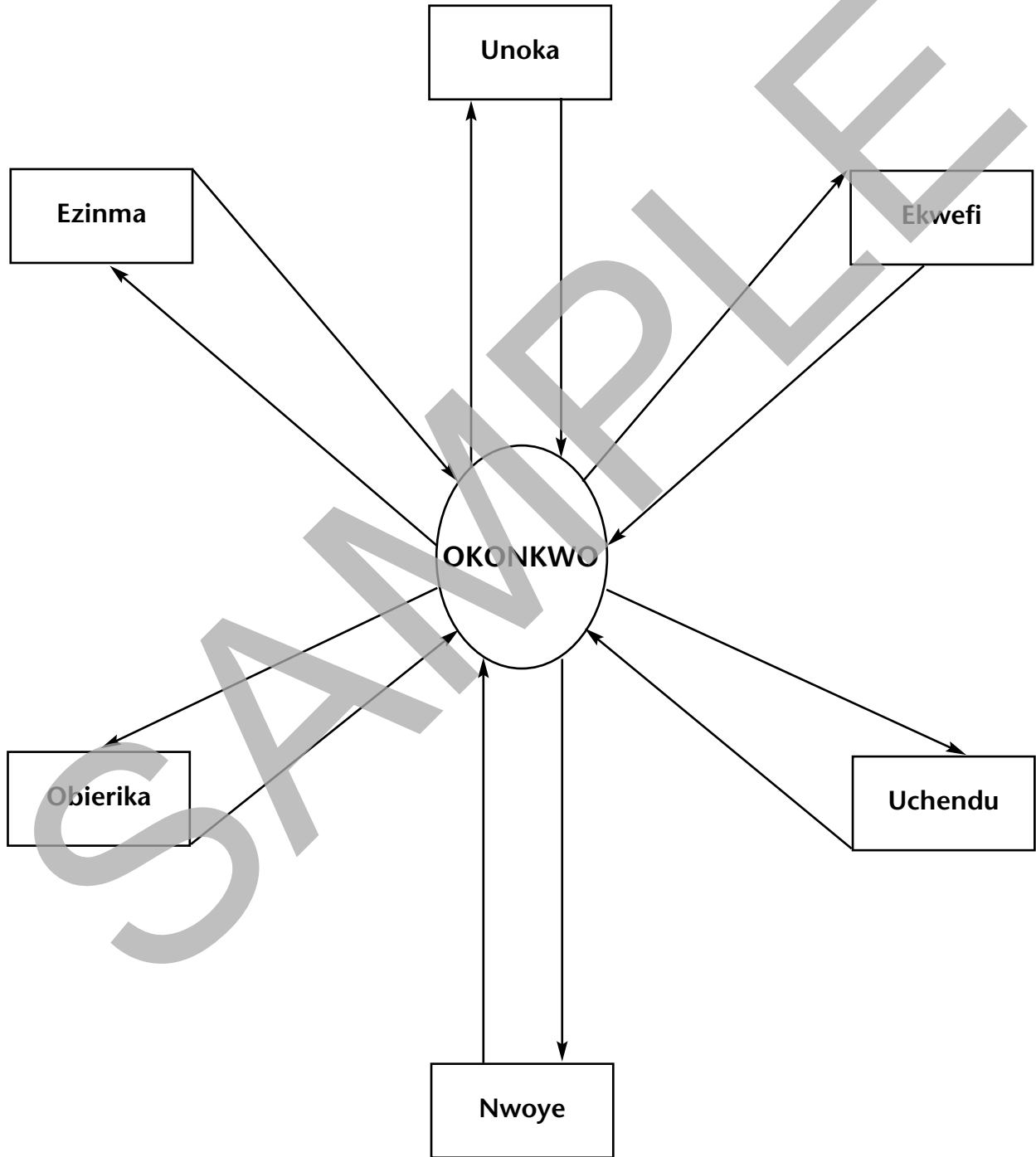
Nwoye  
Ezeudu  
Mr. Brown  
Chielo  
Egonwanne

<b>Victims</b>	<b>Victimizers</b>	<b>Thinking Men/Women</b>
<b>Men/Women of Action</b>	<b>Opportunists</b>	<b>Zealots</b>
<b>Heroes</b>	<b>Cowards</b>	<b>Kind Ones</b>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Things Fall Apart*  
Activity #14 • Literary Analysis  
Use After Reading

**Directions:** On the arrow joining one character to another, write a brief description of the relationship between the two characters. (How do they feel about each other? How do they interact? What impact do they have on each other?)



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Life in Umuofia was very different at the beginning of the book than it was when the story ends. Was it better or worse? Below are some tools to help you write an essay comparing “old” and “new” Umuofia, and stating why you feel the changes were mostly good or mostly bad. First complete the chart. Then go to the bottom of the page.

How did the arrival of the British colonists change life in Umuofia?	
Before the Colonists	After the Colonists
SAMPLE	

- Paragraph 1.** Decide whether you think the changes were mostly good or mostly bad. State your opinion in a **thesis sentence**. Summarize your reasons for your opinion.
- Paragraph 2.** Write about Umuofia before the colonists came. Use details from the chart.
- Paragraph 3.** Write about Umuofia after the colonists had been there for a while.
- Paragraph 4.** Explain why the changes were good or bad (depending on your thesis).
- Paragraph 5.** Restate your thesis and summarize your main points. Write a concluding sentence.