

## ***Things Fall Apart***

### **Portfolio Project (410 total points)**

#### **Part 1: Chapter log (125 points):**

- Achebe has not provided titles for the chapters in *Things Fall Apart*. Your task is to compose a title for each of the twenty-five chapters. For each, explain briefly why the title is appropriate (75 points).
- For each chapter, choose the quotation (with page number) that you believe is the most significant. Explain why it is important, and connect it to character, conflict, or theme (50 points).

#### **Part 2: Vocabulary acquisition (60 points):**

- During your reading, identify 30 words that are unfamiliar to you and that you would like to incorporate into your own vocabulary. Write the sentence from the book with the word in it and indicate page number in a parenthetical citation. Record the definition(s) of the word and at least one alternate form of the word. If multiple definitions exist, choose the definition(s) that fits the context of the book's sentence. Create a sentence of your own using the new word in proper context. [A list of SAT vocabulary words appearing in the novel is appended to these instructions.]

#### **Part 3: Paragraph defining Okonkwo (40 points):**

- Make a list of adjectives to describe Okonkwo—showing traits that reveal how he crosses the border between heroic and unheroic. Then choose two contrasting adjectives you believe best describe who Okonkwo is essentially. Using at least four quotations as evidence to support your ideas, write a paragraph defining Okonkwo's complex character.

#### **Part 4: Proverb and folktale personal response (30 points):**

- The oral tradition is central to the culture depicted in *Things Fall Apart*, and Achebe uses traditional proverbs and folktales throughout the novel to comment upon human nature and behavior. Choose two proverbs and/or folktales, and translate them for modern American society. Explain what these reveal about human nature and how they apply to your own life.

#### **Part 5: T-chart about Okonkwo's decision (40 points):**

- When Okonkwo "drew his machete and cut [Ikemefuna] down" (59), do you believe he made the correct decision? Evaluate the situation by first creating a t-chart, thinking about both sides of the situation. Consider Okonkwo's cultural and personal beliefs, as well as your own, in assessing his decision. Then, choose a side, and write a paragraph, providing specific evidence from the text for support.

#### **Part 6: News article (20 points):**

- Write a news article recounting the events Obierika describes in chapter fifteen of *Things Fall Apart*. You will, however, write the article that might appear in a British newspaper of the time period. You will need to think about how cultural perspective affects people's view of historical "facts" as well as the importance of word connotation for conveying opinion and attitude.

#### **Part 7: Analysis of Yeats' "The Second Coming" (15 points):**

- What about this poem do you think inspired Achebe to choose one of its lines as the title and to excerpt part of it as the epigraph of the novel? Specifically discuss the tone/mood of the poem and its appropriateness for *Things Fall Apart*.

**Part 8: Epigraphs for three parts (40 points):**

- Achebe organizes *Things Fall Apart* into three parts (Part One: chapters 1-13, Part Two: chapters 14-19, and Part Three: chapters 20-25). First, explain why he has divided the novel into these parts, considering how the chapters are related within parts and how the plot changes at these particular points. Then, follow Achebe's model by choosing an epigraph (identifying text and author) for each part. Defend your choice by explaining the relevance of each.

**Part 9: Okonkwo's obituary (20 points):**

- Consult a newspaper, and read several obituaries. Then, write an obituary for Okonkwo. How long did he live? Who survives him? What did he accomplish? How should we remember his life?

**Part 10: Novel's conclusion (20 points):**

- Why does Achebe choose to shift the focus of the novel to the British Commissioner at the end? Consider specifically the final words of the novel, and explain what you believe Achebe's point to be.

**SAT Vocabulary appearing in *Things Fall Apart*:**

adherent	desecrate	idolatry	profane
appease	desolate	imperious	refuge
approbation	despairing	improvidence	rend
arduous	discern	impudent	resilient
atone	discord	incipient	resolute
audacity	dispatch	kindle	revere
benevolence	enthraling	luxuriant	sonorous
blasphemous	esoteric	malevolence	succulent
calamity	exacting	malicious	superfluous
callow	expedient	mirth	tentative
capricious	feint	ominous	vibrant
communal	ferment	pacifistic	vivid
contempt	ferocity	perpetuate	voluble
copious	flourish	plaintive	wily
deft	fugitive	plumage	woe
degeneration	grievous	poignant	zeal
derision	harbingers	potent	zealot