

10th Grade - Midterm Essay on *Things Fall Apart*

Due by \_\_\_\_\_

Topics (choose 1):

1. Think about the role of weather in the novel. How does it work, symbolically or otherwise, in relation to important elements of the novel such as religion? Are rain and drought significant? Explore the ways in which weather affects the emotional and spiritual realms of the novel as well as the physical world.

2. Women suffer great losses in this novel but also, in certain circumstances, hold tremendous power. What role do women play in Okonkwo's life? Is there any difference between his interaction with specific women and his understanding of women and femininity in general?

3. Animal imagery abounds in the folktales and proverbs circulated among the clan members. What is the significance of some of the animals they discuss? What does the prominence of animal figures suggest about Igbo culture and about Achebe's larger goals?

4. In what ways does the idea of progress shape the novel? If Unoka, Okonkwo, and Nwoye are symbolic of three successive generations, how does society in Umuofia change over the course of their lifetimes? Where does Ikemefuna fit into this picture?

5. Throughout the novel, drums, music, and the town crier's voice punctuate the narrative at key moments. When does silence occur and what does it mean? Is there more than one type of silence? Can silence be characterized as a positive or negative occurrence? What are the implications of the fact that Unoka takes his flute with him to the Evil Forest when he dies?

**\*This essay should be at least 5 paragraphs. See the checklist on the back of this page for formatting requirements.**

**\*\*You are not required to use any sources aside from *Things Fall Apart*, but if you do, please remember to properly cite any information from outside sources.**