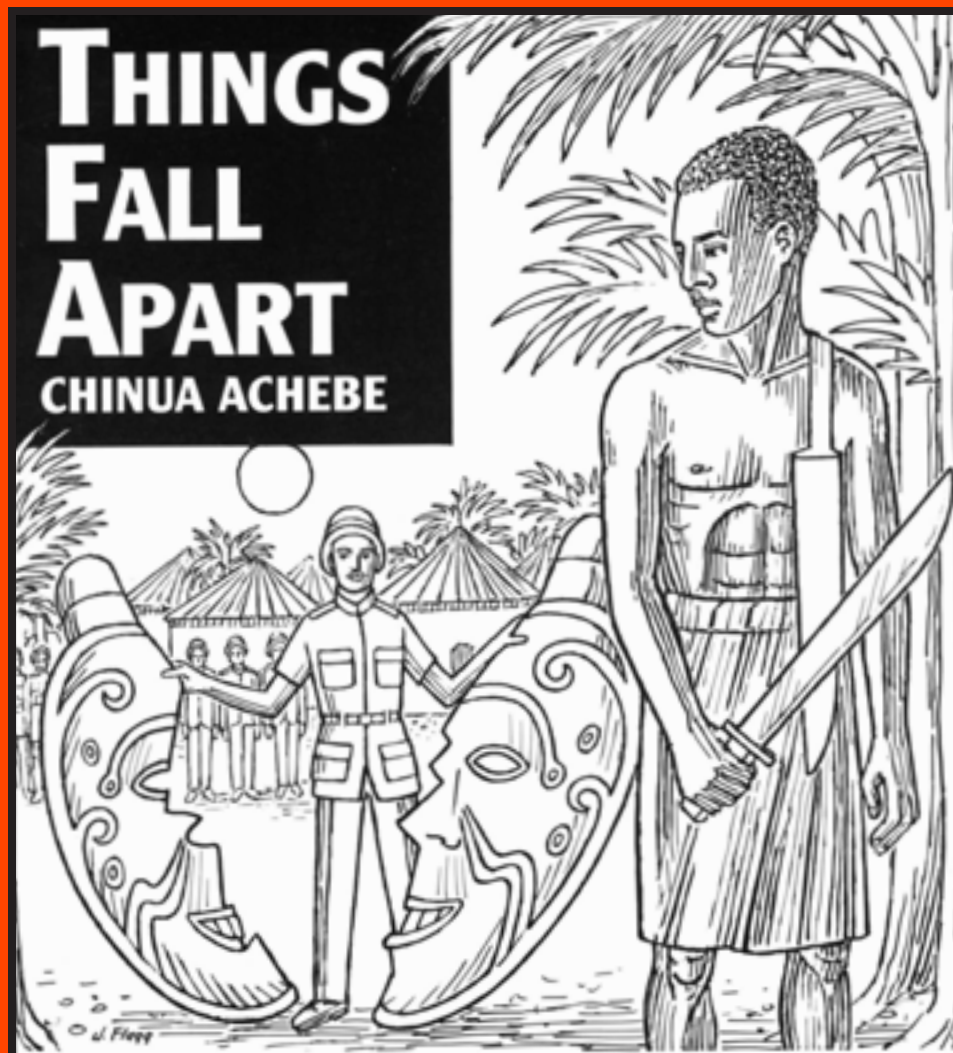


Novel•Ties



A Study Guide

Written By Joseph Claro

Edited by Joyce Friedland and Rikki Kessler

LEARNING LINKS

P.O. Box 326 • Cranbury • New Jersey 08512

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Synopsis	1
Background Information	2
Pre-Reading Activities	3
Chapters 1 - 3	4 - 6
Chapters 4 - 6	7 - 9
Chapters 7 - 9	10 - 11
Chapters 10 - 13	12 - 14
Chapters 14 - 19	15 - 16
Chapters 20 - 25	17 - 19
Cloze Activity	20
Post-Reading Activities	21
Suggestions For Further Reading	22
Answer Key	23 - 24

Novel-Ties® are printed on recycled paper.

The purchase of this study guide entitles an individual teacher to reproduce pages for use in a classroom. Reproduction for use in an entire school or school system or for commercial use is prohibited. Beyond the classroom use by an individual teacher, reproduction, transmittal or retrieval of this work is prohibited without written permission from the publisher.

For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with a specific novel consists of instructional material for guided reading. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

NOVEL-TIES are either for whole class instruction using a single title or for group instruction where each group uses a different novel appropriate to its reading level. Depending upon the amount of time allotted to it in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in two to four weeks.

The first step in using NOVEL-TIES is to distribute to each student a copy of the novel and a folder containing all of the duplicated worksheets. Begin instruction by selecting several pre-reading activities in order to set the stage for the reading ahead. Vocabulary exercises for each chapter always precede the reading so that new words will be reinforced in the context of the book. Use the questions on the chapter worksheets for class discussion or as written exercises.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits formed by practice in focusing on interpretive comprehension and literary techniques will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

1. Preview the book by reading the title and the author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think the book will be about? Where and when does it take place? Have you read anything else by the same author?
2. Read the Background Information on Nigeria on page two of this study guide and do some additional research to learn about the history and culture of Nigeria. Find out about the state of the government and finances in Nigeria from the time it was granted independence by Great Britain in 1960 to the present time.
3. *Things Fall Apart* explores the significance of traditional beliefs and practices. What are some traditions that you follow? Are there any traditions that you think should be seriously questioned?
4. The main character in this novel is a man who is trying to live down his parent's bad reputation. Can you think of any contemporary public figures or celebrities who might have the same dilemma?
5. The central character in *Things Fall Apart* measured his success in life by how much respect he received from the people in his village and the surrounding villages. Do you believe that success should be measured by external criteria, internal criteria, or a combination of both?
6. Do you think parents should expect their children to follow in their footsteps? Should parents be prepared to see their children turn out to be different from themselves?
7. Because of his personality, the main character is driven to do things that may not be in his own best interests. Can you think of any other fictional characters or famous people who might have the same failing?
8. The modern era is characterized as a time of rapid change. What kinds of changes should people be prepared for during their lifetimes? What kinds of changes do you think people should resist as much as they can?
9. Chinua Achebe wrote *Things Fall Apart* in 1958 to dramatize what happened when the culture of one people came into conflict with the culture of another. He believed that this usually resulted in the combination of their worst elements. What are some examples of how Americans have taken elements from other cultures? What are some examples of how other people have taken elements of American culture? Discuss how some of these exchanges were positive and others were negative.
10. Read the excerpt from the William Butler Yeats poem "The Second Coming" that appears opposite the title page. With a partner, discuss the possible meaning of these lines. Obtain a copy of the entire poem to see if it reinforces or contradicts your interpretation of the excerpt. As you read the book, try to determine why the author chose these lines to introduce the book.

Chapters 1 – 3 (cont.)

Questions:

1. Why was “throwing Amalinze the Cat” such an important event during Okonkwo’s teenage years? Why do you think the author used this event to introduce the protagonist of this novel?
2. Why was Unoka considered a failure in Ibo society?
3. What motivated Okonkwo to succeed in life? Was he successful? How did his driven personality affect his family?
4. What did the Ibo beliefs about darkness and snakes reveal about the Ibo attitude toward the world?
5. Why was the village of Umuofia feared and respected by its neighbors?
6. How did Ikemefuna come to live in Okonkwo’s home?
7. Why did Okonkwo ask Nwakibie for yam seeds? Why did Nwakibie agree to help him?
8. How did Okonkwo regard his difficult first year of farming? What did this suggest about his future?

Questions for Discussion:

1. Do you think Unoka was judged fairly by his society?
2. Do you think Okonkwo was justified in wanting to win the respect of his neighbors?

Literary Devices:

- I. *Simile*—A simile is a figure of speech in which a comparison of two unlike objects is made using the words “like” or “as.” For example:

Okonkwo’s fame had grown like a bush-fire in the harmattan.

What is being compared?

What does this reveal about Okonkwo?
