Independent Reading Assignment

Things Fall Apart

Tasks:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Complete Handout #1 – Learning About Nigeria</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Read and annotate (10 points)&quot;The Second Coming” and complete all questions possible(you will need to revisit and complete questions after done with novel)</td>
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<td>3. Read the novel</td>
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<td>4. Create chapter titles (see sheet)</td>
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<td>5. Create Okonkwo Family Tree</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>6. Explain Proverbs throughout (see sheet)</td>
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<td>7. Read Plague of Locusts excerpt(s) &amp; do questions</td>
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<td>8. Read “White Man’s Burden” (10 pnts. – annotation) &amp;</td>
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<td>9. “White Man’s Burden” complete questions</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>10. Answer ALL questions</td>
<td>378</td>
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<td>11. Complete Tragic Hero Chart</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>12. Go back to “The Second Coming” and complete all remaining questions</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>715</strong></td>
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There will be discussion and tests upon your return.
This is your winter assignment. You will be responsible for reading the novel, completing the charts and answering the questions. Be prepared for an exam upon your return.

**Guiding Questions**
How does Achebe see the role of the writer/storyteller? In what ways does he use fiction as a means of expressing and commenting on history?

To what extent is Things Fall Apart successful in communicating an alternative narrative to the dominant Western history of missionaries in Africa and other colonized societies?

**LIST OF CHARACTERS & PRONOUCIATION**

1. Okonkwo (Oh--kawn--kwoh)
2. Unoka (Ooh--no--kah)
3. Nwoye (Nuh--woh--yeh)
4. Ikemefuna (Ee--keh--meh--foo.nah)
5. Ekweft (Eh--kweh--fee)
6. Ezinma (Eh--zeen--mah)
7. Ojiubo (o h--jee--ooh-- boh)
8. Obierika (Oh--bee--air--ee--kah)
9. Chielo (Chee--eh--loh)
10. Agbala (Ahg--bah--lah)
11. Mr. Kiaga (Kee--ah--gah)
Chinua Achebe Video Questions – 
Interview with Bill Moyers – on class website

1. What does Achebe mean when he says the world is upside down?

2. What is the responsibility of an author, poet and playwright according to Achebe?

3. What does he mean that story telling is a threat? Do you agree with this assertion? Why or why not?

4. How, if at all, is this true in today’s society?

5. What is Achebe’s condemnation of Colonial rule?

6. What is the importance of storytelling (the oral tradition) in the African community?

7. Why did he write children’s stories?

8. What is the power of reminiscence?

9. What does it mean that “in remembrance is the secret of redemption?”

10. How does the depiction of Africans differ in white literature that in African literature?

11. How can this affect ones identity – when “they” are seen through the lens of others?

12. What is your impression of his ideas? How do they create an expectation as to what you will see in his novel *Things Fall Apart*?

**HW:** In order to have a cursory working knowledge of the peoples discussed in this novel, you will complete H/O #1 and do research on the following: the following sites may be useful (please report if they are no longer operable):

Countries Resource pg.: [http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/countries/Nigeria.html](http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/countries/Nigeria.html)

People’s Resource pg.: [http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people.html](http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people.html)

Igbo Information: [http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Igbo.html](http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Igbo.html)

Issues in African History: [http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/history/giblinhistory.html](http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/history/giblinhistory.html)

1. Find a map of Nigeria and locate the Igbo area. (See countries resource page)
2. Take notes on pre and post-colonial Nigeria
3. Document the descriptions and information about its four main ethnic groups: Yoruba, Igbo, Fulani, and Hausa. (See people’s resource page)
4. Take add’tl notes on the Igbo from the Igbo Information Page
5. Issues in African History
6. Note any pre-colonial religious information and mythology for the Igbo
Learning about Nigeria

Directions: Using any general encyclopedia (print or online), read about Nigeria and answer the following questions.

1. Where is Nigeria located? On what gulf can it be found?

2. What is its capital?

3. Under a constitution adopted in 1951, from what country was the governor to come? What two councils were established?

4. It also had an elected body of 136 members called the ___________________.

5. What state in the United States is about one half the size of Nigeria?

6. Describe the terrain found in the various parts of this country.

7. The ___________________ River is the great river in Nigeria. What is its importance to the rest of Africa?

8. The two principal tribes found there are the ___________________ and the ___________________.

9. What is the main tree found in its forests? Name at least three crops grown on its farms.

10. What minerals are mined there?

11. Describe the means of transportation and communication one would find.

12. What other interesting information did you find about Nigeria?
Looking at Titles and Themes – Things Fall Apart
(10 points – annotation)

Directions: Read “The Second Coming” by William Butler Yeats, the poem from which Achebe took the title for Things Fall Apart. Read also the editor’s notes. Then follow the steps given to analyze the poem and apply its meaning to the Nigerian experience in Achebe’s book.

The Second Coming (1921)
William Butler Yeats

TURNING and turning in the widening gyre (1)
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming (2) is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi (3)
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries (4) of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

Notes:
(1) This poem expresses Yeats’s sense of the dissolution of the civilization of his time, the end of one cycle of history and the approach of another. He called each cycle of history a “gyre” (line 1) – literally a circular or spiral turn. Spiral, making the figure of a cone (starts small then enlarges as it rises). He imagines a falconer losing control of the falcon which sweeps in ever widening circles around him until it breaks away altogether, and sees this as a symbol of the end of the present gyre of civilization—what he once described as “all our scientific democratic fact-finding heterogenous civilization.”
The birth of Christ brought to an end the cycle that had lasted from what Yeats called the “Babylonian mathematical starlight” (2000 BC) to the dissolution of Greco-Roman culture. “What if the irrational return?” Yeats asked in the prose work A Vision. “What if the circle begin again?” He speculates that “we may be about to accept the most implacable authority the world has known.” The new Nativity (“the rough beast” of lines 21-22) is deliberately mysterious, both terrible and regenerative.
(2) Lines 4-8 refer to the Russian Revolution of 1917. “The ceremony of innocence” suggests Yeats’s view of ritual as the basis for civilized living.
(3) The spirit or soul of the universe, with which all individual souls are connected through the “Great memory,” which Yeats held to be a universal subconscious in which the human race preserves its past memories. It is thus a source of symbolic images for the poet.
(4) I.e., the cradle of the infant Christ.
(5) Second Coming refers to the promised return of Christ on doomsday, the end of the world; but in Revelation 13, doomsday is also marked by the appearance of a monstrous beast.
(6) Spirit of the World.
(7) 2,000 years; the creature has been held back since the birth of Christ. Yeats imagines that the great heritage of Western European civilization is collapsing, and that the world will be swept over by a tide of savagery from the “uncivilized” portions of the globe.
“The Second Coming” Questions: (28 pnts)

1. What is the meaning of the phrase “things fall apart” within Yeats’ poem?

2. Write a short paraphrase of the poem, relating what literally happens.

3. What does the second coming refer to in general?

4. What does the second coming refer to in Yeats’ poem?

5. What might the falconer represent?

6. What might the falcon represent?

7. What two animals are contrasted? How are they different from each other?

8. Lost seven or eight key phrases that create pictures, or images, for you.

9. What is the mood of the poem? What do you think will happen with the coming of the beast?

10. According to the notes on the poem, what world system does Yeats see arising? What parallel fear has Achebe revealed that he has for Nigeria?

11. What theme does this poem convey?

12. As you read Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe, note how the novel both takes up and changes Yeats’ version of the Second Coming. Who or what in the novel represents a “rough beast” that “slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?”

13. Why is this an appropriate title for the novel?

14. What is significant about Achebe using a line from a European poem for the title of his novel?

- Begin a family tree for Okwonkwo. Include all information that we already have.
- Add as you move throughout.
- Include identifying personal characteristics for each
- Add important friends, also.
Okonkwo
Husband/father/ warrior
Personality trait:

Wife:

Child

Wife:

Child

Wife:

Child

THIS IS JUST AN EXAMPLE – COMPLETE AS YOU SEE FIT

You should have at least 10 boxes
(20 points)
These are a few of the terms that will be important to our understanding.

1. **Proverb** - A short, popular saying that expresses some practical truth or illuminating thought about everyday life. Usually didactic in nature.

2. **Myth** - A story, often told orally, which explains some natural phenomena in imaginative ways. A myth does not have any historical basis, unlike a legend. Myths usually contain supernatural occurrences or characters. For example: Greek myth of Deirdre and Icarus.

3. **Legend** - A story which is only partly true about a real or made-up character; a fable. Legends usually include exaggerations and unusual events or circumstances. For example: Paul Bunyan changing the course of the Pecos River.

4. **Fable** - A story that presents a moral or practical lesson. Generally, there are talking animals in fables. For example: Aesop’s fables of The Lion and The Mouse and The Hare and The Tortoise.

5. **Folklore** - The traditions, beliefs, and customs of a people.

6. **Oral Tradition** - Cultural material and traditions transmitted orally from one generation to another.

7. **Characterization (direct & indirect)** - Techniques author uses to develop characters.

8. **Foils** - A character whose emotions or actions highlight, by means of contrast, the emotions or actions of another character.

9. **Dramatic Irony** - The audience or reader knows more about a character's situation than the character does and knows that the character's understanding is incorrect.

10. **Epigram** - A short statement or poem with a witty turn of thought or a wittily condensed expression.

11. **Foreshadowing** - The use of hints or clues in a story to suggest what action is to come.

12. **Irony** - A perception of inconsistency, sometimes humorous, in which the significance and understanding of a statement or event is changed by its context.

13. **Structural Irony** - The use of a naive hero, whose incorrect perceptions differ from the reader's correct ones.

14. **Verbal Irony** - A discrepancy between what is said and what is really meant; sarcasm.

15. **Metaphor** - A comparison of two things that are basically dissimilar in which one is described in terms of the other.

16. **Personification** - A figure of speech in which an object, abstract idea, or animal is given human characteristics.

17. **Protagonist** - The central or main character in a story around whom the plot centers.

18. **Simile** - A comparison between two different things using either "like" or "as".

19. **Symbol** - An object, person, or place that has a meaning in itself and that also stands for something larger than itself, usually an idea or concept; some concrete thing which represents an abstraction.

20. **Theme** - The central or dominant idea behind the story; the most important aspect that emerges from how the book treats its subject.

21. **Tragedy** - A serious work, usually a play, in which the main character experiences defeat, brought about by a tragic flaw.

22. **Tragic Flaw** - The main defect of the protagonist in a tragedy.

23. **Tragic Hero** - The main character in a tragedy; in order to fit the definition, the hero must have a tragic flaw, which causes his or her downfall.

24. **Rhetorical Strategies** - Elements authors use to effectively put forth their arguments such as: repetition, parallelism, imagery, metaphors, similes, personification, hyperbole, analogy, flashbacks, foreshadowing, allusions, symbolism, irony, satire, and a myriad of other literary techniques.

25. **Polysyndeton** - Is another rhetorical strategy that is used in *Things Fall Apart*. It is the use of several conjunctions in close succession, especially where some might be omitted (as in "he ran and jumped and laughed for joy"). It is a stylistic scheme used to achieve a variety of effects: it can increase the rhythm of prose, speed or slow its pace, convey solemnity or even ecstasy and childlike exuberance.
# Proverbs in *Things Fall Apart* - Chapters 1-11 (90 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proverb</th>
<th>Animal involved (if any) / significance (1 pnt.)</th>
<th>Meaning (2 pnts.)</th>
<th>Relevance to the story / what role does it play in developing events or theme? (3 pnts.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “The sun will shine on those who stand before it shines on those who kneel under them.” CHAP 1</td>
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<td>2. “If a child washed his hands he could eat with kings.” CHAP 1</td>
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<td>3. “Let the kite perch and let the eagle perch too. If one says no to the other, let his wing break.” CHAP 3</td>
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<td>4. “A man who pays respect to the great paves the way for his own greatness.” CHAP 3</td>
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<td>5. “A toad does not run in the daytime for nothing.” CHAP 3</td>
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<td>6. “An old woman is always uneasy when dry bones are mentioned in a proverb.” CHAP 3</td>
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<td>Proverb</td>
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<td>7. “The lizard that jumped from the high iroko tree to the ground said he would praise himself if no one else did.” CHAP 3</td>
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<td>8. “Eneke the bird says that since men have learned to shoot without missing, he has learned to fly without perching.” CHAP 3</td>
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<td>9. “It was like pouring grains of corn into a bag full of holes.” (technically, this is a simile, not a proverb) CHAP 3</td>
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<td>10. “Looking at a king’s mouth, one would think he never sucked at his mother’s breast.” CHAP 4</td>
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<td>11. “Those whose palm-kernels were cracked for them by a benevolent spirit should not forget to be humble.” CHAP 4</td>
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<td>12. “When a man says yes his chi says yes also.” CHAP 4</td>
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<td>Proverb</td>
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<td>13. “When mother-cow is chewing grass its young ones watch its mouth.”</td>
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<td>CHAP 8</td>
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<td>14. “But as the dog said, ‘If I fall down for you and you fall down for me, it is play.’”</td>
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<td>CHAP 8</td>
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<td>15. The story about the tortoise in Chapter 11. (FABLE)</td>
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**Proverbs in Things Fall Apart - Chapters 13-25 (42 points)**

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<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Relevance to the story/ what role does it play in developing events or theme?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. &quot;If one finger brought oil is soiled the others.&quot;</td>
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<td>CHAP 13</td>
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<td>2. &quot;Mother is supreme&quot;</td>
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<td>CHAP 14</td>
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<td>3. &quot;Never kill a man who says nothing.&quot;</td>
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<td>CHAP 15</td>
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<td>Proverb</td>
<td>Animal involved (if any) / significance</td>
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<td>4. &quot;There is nothing to fear from someone who shouts.&quot; CHAP 15</td>
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<td>5. &quot;Living fire begets cold, impotent ash.&quot; CHAP 16</td>
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<td>6. &quot;A child can not pay for his mothers milk.&quot; CHAP 19</td>
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<td>7. &quot;Men have learned to shoot without missing their mark and I have learned to fly without perching on a twig.&quot; CHAP 24</td>
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**Things Fall Apart Chapter Titles and Explanations – 50pnts.**

Achebe has not provided titles for the chapters in Things Fall Apart. Your task is to compose a title for each of the chapters and briefly explain why the title is appropriate. Explain how it connects to character, conflict or theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Title</th>
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Things Fall Apart Unit Questions

The following questions help you to focus on an analysis of: Structure, Technique and Plot; Character and Conflict; Setting and Society; Themes and Motifs; and Imagery and Language. Answer them as thoroughly as possible so as to develop an in-depth understanding of the text.

Part One
Chapter One (28 pnts.)

1. Reread the first sentence of the novel. What purposes does this sentence serve?

2. Explain the rhetorical strategies used in the first two paragraphs.

3. Explain the use of figurative devices in the following line: “Amalinze was a wily craftsman, but Okonkwo was as slippery as a fish in water.”

4. Explain the imagery in the following line: “That was many years ago, twenty years or more, and during this time Okonkwo’s fame had grown like a bush-fire in the harmattan.”

5. What is the rhetorical effect used in the following line: “The drums beat and the flutes sang and the spectators held their breath.” What effect does it create?

6. Describe Okonkwo. Why does Achebe use animal imagery to describe him?

7. Describe Unoka. How does Okonkwo feel about his father?

8. Why does Achebe spend so much of the first part of the chapter describing Unoka?

9. How does Okonkwo’s impression of his father shape Okonkwo’s character? How does he act as a result of his father’s reputation?

10. Explain the importance of the following line: “Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten.”

11. What does the reader learn about how Okonkwo feels about his father?

12. How does the text refer to Ikemefuna?

13. What do these references indicate about Ikemefuna?

14. Explain the purpose(s) of the first chapter?
Chapter Two – TFA (44 pnts.)

1. How do the villages communicate with each other?

2. What are the italicized words included in the text? What is the purpose of including these words in the narrative?

3. What does Okonkwo realize after the town crier comes through town?

4. How do the people feel about night? How do they eliminate or deal with fear?

5. Explain the meaning of the following saying: “When the moon is shining the cripple becomes hungry for a walk.”

6. How does Okonkwo feel about war? Why do you think he feels this way?

7. Explain the purpose of the following line as it relates to characterization: “On great occasions such as the funeral of a village celebrity he drank his palm-wine from his first human head.” Why would Achebe mention such an act in this novel?

8. Describe the nature of the conflict between the villages, Mbaino and Umuofia.

9. How do other tribes feel about Umuofia?

10. How does Umuofia choose to settle the dispute? Why do they make this decision? Provide textual evidence to support your answer.

11. What does the discussion indicate about the nature of medicine and religion in the Ibo tribe?

12. Why is Okonkwo chosen to visit Mbaino?

13. Why does the reader suspect that something is going to happen with Ikemefuna and Okonkwo?

14. Describe the family structure of Okonkwo’s tribe.

15. How would Okonkwo’s rule of his household be interpreted in Western culture?

16. Why does Okonkwo treat his family the way he does? How does Achebe want the reader to feel about Okonkwo?

17. What rhetorical techniques does Achebe use in the following line: “It was deeper and more intimate than the fear of evil and capricious gods and of magic, the fear of the forest, and of the forces of nature, malevolent, red in tooth and claw”? What effect is being achieved?

18. Achebe informs the reader that there is a word that means both “woman” and “a man who had taken no title.” Why does he share this information with the reader?

19. Who is Nwoye? How does Okonkwo feel about him?

20. Is Okonkwo’s description of Nwoye accurate? How do we know?

21. Reread the exchange between Okonkwo and his “most senior” wife. How does Okonkwo treat her? What does it demonstrate about the role of gender within the Ibo community?

22. Describe the compound where Okonkwo and his family live. What does this tell the reader about Okonkwo?
Chapter Three - TFA (28 pnts.)

1. What effect does Achebe achieve with his repetition of the phrase “they came” in the second paragraph?

2. Why must people crawl when visiting Agbala?

3. Why might it be unusual that a woman is the one who serves and can see Agbala?

4. When Okonkwo’s father visits the oracle, what does he learn?

5. What is a chi? How is it important in the story?

6. Why is Unoka left to die in the Evil Forest?

7. Reread the first part of this chapter and the last paragraph before the break. Why does Achebe begin and end this section with the same information? What is he repeating?

8. Who is Nwakibie? How does the reader know that he is successful?

9. What does Nwakibie mean when he says, “You will have what is good for you and I will have what is good for me. Let the kite perch and let the eagle perch too. If one says no to the other, let his wing break”?

10. What is the meaning of the following: “An old woman is always uneasy when dry bones are mentioned in a proverb”? How does this relate to Okonkwo?

11. Why does Nwakibie agree to let Okonkwo use his yams for share-cropping?

12. Why does Okonkwo resent having to take care of his mother and sisters?

13. Explain the sarcasm in the paragraph about the unearned success of the farmers who delayed planting their yams.

14. Analyze the several literary techniques used in this chapter.

Chapter Four (20 pnts.)

1. How was Okonkwo able to achieve such a high rank within the tribe when his father died a penniless man? How is this different from colonial-era European culture?

2. What suggestion is there that Okonkwo will evolve into a tragic hero?

3. Why is the old man’s rebuke significant?

4. The text mentions the chi again as it relates to Okonkwo’s success. How strong a determiner is the chi assumed to be?

5. Why does the text return to the story of Ikemefuna after spending time discussing the traditions with the harvest?

6. Describe Ikemefuna. How does he fit into the family structure?

7. What is significant about Okwonko’s breaking the peace during the Week of Peace? What does this action indicate about Okonkwo?
8. In this chapter, what does the reader learn about the customs of the Ibo and the customs of other neighboring clans? How might this be important in the story?

9. How does Okonkwo respond to his son? What verb does Achebe use to suggest that Okonkwo’s perception of his son is not necessarily accurate?

10. Why does Achebe end this chapter by relating the nature of the relationship between Ikemefuna and Nwoye?

**Chapter Five (18 pnts)**

1. Achebe begins Chapter Five by describing the Feast of the New Yam. What does the reader learn about Umuofian culture through this description?

2. Who is responsible for the major preparations for the Feast of the New Yam? What does this tell the reader about Ibo culture?

3. Why does Okonkwo become angry before the New Yam Festival? Was his anger directed in the right place? Why or why not?

4. For what reason does Achebe repeat the word “beautiful” when describing the way the women decorate their bodies and cut their children’s hair into patterns?

5. What is Ekwefi’s favorite part of the festival? Why?

6. When people call for one another, why do they respond “Is that me?”

7. What type of relationship has Ikemefuna developed with Okonkwo’s family? Cite an instance in this chapter that demonstrates this relationship.

8. What is the significance of the extended metaphor Achebe uses to describe the drums and their relationship to the village?

9. When Okonkwo’s wives bring him his food for the evening, Ezinma sits with her father while she waits for him to finish her mother’s dish. Why does Okonkwo yell at her?

**Chapter Six – TFA (10 pnts)**

1. What is significant about the number of drums used at the wrestling?

2. What do Okonkwo’s springing to his feet and then sitting immediately imply?

3. Explain the literary device Achebe uses in the following line:
   “The air, which had been stretched taut with excitement, relaxed again.”

4. Who is Chielo?

5. Discuss the type of language that Achebe uses to describe the fight and how this might add to the importance of this scene.
Chapter Seven (30 pnts.)

1. At the beginning of this chapter, the narrator states: “He grew rapidly like a yam tendril in the rainy season, and was full of the sap of life.” Of whom is he speaking? What does this image indicate about this person?

2. How does Okonkwo feel about Ikemefuna and the relationship that he has developed with his Nwoye?

3. What line in the first page of the chapter would indicate that Nwoye is only acting in a certain way in order to appease his father?

4. Consider the following lines and discuss whether or not you think they are the way everyone in Umuofia feels or just the way Okonkwo feels.

   “And so he was always happy when he heard him grumbling about his women. That showed that in time he would be able to control his women-folk. No matter how prosperous a man was, if he was unable to rule his women and his children (and especially his women) he was not really a man.”

5. How does Okonkwo define manliness?

6. Why does Achebe spend so much time setting up the dichotomy between Okonkwo and Nwoye?

7. Achebe includes one of the stories that Nwoye likes to hear his mother tell. Why does this story appear here?

8. What type of imagery does Achebe use to describe the arrival of the locusts? What is significant about this passage?

   Achebe describes the arrival as follows: “At first, a fairly small swarm came. They were the harbingers sent to survey the land. And then appeared on the horizon a slowly-moving mass like a boundless sheet of black cloud drifting towards Umuofia. Soon it covered half the sky and the solid mass was now broken by tiny eyes of light like shining star dust. It was a tremendous sight, full of power and beauty.”

9. Why do the village elders decide that Ikemefuna is to be killed?

10. How does the clan strike an apparent harmony between the will of the Community and the needs of the Individual?

11. Why does Okonkwo dress to go with the men who are taking Ikemefuna instead of staying removed from the business as he is told?

12. How does Achebe change the setting to complement what is happening in the story?

13. How does Okonkwo once again place his own fears above the good of his community?

14. What is the purpose of Nwoye’s point of view?

15. What two themes have been identified by the end of Chapter 7?

Chapter Eight – TFA (18 pnts)

1. What does the reader learn about Okonkwo from the following passage:

   “Okonkwo did not taste any food for two days after the death of Ikemefuna. He drank palm-wine from morning till night, and his eyes were red and fierce like the eyes of a rat when it was caught by the tail and dashed against the floor.”

2. Again Okonkwo mentions that Ezinma should have been a boy. Why is it important that he mentions this at this point in the story?
3. What theme is advanced by the following passage?

4. “When did you become a shivering old woman,” Okonkwo asked himself, “you, who are known in all the nine villages for your valor in war? How can a man who has killed five men in battle fall to pieces because he has added a boy to their number? Okonkwo, you have become a woman indeed.”

5. How does the reader know that Okonkwo is worried, not only about the future of his family, but also the future of the village?

6. What does Obierika believe about Okonkwo’s decision to help carry out Ikemefuna’s death? What might this foreshadow?

7. Achebe spends some time developing the story of Ozoemena and Ndulue. What is the purpose of this story? What does it illustrate about the differences in the way of thinking between Okonkwo and Obierika, but also about the village as a whole?

8. How could the following statement function as foreshadowing in the novel?
   “Okonkwo was not a man of thought but of action.”

9. How does this chapter establish that things are changing within the village?

10. How are white people introduced in this chapter? What is the tone of the chapter at the time they are introduced?

**Chapter Nine (4 pnts)**

1. What is an ogbanje and how does it relate to Ezinma’s illness?

2. How does Okonkwo’s helplessness manifest itself?

**Chapter Ten (8 pnts)**

1. Explain the disconnect between the chapters. Why would Achebe choose to do this?

2. Read the following lines:
   “It was clear from the way the crowd stood or sat that the ceremony was for men. There were many women, but they looked on from the fringe like outsiders.”

   What does this excerpt suggest about the role of women? What is significant about the placement of this passage relative to what has come immediately before, and what will come immediately after?

3. Explain the irony of the trial in this chapter. Is justice served in the egwugwu’s judgment?

4. How does the case brought before the egwugwu parallel Okonkwo’s life?

**Chapter Eleven - TFA (22 pnts)**

1. Often, the setting is not just “where the story happens,” but a geographical, historical, social, economic, or philosophical setting. Achebe begins this chapter with a description of the night. The reader learns earlier in the
2. This chapter focuses on Ibo folklore. Summarize the story of the tortoise and the birds and explain what it suggests about customs and traditions. How might this story relate to Okonkwo?

3. How does the story of the tortoise and the birds relate to colonialism?

4. What type of imagery does Achebe use to describe Ekwefi’s reaction to hearing her daughter’s name? Find similar language in the chapter that parallels this.

5. Why does Chielo visit Okonkwo and Ekwefi?

6. How does Ekwefi go against the wishes of Chielo?

7. Describe the rhetorical technique that Achebe uses in the paragraph that begins, “The priestess’ voice was already growing faint in the distance.” Why does Achebe use this technique?

8. Explain the irony in the situation that it begins to grow lighter as Ekwefi is still following Chielo.

9. How does Achebe maintain the tone of the chapter and the significance of Chielo’s power when the priestess reaches the circular ring of hills? How might a western reader interpret this section?

10. Who joins Ekwefi at the cave, and how does this contribute to his character development? Does this conflict with what we know about this character thus far?

11. How does Ekwefi’s decision to follow Chielo contradict Okonkwo’s ideas about femininity and masculinity?

Chapter Twelve (4 pnts)

1. Analyze Okonkwo’s feelings about what happened with Chielo. How is his response different from the way that Ekwefi views the situation?

2. On what type of ceremony does this chapter focus? How is this ceremony different from the other ceremonies that have been discussed in the book?

Chapter Thirteen (20 pnts.)

1. What happens that causes the cannons to boom? What does Okonkwo remember in relation to this event?

2. Why does Achebe include a funeral ceremony at this point in the novel?

3. What does the one-handed spirit’s benediction ironically foreshadow?

4. What is the significance of this death’s occurring at the center of the novel?

5. How is the accidental killing punished by Okwonko’s clan? How does Okonkwo face his punishment? How do the village elders handle his punishment?

6. How does Obierika react to the punishment? Why do you think he reacts this way? What does he resolve after his contemplation? How does this resolution advance one of the themes of the novel?

7. How might the village interpret Okonkwo’s role in the death? What had Obierka warned Okonkwo about his role in Ikemefuna’s death?
8. How does Achebe create dramatic tension in this chapter? What purpose does the shooting serve?

9. Explain the irony in Okonkwo’s having to return to the motherland and that he committed the “female” crime.

10. What might Obierika’s final statement foreshadow?

   “As the elders said, if one finger brought oil it soiled the others.”

**Part Two**

**Chapter Fourteen (16 pnts.)**

1. What does Okonkwo learn about family in his transition to life in Mbanta?

2. Cite several literary devices that Achebe uses when describing nature after the first rains and analyze the effect Achebe creates with their use.

3. How does Okonkwo compare beginning life as an older person to beginning life as a young man?

4. Why is Okonkwo unable to deal with his punishment? How does he seem to be behaving by sitting in “a silent half-sleep”?

5. Explain the significance of being “cast out of his clan like a fish onto a dry, sandy beach, panting.”

6. What does Okonkwo find discouraging about his chi?

7. What does Uchendu try to teach Okonkwo about the role of women?

8. What might Uchendu’s lecture portend for Okonkwo and foreshadow for the plot?

**Chapter Fifteen (12 pnts.)**

1. What is the purpose of Obierka’s visit?

2. How do Obierika and Okonkwo greet Uchendu when they come to visit him?

3. What news does Obierika bring to Okonkwo?

4. What did the Oracle mean when it told the Abame that the white men were locusts?

5. To what do Obierka, Uchendu, and Okonkwo liken the arrival of the white men in Abame?

6. How does Achebe conclude the chapter? Why is this significant?

**Chapter Sixteen (10 pnts.)**

1. How do the clan leaders feel about the white men’s religion? Why?

2. In what ways is Nwoye’s being with the missionaries significant?

3. How are Nwoye and Okonkwo revealed to be more similar than different?
4. What imagery does Achebe use to illustrate how Nwoye felt after hearing the missionary’s message?

5. Why does Achebe create a situation in which the missionaries cannot speak the African language?

Chapter Seventeen (10 pnts.)

1. What do the missionaries ask of the village? What do the leaders of the village grant the men? How does this backfire?

2. What prevents Nwoye from attending church the first Sunday it is open? What does this illustrate about the power of superstition?

3. Whom do the missionaries allow to join their church? What is unusual about this?

4. How does Okonkwo react when he learns that Nwoye has been at the church? Why do he and Nwoye no longer talk?

5. At the end of the chapter, what metaphor does Achebe use to illustrate Okonkwo’s belief about his son?

Chapter Eighteen (8 pnts.)

1. What does the narrator suggest has arrived along with the new religion?

2. Why do the missionaries insist that the outcasts shave their heads?

3. Part two of the novel relates much of what happens to the clan as a unit rather than just to Okonkwo. How does the reader know that Okonkwo is still the same man who came to the village after being banned from his fatherland?

4. In what two, almost contradictory, ways is Okoli’s death significant?

Chapter Nineteen (6 pnts)

1. What do we learn about Okonkwo in the opening paragraphs of this chapter?

2. What do the names of the children that are born to Okonkwo during his exile symbolize about how he really feels about living in his motherland? How do the names of his children illustrate Okonkwo’s personality?

3. Explain the significance of the final speech in the chapter. What does it foreshadow for Part Three of the novel?
Part Three

Chapter Twenty (14 pnts)

1. The first part of the novel focuses on Okonkwo and how he rises to prominence in his society. The first part also details customs and traditions among the people. The second part of the novel depicts Okonkwo’s exile, and the beginning of both his decline and the potential decline of Ibo culture. Chapter Twenty is the beginning of Part Three. What do you think Part Three will be about?

2. Explain the meaning of the following simile: “The clan was like a lizard; if it lost its tail it soon grew another.”

3. What effect does Achebe achieve with his use of anaphora in the first page of this chapter?

4. Why is it ironic that Okonkwo now blames his chi for his losses, especially the “tragedy of his first son”?

5. Why, according to Obierka, did the village not resist the white man’s initial encroachment? Why won’t he agree to fight now that Okonkwo has returned?

6. Explain the significance of the following line: “He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.”

7. Okonkwo and Obierika seem to disagree a great deal throughout the novel. What does each person represent?

Chapter Twenty-One (10 pnts.)

1. What turns out to be the real underlying reason for the white man’s success in Umuofia?

2. Explain Mr. Brown’s method of conversion and why he is successful.

3. How does Umuofia respond to Okonkwo’s return? Why?

4. What does Mr. Brown’s visit to Okonkwo emphasize about relations between the Ibo and the Europeans?

5. How is the theme of the novel repeated in the last paragraph of this chapter?

Chapter Twenty-Two (10 pnts.)

1. How does Mr. Smith’s arrival portend trouble for the clan?

2. How does Enoch create the conflict between the church and the clan? How was this event foreshadowed earlier in the novel?

3. Explain the importance of the following line: “It seemed as if the very soul of the tribe wept for a great evil that was coming—its own death.”

4. How are Enoch and Okonkwo similar?

5. What is the inevitable result of Mr. Smith’s inability to understand and communicate?
Chapter Twenty-Three (12 pnts.)

1. What do the first two paragraphs of this chapter suggest are the reasons that Okonkwo begins to feel happy again?

2. How does the District Commissioner break faith with the leaders of Umuofia?

3. What punishment does the District Commissioner impose on the men? What is the men’s reaction?

4. How are the men treated in the jail that is in opposition to what the District Commissioner tells the guards to do?

5. What simile does Achebe use to describe the village’s alarm and confusion? Why is this significant?

6. How is village life portrayed as already ended?

Chapter Twenty-Four (10 pnts.)

1. What kind of opportunity would a war offer to Okonkwo?

2. Based on what we already know about Okwonko’s character, what does his insistence on war foreshadow?

3. Reread the exchange between Obierika and Okonkwo. How does it reflect the characteristics of both men? What does it foreshadow for Okonkwo?

4. How does Okonkwo’s statement about not caring what the group does predict his fall as a tragic hero?

5. In what ways is Okonkwo’s slaughter of the head messenger climactic?

Chapter Twenty-Five (6 pnts.)

1. Why has Okonkwo committed suicide?

2. Given his role as the tragic hero in the novel, is it inevitable that Okonkwo commit suicide?

3. On what kind of note does the novel end?
Things Fall Apart AP Unit
modified 12/2018

~The Plague of Locusts~ (10 pnts.)
(8th plague of 10 – follows hail and precedes darkness) – READ AFTER CHAPTER 8

The Second Book of Moses, Called

Exodus 10:1

(1) And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might show these my signs before him: (2) and that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son’s son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the LORD. (3) And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? let my people go, that they may serve me. (4) Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast: (5) and they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which growth for you out of the field: (6) and they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers’ fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day. And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh. (7) And Pharaoh’s servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed? (8) And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God: but who are they that shall go? (9) And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the LORD. (10) And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you. (11) Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the LORD; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence. (12) And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, even all that the hail hath left. (13) And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. (14) And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous were they; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such. (15) For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; Rev. 9.2, 3 and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt. (16) Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you. (17) Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me this death only. (18) And he went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the LORD. (19) And the LORD turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea; there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt. (20) But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.

QUESTIONS:
1. Read the description of the hordes of swarming locusts. What picture of locusts is portrayed in this scripture? Was there any effective way to stop them?
2. Why are they considered a plague? What are the implications of this word?
3. How does Achebe create a parallel between the Locusts in African and Western traditions?
4. To what is he comparing the descending of the Locusts (what do they foreshadow / what are they symbolic of)? Is it effective? Why or why not?

MODERN CONNECTIONS:
5. What current national and world events or situations might well be modern visitations of the locust plague?
The White Man's Burden (1899) READ WITH CHAPTERS 18-19
Rudyard Kipling, (10 pnts. – annotation)

Born in British India in 1865, Rudyard Kipling was educated in England before returning to India in 1882, where his father was a museum director and authority on Indian arts and crafts. Thus Kipling was thoroughly immersed in Indian culture: by 1890 he had published in English about 80 stories and ballads previously unknown outside India. As a result of financial misfortune, from 1892-96 he and his wife, the daughter of an American publisher, lived in Vermont, where he wrote the two Jungle Books. After returning to England, he published "The White Man's Burden" in 1899, an appeal to the United States to assume the task of developing the Philippines, recently won in the Spanish-American War. As a writer, Kipling perhaps lived too long; by the time of his death in 1936, he had come to be reviled as the poet of British imperialism, though being regarded as a beloved children's book author. Today he might yet gain appreciation as a transmitter of Indian culture to the West.

What is it today's reader finds so repugnant about Kipling's poem? If you were a citizen of a colonized territory, how would you respond to Kipling? Pay close attention to diction & imagery. They convey a lot.

Take up the White Man's burden--
Send forth the best ye breed--
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild--
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's burden--
In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple,
An hundred times made plain
To seek another's profit,
And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden--
The savage wars of peace--
Fill full the mouth of Famine
And bid the sickness cease;
And when your goal is nearest
The end for others sought,
Watch sloth and heathen Folly
Bring all your hopes to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden--
No tawdry rule of kings,
But toil of serf and sweeper--
The tale of common things.

The ports ye shall not enter,
The roads ye shall not tread,
Go mark them with your living,
And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden--
And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better,
The hate of those ye guard--
The cry of hosts ye humour
(Ah, slowly!) toward the light:--
"Why brought he us from bondage,
Our loved Egyptian night?"

Take up the White Man's burden--
Ye dare not stoop to less--
Nor call too loud on Freedom
To cloke (1) your weariness;
By all ye cry or whisper,
By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples
Shall weigh your gods and you.

Take up the White Man's burden--
Have done with childish days--
The lightly proferred laurel, (2)
The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood
Through all the thankless years
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,
The judgment of your peers!

(1) Cloak, cover.
(2) Since the days of Classical Greece, a laurel wreath has been a symbolic victory prize.
White Man's Burden Questions (28 pnts.)

1. What is the subject of the poem?

2. What is the “White Man’s Burden”?

3. What is the speaker’s attitude towards the subject?

4. What are some of the “duties” the speaker says must be done?

5. Who are the “sullen peoples” and how are they characterized?

6. What reward did Kipling suggest the “White Man” gets for carrying his “burden”?

7. What is the moral dilemma presented within each work (TFA & the poem)?

8. How do the two texts represent Christianity versus African religious belief and practice?

9. How do they approach the relationship between the community and the individual?

10. How does the poem portray non-white peoples?

11. What is the narrator’s attitude towards Empire and colonialism?

12. How does this attitude compare with that of the narrator in Things Fall Apart?

13. How are the European views of Africans and the Africans’ views of whites represented in the novel?

14. How might Things Fall Apart be a response to and a revision of the view of non-white people as represented in “The White Man’s Burden”?
Tragic hero

A tragic hero is the main character in a tragedy who makes an error in his or her actions that leads to his or her downfall.[1]

Common traits of a tragic protagonist:

- The hero discovers his fate by his own actions, not by things happening to him.
- The hero sees and understands his doom, and that his fate was revealed by his own actions.
- The hero’s downfall is understood by Aristotle to arouse pity and fear.
- The hero is physically or spiritually wounded by his experiences, often resulting in his death.
- A tragic hero is often of noble birth, or rises to noble standing (King Arthur)
- The hero learns something from his/her mistake.
- The hero is faced with a serious decision.
- The suffering of the hero is meaningful.
- There may sometimes be supernatural involvement (in Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar, Caesar is warned of his death via Calpurnia’s vision and Brutus is warned of his impending death by the ghost of Caesar).
- The Shakespearean tragic hero dies at some point in the story, for example Macbeth. Shakespeare’s characters illustrate that tragic heroes are neither fully good nor fully evil. Through the development of the plot a hero’s mistakes, rather than his quintessential goodness or evil, lead to his tragic downfall.
- The hero of classical tragedies is almost universally male. Later tragedies (like Shakespeare’s Antony and Cleopatra) introduced the female tragic hero. Portrayals of female tragic heroes are notable because they are rare.[2]
## Chart for Characteristics of Tragic Hero

*Directions: Explain each category in complete sentences. (25 pnts.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of tragic hero:</th>
<th>Okonkwo as a tragic hero (give examples or explain why it doesn't apply): (2 pnts. Each)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What is the character’s position in the community? It should show a sense of nobility, authority, influence or power.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• must be good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• must aim at propriety — have good intentions — conformity to established standards of good or proper behavior or manners.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• must be consistent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• exhibits tragic flaw or flaws, often • hubris—excessive pride self-confidence; arrogance. • Rashness—to act too hastily or without due consideration.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• experiences a reversal or fall</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• brings about his/fall own downfall as a result of his tragic flaw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What discovery does the character make about himself or herself? What self-knowledge does the character gain? How does the character achieve reconciliation with the universe?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What catharsis (purging of emotions) does the character experience?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• evokes both pity and fear in audience/reader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on all of this, does Okonkwo reflect the archetypal tragic hero? Explain. (5 pnts.)