

This is due by the first Friday of the school year. I'll create a Google Assignment for you to attach your work to.

For this assignment, you'll need to read Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart*, which you can pick up from the school library. **There are THREE parts to this summer assignment.** If you have any questions, please email me at Jnarozny@rutherfordschools.org

Part 1: Meaning and Complexity Chart

After reading each section detailed below, complete the following chart. The purpose of this is to keep you thinking about one central question: **What message does Achebe's novel communicate about people, society, and/or the human experience?**

- **For Column 2**, ask yourself: what is the main purpose of these chapters? What is Achebe trying to get me to understand about society, people, humanity?
- **For Column 3**, provide the **basic** evidence that helped you see the message you stated in Column 2.
- **For Column 4**, what complexity or tension do columns 2 & 3 reveal in the novel? Identify it or ask a pointed question about it.

I've provided an example for the first group of chapters.
Use it as a starting point for your own ideas; do not keep it exactly as-is.

Reading Section	Main message of this section (1 short statement)	Evidence (1 – 2 bullet points)	Complication or Question (1 – 2 bullet points)
Ch. 1 – 7	Success is built on society's expectations of strength and achievement.	Okonkwo's reputation as a wrestler and successful farmer.	Does respect that is based on strength come with a cost? <i>Or:</i> Fear seems to motivate him to gain respect in society.
Ch. 8 – 13			
Ch. 14 – 19			
Ch. 20 – 23			
Ch. 24 – 25			

Part 2: Explore the complexities

For each of the four complexities below: (Do this after finishing the novel.)

- Explain both sides of the tension. (1 – 2 sentences)
- Identify one to two specific moments from the novel that illustrate this complexity. (**BRIEF REFERENCES!**)
- Discuss how the complexity contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. (1 – 2 sentences)

1. Tradition creates both order and suffering.

A.

B.

C.

2. Masculinity can be both a source of strength and a source of weakness.

A.

B.

C.

3. Colonial influence causes harm, yet some characters find opportunities within it.

A.

B.

C.

4. Change is both necessary and dangerous. (Consider what is gained and what is lost through change.)

A.

B.

C.

Part 3: Final Reflection – Why this story?

After finishing the novel and completing Parts 1 and 2 above, write a **1-page response** addressing the following question. (*size 12 font, single-spaced, about 400-500 words*)

Why did Chinua Achebe need to tell this story?

You should consider the following when developing your response:

- *Why did Achebe choose: this protagonist, this culture, this central conflict, this ending?*
- *What larger understanding of people, society, culture, or the human experience does the novel ultimately communicate?*

Requirements

- Use specific references to the novel to illustrate your points.
- Focus on interpretation rather than summary.
- Your response should move beyond simply asking "**What happened?**" by asking "**Why did the author make these choices, and what do those choices reveal about the meaning of the work as a whole?**"

Your Final Reflection: