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All things fall apart chapter 1 summary

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He was constantly borrowing from his friends and neighbors, and his children and wife didn't have enough food. One day, a neighbor of Unoka, a man named Okoye, came to discuss the money Unoka owed him. Rituals of hospitality are described: the guest brings bicycles, the kind of food consumed during visits, and men often speak proverbs. Okoye was about to take the third highest title in the country, and he needed to collect resources. Unoka laughed at him and told him that he had a lot of other debts to pay first. Unoka dies deep in debt. But Okonkwo, though young, is already a great man. He has two barns full of potatoes and fought valiantly in two intertempea wars. He's already won two titles. He's got three wives. The narrator tells us that his high status was the reason he was entrusted to oversee the condemned boy who was sacrificed to Umuofia to avoid war. The condemned boy's name was Ikemefuna. Analysis: Things Fall Apart is part tragedy and part documentary. It is the story of Okonkwo and his tragic death after the arrival of a white man; it's also fiction that documents the world that a white man destroyed. The structure is important for tragedy, and according to Aristotle's rules of tragedy, anything that is irrelevant to the central action should be removed. But the tragedy of Okonkwo's death is seen as part of a greater tragedy: the defeat and forced transformation of the great people. Achebe's novel is both a tragedy and a memory. The story tends to turn; in order to understand the gravity of Okonkwo's tragedy, the reader must see it in the context of his world. Achebe gives us a detailed description of Igbo traditions, customs and beliefs. Memory is an important topic; Here this study guide uses memory as a broad term covering all documentary descriptions of Igbo's life. At the end of the novel, the reader realizes that the account he has just read is the story of a culture that has been irrevocably transformed. Another part of Achebe's project is to provide a balanced and sensitive portrait of Igbo culture, as an African cultures have long been dismissed by white scholars as barbaric and evil. The turn-off is one of Achebe's most important tools. He's taking every opportunity to tell us about a past incident that's only indirectly connected to his central story. These branches allow him to materialize his portrait of tribal life. Ambition and size are two closely linked themes. Okonkwo is determined to be the opposite of his father. He's already taken two degrees (honorary degrees that give a man a position in the tribe) and he's pretty rich. Success and honor are very important to Okonkwo. He's worked his whole life to earn the respect of his people. His work ethic and ambition also lead to his mistakes: he is a cruel man, a quick anger and without humility. Chapter 2 Summary: One night, as Okonkwo prepares for bed, he hears the city crier, beating on his hollow instrument and calling all the men of Umuofia to meet early tomorrow morning. The night is dark and moonless, and the narrator explains that the darkness was terrifying even for the bravest of Igbo. The forest is an ominous place at night. Okonkwo suspects she might be about to go to war: he's a major fighter, and the war gives him a chance to gain more respect. The next morning, 10,000 men from Umuofie gathered at the market. Ogbuefi Ezuogo, a powerful orator, gives a traditional opening: he stands in front of four different directions, raises a beheaded fist and shouts Umuofia kwenu, to which all the men call Yaa! The fifth time he greets them like this and then tells them that the men from the neighboring village of Mbaino have killed a girl from Umuofie. Men discuss the situation and decide to follow the normal procedure: issue an ultimatum and demand a boy and a virgin as compensation. The neighboring village is afraid of Umuofie because its warriors and medical people are powerful. It is the strongest war medicine (magic) is agadi-nwayi, a spell enforced by the spirit of an old woman with one leg. The narrator tells us that in fairness to Umuofia, it must be said that the village never went to war without first trying for a peaceful settlement, and even then it only went if the war was approved by the Oracle of hills and caves. And the Oracle often forbade war. Okonkwo is chosen as an envoy. He walks and is treated with respect, and he returns with a young boy and a virgin girl. The girl goes to the man whose wife was murdered. As for the boy, the village does not rush to decide his fate. Her name is Ikemefuna. He lives with Okonkwo and his family. The narrator describes Okonkwo and his family, as well as their life situation. Okonkwo has a separate cottage, or obi, in the heart of their family area. Every woman has her own shack. Everything is matched by a large red wall. Yams are the main crop for Igbo, and the compound contains a barn for yam-storage. There is also a shrine or medicine house. Okonkwo quickly angers. He rules his family like He fears failure and hates the memories of his idle father; his eldest son, Nwoye, shows signs that he is like Okonkwo's father, and so Okonkwo is very him. Ikemefuna is brought home with Okonkwo and given to Nwoye's mother. The boys miss home and don't understand why it was taken from their family. Analysis: Achebe gives us a brief portrait of the social organization Igbo, on several levels. We see that the city is not dominated by the chief, but by the general assembly of all men. In fact, the Igbo have a primitive democracy. We learn that sweet potatoes are the basis, and a large stock of pits indicates prosperity. We also learn that Umuofia appreciates justice and does not fight wars for conquest. There is also a high level of social mobility. Note that while Unoka was a failure, Okonkwo rose to become a great man among his people. Okonkwo fears failure. The topic of ambition has its conversation, and it is Okonkwo's fear of failure that makes him a tough man. He's strong, but he can't see that his wives and children aren't as physically strong as he is. Yet he forces them to work as hard as he does. All his wives and children are afraid of him. Okonkwo is trying to help his son Nwoye by being twice as cruel to him. But this approach turns Nwoye into a sad and cranky youth. Chapter 3 Summary: When Okonkwo was young, his father Unoka went to Agbala, the Oracle of hills and caves. He asked why he had always had a miserable harvest, despite his prayers and sacrifices to the gods. The Oracle told him that the fault lies not with the gods, but in his laziness. Unoka died of swelling, which Igbo believes is an abomination to the goddess of the Earth. Like the others who died badly, he was left in the Evil Forest. Okonkwo lives in fear of the kind of failure and sad ending that met his father. Okonkwo didn't inherit a barn full of potato seeds. He had to start as a farmer for a rich man named Nwakibie. Nwakibie was generous, but the first year Okonkwo planted was the worst planting year in Umuofia's vivid memory. Okonkwo survived with superhuman determination. His father was in his last days. He praised Okonkwo, but it just tested Okonkwo's patience. Analysis: Okonkwo has overcome incredible diversity. The pathetic end and death of his father tainted him with shame and left him without an inheritance. His rise to social power and wealth was a triumph of stubbornness and will. Sharecropping is a difficult way to get started; Moreover, the first year okonkwo planted was a terrible harvest year. But Okonkwo was young and strong and able to survive. Experience was necessary to shape his character. The focal point of Okonkwo's faith is not only work ethic, but belief in the ability of the will to overcome adversity. He is convinced that he can manage his environment; he rules as a man and is immensely proud of his people. Understanding these beliefs is key to understanding the tragedy that strikes Okonkwo later, after the arrival of a white man. Chapter 4 Summary: Okonkwo shows few emotions openly, none of them offer those. He once insulted a man at a town meeting, suggesting that the man was a woman. The man didn't have any degrees. Okonkwo was rebuked, and the elders of the village said that the lucky ones should show humility; yet Okonkwo was never lucky. Everything he deserves on his own. Ikemefuna is terribly homesick, but in time finds a place among the Okonkwo family. Nwoye, two years younger, is inseparable from him; even Okonkwo likes the boy, even if he doesn't show it openly. Ikemefuna is a smart boy. He knows how to make flutes and traps for rodents. He's starting to call Okonkwo father. During Peace Week, Okonkwo's youngest wife, Ojiugo, goes out to braid her hair and neglects to cook an afternoon meal for him. When she comes back, Okonkwo beats her wildly. This act is an abomination of igbo. No one may speak unkindly to another during Peace Week; Okonkwo's transgression threatens the entire clan's crop. Ezeani, priest of the goddess Earth, arrives before dusk. It despises okankwo's traditional offer of a round of nuts and demands tough goods and money from Okonkwo. Okonkwo pays it, internally contritely, but he is too proud to openly admit to his neighbors that he is wrong. His neighbors are starting to say he's getting proud of him. It's time to plant; As the seeds of the pit are prepared, Okonkwo is very cruel nwoye and Ikemefuna. Yam is a man's crop and Okonkwo is very demanding. Yams, too, are difficult crops to raise, sensitive and laborious. The rainy season comes, during which children huddle by the fire inside and rest. With the planting season over, Igbo took a rest period before working on the harvest. Ikemefuna and Nwoye became very close: Nwoye loves an older boy who is now like a brother to him. Ikemefuna has an endless supply of folk goths, and hearing them makes Nwoye see the world in a new light. Analysis: Maculinity is one of Okonkwo's obsessions. She considers every gentle emotion to be feminine and therefore weak. His culture is as patriarchal as any, but in his need to be strong Okonkwo carries the interest in masculinity to the extreme. He didn't learn restraint. His beating of Ojiugo is the first specific incident in the book during which we watch Okonkwo lose control. Although the beating begins he forgot it was a week of peace when reminded that he would not stop. He's not a guy who does anything halfway, even though he knows there are consequences. Later, this arrogance will destroy him. His neighbors noticed his pride. Even though Okonkwo feels contrite, he makes a great effort to hide it. This journey and wild pride have made him a great man, but they are also the source of all his mistakes. In his sincere desire to see his son Nwoye become great, he made the boy very unhappy. Okonkwo is not exactly a typical Igbo man: although Achebe sets Okonkwo's fall as parallel to the fall of his people, he also shows us that Okonkwo is an extraordinary man among Igbo, both good and bad. In other men in the village, we see restraint and humility. We see a pattern in Ikemefuna that Nwoye lacked. Nwoye, who fears her brutal father, now has a kind older brother, to the brethren she looks up to. We also see that Nwoye is a thoughtful boy: his reactions to Ikemefun folk talans are imaginative and beautiful. Chapter 5 Summary: The Feast of New Yam is approaching. That means the beginning of the harvest. All old sweet potatoes are discarded, and new and tasty potatoes are eaten for the holidays. The new Yam marks the beginning of the new year and the beginning of the season of abundance. Okonkwo, like all rich men, always invites a huge number of guests to the feast. But he himself is somewhat impatient with the holiday, and prefers to work on his farm. Preparing for the festival makes him touchy. Three days before the festival, he was furious to see that several leaves had been cut out of the banana tree (banana leaves are used to pack food in many tropical countries). When his second wife confesses to the crime, he brutally beats her. Then he decides to go hunting. Even though he's a big man, Okonkwo is not a great hunter. A woman who has just been beaten makes a sarcastic comment about guns that never shoot, and he tries to shoot her. He misses her. Despite these unrest, the festival is celebrated happily. The second day of the new year is match day. Ekwefi, Okonkwo's second wife, loves matches. It was watching Okonkwo defeat the Cat that she fell in love with him. She married another man, but a few years later she ran away from him and came to live with Okonkwo. At the time, she was a great beauty of the village. That was 30 years ago. Ekwefi has only one child, her daughter Ezinma. Ezinma is a charming, pretty and smart young girl, one of her father's favorite girls, although she rarely shows it. We see her helping other women, doing housework for her mother and bringing Okonkwomu food. Analysis: Chapter 5 fleshes out a portrait of Onkwo's family life. His three wives live together in peace, and they seem to have a great affection for each other. Ezinma is well loved, not only Ekwefi and Okonkwo, but also other wives. Children live together like brothers and sisters. Ikemefuna was fully absorbed into the family. But Okonkwo rules with fear. His anger over the banana tree is completely unfounded; He's using it as an excuse to beat someone. He is insanely self-absorbed, and does not consider it appropriate to learn limitations for the sake of his family. Igbo Society is patriarchal, but this chapter focuses on female characters. Ekwefi is far from shy: fresh from the beating, she makes fun of her husband. We also meet her daughter Ezinma, one of the most sympathetic characters in the book. Okonkwo's treatment of her zh humanizes him, balancing his harsh treatment of Nwoye. One of the reasons for its inimity with Ezinma is its as a girl, expectations for her are different. Okonkwo often wishes she were a boy, but the wish seems harmless alongside his ruthless treatment of Nwoye. We see that Okonkwo is at least capable of tenderness. Since he does not have the same terrible expectations from a girl as he does his son, he can treat her with at least a little care. Subtlety.