



Summer Reading Assignment

Course: English 10 – European Literature
Grade: 10th
Teacher: Mr. Peter Hufnagel
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Required Book: *Things Fall Apart*, by Chinua Achebe (ISBN: 978-0385474542)

Born and raised in southeastern Nigeria, Chinua Achebe is widely considered one of the most important African authors of the 20th century. His acclaimed novel *Things Fall Apart* tells the story of Okonkwo, a successful farmer in a Nigerian village inhabited by the Igbo people. In the opening chapters, Okonkwo is admired and respected in his village. His work ethic and physical prowess make him a model of excellence in the traditional Igbo culture. However, as the title of the novel suggests, things fall apart for Okonkwo. In class we will explore why and how this happens. Your assignment is to answer the following questions. Use specific examples and quotes from the novel to support your claims.

1. What is considered “good” or “noble” at the beginning of the novel?
2. What is considered “bad” or “base”?
3. How does this change as a result of colonialism in the second half of the novel? In what ways are traditional Igbo values reversed? How does Achebe present this to readers? Does it help or hurt Igbo villagers?

Write a one-page response to each of the questions (3 pages total). Include at least two quotations from the novel for each response. Please refer to the MSA writing manual for questions about formatting.

Your answers are due on the first day of class.