

The crucial skills in Honors and AP English courses are thinking with depth about the ideas developed in a text and presenting those thoughts in written form. We write to analyze in high school English, and our analysis is always supported by the text, our own arguments, and often by valid external support.

**DIRECTIONS FOR SUMMER ASSIGNMENT**

**BEFORE you read *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe:**

- 1) Read this entire handout.
- 2) Read EACH of the eight topic sets below.
- 3) Start a three column chart for EACH of the eight. **See the model.** Leave generous space to add LOTS of information. **HINT:** Do one per page!
- 4) Add notes on what you think about each topic to complete the “personal thoughts” section of the chart in response to all eight topics.

**AS you read *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe:**

- 1) For each of the eight topic sets, write connections between the topic and the story. Guide questions: How is that topic important to the story? Where do you see it in the plot, characters, setting, or theme? What do the characters seem to think about the topic? How can you tell? What could the author be trying to say about the topic? How can you tell?
- 2) For each of the eight topic sets, support your connections with at least three excerpts from throughout the book. Cite the page number for each excerpt. See the model for examples.

**AFTER you read *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe:**

*If your last name starts with letters A-L, do this part for topic sets 1-4.*

*If your last name starts with letters M-Z, do this part for topic sets 5-8.*

- 1) Add at least two excerpts from at least one valid external nonfiction research source (NOT Wikipedia®) to support your personal thoughts and text connections.
- 2) Write an explanation of HOW your external excerpts support your personal thoughts and text connections.
- 3) For the external source, document the publication information, including the author, title of source (name of book or website), date recorded, and website address (if online). Feel free to use multiple sources, and provide this information for all of them.

**IN-CLASS ASSESSMENT**

\*All students will complete an in-class assessment with the English II Honor instructor within the first two weeks of the course.

*Last names which start with letters A-L will complete this part for topic sets 1-4.*

*Last names which start with letters M-Z will complete this part for topic sets 5-8.*

\*Students will compose an in-class essay in response to a prompt related to ONE of the topic sets. The prompt, which will be given to the student the day of the assessment, requires students to support their essay points with direct cited quotes from *Things Fall Apart* and at least one external nonfiction research source. Students will be permitted to use their summer assignment as a reference; however, they will not know in advance on which of the four topic sets their prompt will be focused, so the summer assignment needs to be completed in detail for all assigned topic sets.

**TOPIC SETS**

- 1) What holds a culture together? What tears a culture apart? What role does change play in the functioning of a people and culture? If an outside force threatens our culture, do we have the right/responsibility to respond with violence? Should change come only from within, or is it only possible from an individual or group arriving from the outside? Do we cling to traditions of the past for fear of the future? Is change destructive or progressive? How so?
- 2) List and explain some of the primary causes of stress in daily adult human life in a “normal” society (i.e. not one at war or some other extreme). Of these, which is the cause of most stress? Why? How do (or should) people manage it? How could we as a society implement plans/policies/procedures to help alleviate the sources of stress in daily adult human life?

**The summer assignment is due in hard copy (NOT digital/email, etc., but printed or handwritten) to the English II Honors instructor by 3pm on the first Friday in school, REGARDLESS OF FALL OR SPRING ENGLISH II HONORS PLACEMENT. Extra credit is awarded for summer reading assignments submitted early. Summer assessment will occur in class with the English II Honors instructor.**

- 3) People worldwide have enormous variances in their religious beliefs. It's been said the power of religion can both guide a society and destroy it. In your opinion, how can religion or spirituality help a person individually or society in general? How can religion or spirituality hurt a person or society in general? Does religion or spirituality influence government?
- 4) We'll discuss traditional gender expectations several times in class. Do you believe that gender roles are changing and/or evolving? In what ways? Where or from whom do children and young adult learn their roles? How do these expectations positively and negatively impact people individually and society in general?
- 5) There are many types of governmental structures worldwide. In an ideal society, list the things (tangible or intangible) that an ideal community, state, or country should provide an individual (Do not answer money!). What should an individual be expected to give back to society?
- 6) Character education has been incorporated in many schools addressing personality traits. What particular traits (notice that is plural) will take an individual the furthest in life? What traits (plural again) will hold an individual back in life? Explain how/why.
- 7) Multiculturalism is a big buzzword in school and society. What are some ways that people respond when they don't understand someone else's culture or experiences? How can people successfully gain an understanding of another culture and the people in it? What potential positive and negative impacts on society occur when people of mixed cultures exist?
- 8) Gandhi reportedly once said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." Is it truly possible for one person to change a society? Give evidence and explanations to support your response.

**MODEL FOR SUMMER ASSIGNMENT**

Topic Set: Part of parent/child conflict is the idea that parents do not understand the lives of young people. It's called the generation gap. Explain your thoughts on this idea. How accurate is the idea that there is a generation gap, that parents really can't understand their children's lives? Is there some perspective loss on the side of the parents or on the side of the children? On both?

<b>Personal Thoughts</b>	<b>Connections and text from <i>Things Fall Apart</i></b>	<b>External Support</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The generation gap occurs between each generation; it's not a modern phenomenon, no matter how much people talk about today's technology being the reason.</li> <li>- Both parents and children often think the other just can't understand, but it's more about the fact that they have different areas of concern. Parents want to protect their children, but children want to become independent; parents want children to be successful, but children want to have fun; parents want to be close to their children, but children often feel closer to their friends and/or siblings (peers).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This is 19<sup>th</sup> century Africa, but parent/child conflicts like this still happen today in modern society, which shows that they're part of human nature.</li> <li>- Unoka and Okonkwo have a generation gap, and then Okonkwo and Nwoye do as well, even though times and circumstances have greatly changed. The gap between Unoka and Okonkwo is so severe that Okonkwo's entire life "was ruled by one passion – to hate everything his father Unoka had loved" (Achebe 13).</li> <li>- Okonkwo was worried that Nwoye was not developing into the Ibo perception of manhood, so he would not be successful; he "wanted his son to be a great farmer and a great man. He would stamp out the disquieting signs of laziness which he thought he already saw in him" (Achebe 33). Nwoye felt this pressure from Okonkwo, which pushed him to be closer to Ikemefuna, from whom Nwoye "became quite inseparable...because he seemed to know everything" (Achebe 28).</li> <li>- Finally, when Nwoye breaks from the family tradition, Okonkwo asks himself "how then could he have begotten a son like Nwoye, degenerate and effeminate?" (Achebe 153). He can't accept that his son is so entirely different than he is and from who he expected his son to be.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At any time in society, "younger people have less power and fewer resources than middle-aged adults. The inequality of power between generations creates very different views on social and political issues" (Mannheim qtd. in "Intergenerational Relations"), so parents and children often find themselves disagreeing. Okonkwo is very proud of his authority and status in the tribe, while Nwoye, as his son, is expected to be obedient and essentially powerless.</li> <li>- Mannheim also asserts that "people of the same generation have similar beliefs, which may conflict with the ideas of other generations. Younger people often try to impose their views on society, while older people generally resist change," perhaps because they are more set in their ways or unwilling to face conflict. When the Ibo society starts to be pressured to change, Nwoye is much more willing than Okonkwo to embrace the changes.</li> </ul> <p>"Intergenerational Relations." <i>Current Issues: Macmillian Social Science Library</i>, Macmillan Reference USA, 2003. <i>Opposing Viewpoints In Context</i>, <a href="http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/EJ3011400141/OVIC?u=scschools&amp;sid=OVIC&amp;xid=12431353">http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/EJ3011400141/OVIC?u=scschools&amp;sid=OVIC&amp;xid=12431353</a>. Accessed 15 May 2018.</p>

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