

Things Fall Apart

Part Three (Chapters 20–25)

by Chinua Achebe

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Practice words: bereaved, buoyant, desolate, expedient, intoxicated, pacification, profane, sacrilege, superfluous, tumult

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Vocabulary Preview 2

Answer Key — Preview 3

Caution: share only if self-checking

OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

Vocabulary in Context 4

Answer Key — In Context 5

Caution: do not share with students

About the Pre-Reading Activity (open-dictionary; ungraded or completion grade):

Students preview 10 words from the upcoming reading, each in a sentence that supports understanding. They choose the best meaning from 3 choices.

About the Optional Post-Reading Quiz (use after reading, or skip):

Same words, now in real excerpts from the text, with questions that build reading and analytical skills.

Vocabulary Sections for this Book:

Section 1 · Part One (Chapters 1–13) · Okonkwo and his village of Umuofia

Section 2 · Part Two (Chapters 14–19) · Okonkwo's years of exile in Mbanta

Section 3 · Part Three (Chapters 20–25) · Okonkwo's return to Umuofia

Bold = this section. Other sections are available at verbalworkout.com.



verbalworkout.com
(all resources free)

Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Read each prompt. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word.

1. The **bereaved** stood silently by the open grave.

- A. the funeral guests
- B. the village elders
- C. those grieving a death

2. She felt **buoyant** after hearing the wonderful news.

- A. proud and confident
- B. cheerful and lively
- C. calm and relaxed

3. The **desolate** plain stretched on to the horizon.

- A. barren and empty
- B. rocky and uneven
- C. calm and peaceful

4. She found it **expedient** to leave early and avoid the traffic.

- A. practical and convenient
- B. honest and fair
- C. risky but bold

5. The young actor felt **intoxicated** by the roaring applause.

- A. deeply embarrassed
- B. wildly carried away
- C. calmly satisfied

6. The general's **pacification** of the province ended the long war.

- A. the forced control of a people
- B. a peace treaty between nations
- C. the rebuilding of a region

7. The invaders' **profane** acts in the temple horrified everyone.

- A. secret and forbidden
- B. violent and cruel
- C. disrespectful of the holy

8. Many believed that mocking the temple was **sacrilege**.

- A. an insult to the sacred
- B. a careless blunder
- C. a serious crime

9. He cut the **superfluous** details from his short report.

- A. harsh and critical
- B. confusing and unclear
- C. needless and excessive

10. A great **tumult** broke out among the angry crowd.

- A. a joyful celebration
- B. a noisy commotion
- C. a steady chant

Reading Helpers

(Not quizzed — helpful for this text.)

things fall apart — the bonds holding a person or society together begin to break

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY
1	C
2	B
3	A
4	A
5	B
6	A
7	C
8	A
9	C
10	B

Vocabulary in Context
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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 10

Read each excerpt carefully. Then choose the best answer to each question.

1 “... had been transformed, almost overnight, into a healthy, buoyant maiden.”

As it is used in the passage, the word ‘buoyant’ most nearly suggests that Ezinma had become...

- A. quiet and withdrawn
- B. lively and full of energy
- C. proud and willful

6 “And from there they made for the church, intoxicated with destruction.”

As it is used in the passage, the word ‘intoxicated’ most nearly suggests that the egwugwu...

- A. were wildly carried away by it
- B. were sickened by the violence
- C. were drunk on palm-wine beforehand

2 “Everything was possible, he told his energetic flock, but everything was not expedient.”

The passage most strongly suggests that Mr. Brown wants his converts to...

- A. avoid what is unwise though allowed
- B. give up their new faith
- C. attempt everything they can

7 “Then an unmistakable voice rose above the tumult and there was immediate silence.”

Which statement is best supported by the passage?

- A. The spirits did not hear him
- B. One voice silenced the uproar
- C. The crowd was already calm

3 “... the villagers called him the outsider who wept louder than the bereaved.”

In the passage, the villagers’ saying characterizes Enoch as...

- A. respected by grieving families
- B. too sorrowful to be comforted
- C. more zealous than the true mourners

8 “Our dead fathers are weeping because of the shameful sacrilege they are suffering and the abomination we have all seen with our eyes.”

According to the passage, the dead fathers are weeping because of...

- A. the deaths of their sons
- B. the loss of their farmland
- C. a violation of sacred things

4 “... to shield him from the profane gaze of women and children ...”

It can reasonably be inferred that the egwugwu shield their companion because...

- A. the women feared its power
- B. it had been badly wounded
- C. the uninitiated must not see it

9 “One of the most infuriating habits of these people was their love of superfluous words, he thought.”

The passage most strongly suggests that the Commissioner is annoyed because the people...

- A. refuse to answer him
- B. use more words than needed
- C. speak too softly to hear

5 “The band of egwugwu moved like a furious whirlwind to Enoch’s compound and with machete and fire reduced it to a desolate heap.”

The author most likely calls the wreckage a ‘desolate heap’ in order to...

- A. stress the total destruction
- B. imply it was long abandoned
- C. praise the egwugwu’s restraint

10 “He had already chosen the title of the book, after much thought: *The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger*.”

The Commissioner’s ironic use of the word ‘Pacification’ in his book title serves to...

- A. expose conquest disguised as peace
- B. show the tribes embraced rule
- C. honor his careful scholarship

ANSWER KEY

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#	KEY	NOTE
1	B	
2	A	
3	C	Character comprehension.
4	C	Event comprehension.
5	A	
6	A	'Intoxicated' is figurative here – carried away as if drunk, not literally drinking.
7	B	
8	C	
9	B	Ironic: the 'superfluous words' the Commissioner scorns are Obierika's veiled plea for help recovering Okonkwo's body.
10	A	Theme comprehension. The novel's closing irony – the colonizer calls violent conquest 'pacification,' or peace.

Teacher Context: Part Three (Chapters 20–25)

Part Three follows Okonkwo's return to a Umuofia transformed by the church and the colonial administration, where his old standing and the traditional ways have eroded. Tensions build toward a violent confrontation between the clan and the colonizers. Section runs to the end of the novel.