***Things Fall Apart***

**Context Webquest**

Adapted from <http://questgarden.com/35/38/3/061207154135/index.htm>

THINGS FALL APART: Understanding Context through Expert Interviews

by Cherisse Jackson, California State University Monterey Bay

If you're like most American high school students, you don't know much about the context of the novel we're going to read. *Things Fall Apart* is a novel written by a Nigerian. The novel's characters are also Nigerian, specifically Igbo, and they lived in the late 1800s. Obviously, before you enter the world of this book and try to make connections with its ideas, you need to know more about its context. Who wrote it and why? Where did it happen? When did it happen? What are the people like? What is the time period like? In other words, before you think about this book's ideas, you must consider it's historical, geographical, social, and cultural contexts.

You will visit links and read information in each category. After perusing the websites, you will write about predictions you have about the novel. **Answer each question in a brief paragraph using cited evidence from EACH of the documents in the section. Upload your 4 completed questions to Turnitin.com.**

In order to simply click on the links, instead of typing them in yourself, you may want to visit this assignment on our course blog.

**GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT**

Nigeria

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigeria>

Ibo/Igbo History

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Igbo_people>

African Rock Python

<https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2013/08/130806-african-rock-python-snakes-canada-killed-boys-world/>

Yams

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-11385436>

**Question #1: Predict the environment in which the characters of *Things Fall Apart* live.**

**CULTURAL CONTEXT**

Igbo Mythology

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odinani>

Igbo Culture and Language—Visit all links under Igbo Culture, Igbo Language, and Igboland: Enugu.

<https://www.igboguide.org/>

**Question #2: Predict the lifestyle of the characters in *Things Fall Apart*, including religious practice, marriage rituals, and occupations.**

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Africa 1800-1914

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section11.shtml>

African Religious Conversions 1800-1914

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/11chapter6.shtml>

The European Scramble 1800-1914

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/11chapter3.shtml>

West African Kingdoms

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/4chapter7.shtml>

**Question #3: Predict the conflicts that arise in *Things Fall Apart* when the characters living in a small Nigerian village encounter British Imperial officers.**

**AUTHOR CHINUA ACHEBE**

Life Overview

<https://www.biography.com/people/chinua-achebe-20617665>

Importance to Modern Africa

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/chinua-achebe-who-was-he-nigeria-writer-novels-everything-falls-apart-google-doodle-birthday-a8057581.html>

Death at 82

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/23/world/africa/chinua-achebe-nigerian-writer-dies-at-82.html>

**Question #4: Explain Chinua Achebe’s importance to modern African literature.**