

Things Fall Apart Characters & Terms

Unoka: Okonkwo's father, he was a notorious slacker and debtor.

Okonkwo: Known as a courageous and wealthy man throughout his tribe, Okonkwo is a severe man who often resorts to violence to make his points understood. He hated his father, Unoka, because he was a lazy debtor.

Ikemefuna: A boy of a neighboring village who was chosen as a sacrifice to avoid warfare with Umuofia.

Nwoye: Okonkwo's oldest son, child of Okonkwo's eldest wife.

Obierika: Okonkwo's friend who takes care of his home for him while he's in exile and brings word of the first violent encounters of the Ibo with the white men who came to colonize the area.

Mr. Kiaga: An Ibo convert to Christianity who acts as a missionary and translator for the first six missionaries who come to Mbanta while Okonkwo and his family are in exile there.

Mr. Brown: A missionary in Okonkwo's native village who tries to make the relationship between the Christians and the villagers as stable as possible despite the fanaticism of some of his converts.

Mr. Smith: Mr. Smith replaces Mr. Brown as the leader of the Umuofia church and encourages the fanatics to act out against the pagan tribe.

District Commissioner: A white man sent to rule over Umuofia, he and his court messengers are corrupt officials who abuse the natives.

Minor Characters

Amaline the Cat: A wrestler from a village near Okonkwo's home of Umuofia who was undefeated for seven years.

Nwakibie: A prosperous villager with three barns, nine wives, thirty children, and all but the greatest title in the clan. As a young man, Okonkwo went to Nwakibie to ask for seed yams so that he could begin his crops.

Ekwefi: Okonkwo's second wife, she was the village beauty in her younger days. She is passionate about wrestling, and when she saw Okonkwo defeat Amaline the Cat, he won her heart.

Ezinma: The daughter of Okonkwo and Ekwefi, Ezinma understands her father better than her other siblings.

Chielo: The priestess of Agbala, the Oracle of the Hills and Caves. Chielo is a normal woman just like the other women of the village when the spirit of Agbala does not possess her. She and Ekwefi are friends, and Chielo is especially fond of Ezinma.

Ogbuefi Ezeudu: One of the oldest men in Umuofia, he came to warn Okonkwo to have no part in Ikemefuna's death because the boy considered him a father.

Uchende: Okonkwo's uncle on his mother's side who is an elder of Mbanta where Okonkwo and his family stay in exile for seven years.

Enoch: A religious zealot hungry for conflict who unmasked a sacred egwugwu at a public ceremony and enraged Okonkwo's village. Mr. Smith protected Enoch from the tribe's wrath, but the egwugwu burned the church as punishment for Enoch's insurrection.

Objects/Places

Umuofia: The name of the village where Okonkwo and his family live. It is one of a cluster of nine villages, the farthest being Mbaino.

Kola nut: A ritual refreshment for hosts and guests.

Cowries: Shells used for currency.

Agbala: The Oracle of the Hills and Caves.

Ogbanje: An ogbanje is a wicked child who is born and then dies only to re-enter its mother's womb over and over again.

iyi-uwa: The stone that connects the ogbanje with the spirit world.

egwugwu: Men who disguise themselves as the ancestral spirits of the village and judge disputes among the villages. There are nine egwugwu, one for each of the nine villages started by the sons of the father of the clan long ago.

Abame: A village destroyed by white men because they killed one white man.

Chi: A personal god that determines a man's fate and guides his fortune, almost an embodiment of luck.