

# Conflict and Identity - Things Fall Apart

Content Area: **ELA**  
Course(s):  
Time Period:  
Length: **4 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Overview:

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### UNIT GOALS, ESSENTIAL INQUIRY

Students will ask, “How does conflict affect cultural identity?” as they explore identity, culture, and meaning in literature. Students will examine how authors from different cultures and eras approach universal questions such as how do war and conflict (political or social) influence our values, attitudes, and behaviors? What does it mean to be a world citizen? How can I be myself? They will consider how literary works can help answer these questions of importance in their own lives.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

### Enduring Understandings

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1. Numerous factors - including those related to history, society, religion, politics, and the economy -- contributed to the gradual and systematic destruction of oppressed populations.
2. Individuals experience emotional, physical, and psychological conflicts which may lead to growth.
3. The choices one makes are the ages of change, both individual and social.
4. Both the choices one makes and the circumstances beyond one's control define character and relationships.
5. Novels have particular designs which convey themes through literary elements and devices.

### Essential Questions

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1. Do people have an obligation to tell their stories?
2. What is an individual's responsibility to listen to, understand, and act or react to others' stories?
3. What happens when personal morality collides with social and political expectations?
4. How do individual choices reflect and define one's character?
5. Over which events do individuals exert power?
6. How can both positive and negative experiences shape one's character?
7. What influences do socioeconomic class, gender, and family background exert upon character?
8. What force(s) in the plot create significant moments of change and character growth?

9. What do others' perceptions and analysis of the text, as presented in media depictions and critical reviews, add to one's understanding of the text?
10. What historical and/or social issues that play a key role in the text are still important today?

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**Student Learning Objectives: Students will be able to . . .**

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1. Identify key elements of the novel as well as literary elements of writing and their effect.
2. Identify key historical events Nigerian and African history alongside cultural and social values.
3. Analyze the role of fiction in colonial history, and provide background and context for the *Things Fall Apart* and Chinua Achebe.
4. Analyze the use of Ibo language and cultural values in *Things Fall Apart* to contrast popular colonial "image of Africa"
5. Discuss literary elements such as proverbs and figurative language critically.
6. Explain how the passage of time reflects the protagonist's tragic cycle.
7. Identify internal and external conflicts and explain why each is resolved or left unresolved.
8. Identify and evaluate literary devices such as allusions, figures of speech, and symbols
9. Analyze the pressures of the historical period and its characteristics bring to the lives of the characters
10. Explain connections between settings' imagery and mood and the characters' stages of growth.

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**Students Will Know (Facts and Basic Concepts)**

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1. Critical reading of the texts allows them to ascertain and examine elements that reveal theme
2. Historical background relevant to the text
3. The text's point of view is important to the reader's involvement in the story
4. Setting is integrated with theme

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**Common Core State Standards**

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LA.9-10.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.6

Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1.d

Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1.e	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.3	Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

## 21st Century Themes and Skills

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CRP.K-12.CRP2.1	Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP11	Use technology to enhance productivity.
CRP.K-12.CRP12	Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.

## Interdisciplinary Connections

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Social Studies (Global Issues, Sociology, Psychology, Human Geography): All Enduring Understandings

## Learning Activities

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### Text Analysis

- Students can write a response (paragraph or essay) that answers one or more of the essential questions or supports and specifically one or more of the enduring understandings through the analysis of evidence in the text(s).
- Whole class and small group discussions, student-led seminars.
- Discussion or writing of meaning and themes

### Responding to the text

- Identification and discussion of significance of literary devices, plot structure and impact, characterization, etc.

- Close reading of texts, including class discussions and regular responsive journals/study guide questions to guide discussions.
- Periodic reading checks

## **Research**

- Minor (limited) research given specific resources to uncover some of the historical, social, religious, political and economic information concerning the texts. This could be in the form of a preliminary Webquest or presentation as products to assess understanding of background information necessary to understanding the texts.
- Web-based research on the authors to lead to writing about the decisions to include/ignore autobiographical aspects as they constructed their texts.

## **Text Specific**

- K-W-L (know, want to know, learn) chart to be amended and organized by historical time period or genre (or both) or Read Like a Reader/Read Like a Writer chart.
- Supplemental material to include poetry, essays, primary documents, film
- Critical essays to form student opinion (agree or disagree)

## **Pacing Guide**

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Specific pacing guides will be established for each text. Each TCU (Thematic Core Unit) ranges from 9 to 11 weeks.

## **Summative Assessment**

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Objective test

Paragraph response