

Character sketch of Okonkwo in "Things Fall Apart" essay sample

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“ Things Fall Apart” is a tragic novel, which is set in the Igbo community of Africa. Chinua Achebe, who is the author of this novel, portrays how an ambitious, well known, and respected African, Okonkwo, life falls apart. He was a man with great intensity and personality. He had accomplished his goal to become rich and famous and committed suicide after things in his life wasn't going all right.

Okonkwo was a farmer and he was well know throughout the nine villages and even beyond. He was tall and huge, and his bushy eyebrows and wide nose gave him a very severe look. His father was Unoka and he lived in his fatherland. In his youth days he was known as the greatest wrestlers among the clans. Due to his popularity he married his second wife Ekwefi because she admired that he was a good wrestlers. Okonkwo had three wives called Ekwefi, Ojiugo and Nwoje's mother. His favorite son was Nwoje and his favorite daughter was Ezinma. He wanted Nwoje to turn out just like him and he thought his son how to work the land and how to grow yams. His favorite daughter Enzima was the only surviving child of Ekwefi. Enzima is the only child of him that understands him and she reminds him of his beautiful wife Ekwefi. He has dreams that one day a nice young man will marry his beautiful daughter Enzima

Later on in the story we hear about a boy called Ikemefuna. Ikemefuna was a boy given to Okonkwo and the boy grew close to Okonkwo. In three years the boy called Okonkwo father and Okonkwo grew closed to the boy and he

told him stories. Okonkwo became had broken after the oracle ordered the killing of Ikemefuna and because of the result he did not eat anything for three days. His wonderful daughter Enzima encourages him to eat and after a while he did. During the Week of Peace Okonkwo beats his wife Ojiugo and he gets in trouble from the clan. During the Week of Peace you are not to do anything violent. Although Okonkwo was well known throughout the tribes he also showed characteristics of being violent. He would beat his children often and threatened to kill his son later on in the story when he turns a Christian.

Okonkwo's life starts to fall apart when he was thrown out of the clan for seven years. He was thrown out of the clan because he accidentally killed a seventeen-year-old teen by accident during a weeding ceremony. After being kicked out of his father's clan and the place where he built his image and his wealth he went to live in his motherland. This incident decreased the chance of Okonkwo's dreams of being very rich and popular. In his motherland he would have to start all over again and his family started to lose faith in him.

In his motherland, he was crushed when his son Nwoye turned to a Christian because he always wanted to rebel against the Christian missionaries.

Okonkwo was a strong believer in his tradition and he upheld the work the Christians were preaching. He saw that the white people were killing the Igbo tradition slowly and he wanted people of the village to revolt against them. He was ashamed how his people gave them land to build their churches.

After his seven-year absence, he returns to his fatherland Umuofia and is very angry to see the Christian missionaries were there too. He was shocked by how the white people were running the clan and how the white men built courthouses and jails, and tried the Umuofians for crimes. In the end Okonkwo kills a white messenger because he was angry how the white men tried to break up clan meetings. He draws his machete and with two quick swings of it, a white man's messenger lay dead on the ground, his head cut clean off. The next morning, Okonkwo is found dead by his own hand. He had deep beliefs in his religion, as well as respect for the white man, but he knew they had now gone over the boundary lines. He didn't like what was happening to his people and he decided life was not worth living anymore.