Discover "Things Fall Apart"

WebQuest Description: This WebQuest is designed to provide students with appropriate background information prior to reading "Things Fall Apart" by Chinua Achebe. Students will become familiar with the author, the geographic location of Nigeria (and surrounding counties), Igbo tribal culture, and colonialization.

Grade Level: 6-8

Curriculum: English / Language Arts

Keywords: Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe, Okonkwo, colonialization, Igbo

Published On: 2008-01-28 12:32:10

Last Modified: 2008-01-28 11:51:27

WebQuest URL: http://zunal.com/webquest.php?w=6349

Introduction

You have been contacted by the local news station to interview bestselling author Chinua Achebe! In order to prepare a few insightful questions for the interview, you'll have to do some research. Let's get ready to roll up our sleeves and get busy...

Tasks

Search the following "Process" page and use the links provided to gather important information on Chinua Achebe, Nigeria, Igbo tribal culture, and colonialization.

Use the questions on your worksheet to guide you, then develop three questions for your interview with Mr. Achebe. You may work quietly with classmates or ask your teacher for assistance!

Process

I. Geography of Africa

World: http://geography.about.com/od/learnabouthetheearth/qt/qzcontinents.htmAfrica:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africa
Igbo Culture
Origins and History
Ibo culture: http://www.uiowa.edu/~africat/toc/people/Igbo.html
http://logicerror.com/thingsfallApart-review (Destroying Native culture)
Modern Nigeria:
http://www.peoplenigeria.com
How the Ibo Governed
Read through this site: Ibo Government
Women in the Tribe
Seelink and read 5th paragraph, starting with "The world in Things Fall Apart is one in which patriarchy...

In the meantime, according to Achebe, kinsmen of the battered woman who had married into the clan would pressure their own men to do something about the abuse. Chi, The Spiritual Double
Check out this site: Chi
Also, read this excerpt: According to an Ibo proverb, &ldquo;Nothing can stand alone; there must always be another thing standing beside it.&rdquo; So too, a human being must have some company. Chi is a person's spiritual &ldquo;double,&rdquo; linking him or her to the ancestors, the unborn, and to Chukwu, the great God that created all other gods and humankind. While a man who says &ldquo;yes&rdquo; may get his chi to agree with him, that same man may find himself in trouble if he goes against a strong &ldquo;no&rdquo; coming from his chi.&nbsp;

In the Ibo world-view, chi gets the last word. Ibo Currency
Among the Ibo and many other regions of Africa----cowrie shells were formerly used as money. The cowrie is a shiny, white and tan mollusk (snail), about a half-inch long. The typical bride-price for attaining a wife was twenty bags of cowries.

In Achebe&amp;rsquo;s World, Robert Wren explains that each bag would have contained about 24,000 cowries and would have weighed about 60 pounds. For further explanation: Cowrie and Cowrie currency: http://www.uiowa.edu/~africat/toc/people/Igbo.html
http://logicerror.com/thingsfallApart-review (Destroying Native culture)

Cowrie definition
Nigerian Music
Nigerian Music
Read the information on this page for the Ibo people and the instruments they use:

Ibo music:
Nigerian Percussion:
View the following pictures:

Pictures of African drums
Masks
Read the following website and answer these questions for your presentation: Masks and Meaning
See what they looked like: Masks pictures
Agricultural Staples
The most important crops cultivated by the Ibo are the Yam and the oil palm (Palm oil),

The African yam is a large tuber with a thick, dark outer skin covering white meat.

Yams can be boiled, mashed, fried, or roasted like potatoes.

The oil palm tree reaches heights of 30 feet or more.

Small oval fruit grows in large clusters at the base of the leaves.

Oil from the fruit&amp;rsquo;s soft shell is used to make soap and candles.

Palm-kernel oil squeezed from the hard nut inside the fruit is used in margarine.

Also take a look at this web page and scroll down to the small caption at the bottom of the picture, entitled, &ldquo;Palm oil production&amp;rdquo;

Ibo Food
Alligator pepper: sometimes called wild ginger or malegueta (Portuguese), This spice grows well on land newly cleared and burnt for farming.

For a picture, see:

Alligator Pepper picture

Foo-foo: a dough made from mashed yams or from another tuber, called cassava.

Foo-foo might be served in a calabash, a container made from hollow shells of the gourd-like fruit of the calabash tree.

Foo-foo, usually eaten with a tasty sauce, is a staple food in many regions of West Africa.

Palm wine: a sweet wine made from the sap of the raffia palm tree.

See also under hospitality heading of webpage: Hospitality

For more information on both palm wine and foo-foo, see web page under economy: Economy

Kola nut: a nut inside the kola, which looks like a green grapefruit. Nuts are silver or pink and their juice contains caffeine. Kola nut picture

Coco-yam:

A large-leaved plant with round underground tubers, called taro in Asia, and known in the United states as the base for Hawaiian poi. See Taro plant and Taro
information
Cassava: root vegetable, also called manioc. Its leaves are rich in nutrients. The roots are processed to make fofoo. The leaves are cooked as a green vegetable. In granular form, cassava is known as tapioca. Cassava is a staple food in many parts of West Africa. See CasavaIba (also called malaria)

Check out these web pages for answers: Malaria and Malaria distribution

Edema: The Swelling Disease

Read through this site: Edema Wikipedia and Edema Overview

Colonialization
What is "colonialization?": http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colonialism
Corruption as a Consequence of Colonialism: http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEnglish/imperial/nigeria/corrupt.htm

IV. Chinua Achebe

Author Information: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinua_Achebe

Things Fall Apart: Times Review

V. Literary Elements

Tragic Hero

Category and Score | Needs Improvement (1) | Satisfactory (2) | Good (3) | Excellent (4) | Score |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
WebQuest Navigation | Needs assistance or supervision to use suggested internet links and/or to navigate within these sites. | Occasionally able to use suggested internet links to find information and navigates within these sites easily with little assistance. | Usually able to use suggested internet links to find information and navigates within these sites easily without assistance. | Successfully uses suggested internet links to find information and navigates within these sites easily without assistance. | %25 |
Quality of Information | Information has little or nothing to do with the WebQuest lesson. | Information clearly relates to the WebQuest lesson. No details and/or examples are given. | Information clearly relates to the WebQuest lesson. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples. | Information clearly relates to the WebQuest lesson. It includes several supporting details and/or examples. | %25 |
Amount of Information | One or more topics are not addressed. | All topics are addressed, and most questions answered with short phrases about each. | All topics are addressed and most questions answered with detailed sentences about each. | All topics are addressed and all questions answered with detailed sentences about each. | %25 |
Mechanics | Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors. | A few grammatical spelling, or punctuation errors. | Almost no grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors | No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors. | %25 |

Total Score | %100 |

Conclusion

Great job! Now that you're familiar with Nigeria, Igbo history and culture, and the author of "Things Fall Apart" (Chinua Achebe), it's time to develop a few thoughtful questions for your interview. If you get stuck, remember: "who, what, when, where, why, and how" Have a great interview!

Teacher Page

Focus: This WebQuest can be used as an introductory lesson for "Things Fall Apart." The objective of this webquest is to provide students with background information on Africa, Nigeria's history and culture (specifically the Igbo people), and author Chinua Achebe. The lesson challenges students to gather information in preparation for an interview with Mr. Achebe.

Instructional Variation: Students may complete this activity on their own or in groups. Teachers may want to assign each student a group a different section/topic to research, then present findings to the class.

Resources: Prerequisite Skills: Basic comfort level with the Internet. Time Required: One 60-minute class period. Technology Needs/Materials Needed: Students must have access to computers (at least one computer for every two students).

Credits: The resources and web links included on this website are external websites and I would like to thank them for creating such useful WebPages. Also, thanks to those who created more advanced WebQuests on this topic -- I consulted a handful of good WebQuests while creating this one!

Standards

Credits

Other