

## Humanities, Orature and Classics – Handout by Arti Mehta

1.) Achebe, C. 1994. *Things Fall Apart*. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition. Originally published in 1959. Anchor Books, New York.

Annotation: Title extracted from W.B. Yeats’s “The Second Coming”; Protagonist as warrior, flawed hero, authoritarian family man, colonialism; Glossary of Ibo Words and Phrases

Search Terms: Ibo/Igbo proverbs; kola nut; Igbo cosmology

Links: <http://www.literaryworlds.wmich.edu/umuofia/>  
<https://journal.oraltradition.org/about/>  
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/chinua-achebe>  
<https://pen.org/chinua-achebe-reads-from-things-fall-apart/>

2.) Igbo Proverb

“He who brings kola brings life.” – *Things Fall Apart* (p 6)

3.) Niane, D. T. 2006 (revised edition). *Sundiata: an epic of old Mali*, translated by G. D. Pickett (first published in 1986 as Longman African Classic). Pearson Education Limited, Essex (England).

Annotation: The contextualizing materials include a map covering the travels of King Sundiata (1235-1255 c.e.; variously spelled Sundiata Keita, Sundjata, Soundjata, etc.) in West Africa; charter/foundation myth for Mali Empire; lists of geographical, religious, social classes, and political terms found in the epic; Who’s Who of Characters/Glossary of Places; The Words of the Griot Mamadou Kouyaté; cosmology; Malian confederation; Notes

Search Terms: Griot/Djeli Mamoudou Kouyaté, Mande people, Mali, Islam in West Africa

Links: <https://www.bu.edu/africa/files/pdf/SUNDIATA1.pdf>  
<https://www.ancient-origins.net/history-famous-people/sundiata-keita-lion-king-mali-005733>

4.) Heroic Tale and Benediction

*Iliad* 11.783-784

“Old Peleus ordered his son Achilles  
Always to be the best and stand out from all the rest.”

Πηλεὺς μὲν ᾧ παιδὶ γέρον ἐπέτελλ’ Ἀχιλλῆϊ  
αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων·

5.) Boast

“Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee.

The hands can’t hit what the eyes can’t see. – Muhammad Ali

6.) Abuse in Contests

“Monkey looked down and said, Lion,

I hear you’s king in every way.

But I know somebody

Who do not think that is true –

He told me he could whip

The living daylights out of you...

Lion, he talked about your mama

And talked about your grandma too,

And I’m too polite to tell you

What he said about you....” (*Broad Sympathy* page 143)

7.) Douglass, F. 1995. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Dover Thrift Editions. Dover: New York.

Annotation: Preface by abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, Letter from Wendell Phillips, Esq. (fable of “The Man and the Lion”); First autobiography of Frederick Douglass (c. February 14, 1818 (?) - February 18, 1895, né Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey); “My father was a white man”; reading as access to liberty

Links:        <https://www.nps.gov/frdo/learn/historyculture/frederickdouglass.htm>  
<https://frederickdouglassbirthplace.org/>  
<https://www.visitmaryland.org/info/frederick-douglass-map>  
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race>

8.) Du Bois, W. E. B. 1920. “On the Souls of White Folk” (Originally published in 1920 by Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York); sourced from the Internet Archive.

“How easy, then, by emphasis and omission to make children believe that every great soul the world ever saw was a white man’s soul; that every great thought the world ever knew was a white man’s thought; that every great deed the world ever did was a white man’s deed; that every dream the world ever sang was a white man’s dream. In fine, that if from the world were dropped everything that would not fairly be attributed to White Folk, the world would, if anything, be even greater, truer, better than now.”

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