Socratic Seminar Prewrites

*Things Fall Apart*

Due: Tues, April 28th

45pts

Respond to **four** of these questions. Each response should be a well-developed paragraph (or more) including **at least two pieces of textual evidence** to support your position. Please properly cite quotations. (Ex: When Conrad writes, “She came forward, all in black, like a pale head, floating towards me in the dusk” (p 57), he is showing us that…)

1. Why is Okonkwo’s death “tragic”?
2. What is the general feeling you get at the end of the novel? Have things fallen completely apart? Is there hope for Umuofia?
3. Do you feel sad or relived that Okonkwo has died?
4. Do you think this book is a positive or negative assessment of the colonial encounter? Defend your answer with quotes from the text.
5. Why does Achebe let the District Commissioner have the last word in his novel? What does this tell us?
6. The novel is structured in three parts. What do the divisions reflect about the stages of life of the protagonist? How do the divisions move toward and illustrate the collapse of Igbo society?
7. In the novel's opening, Okonkwo is wrestling. How does this contrast with the ending, when Okonkwo is deliberating about an adequate response to the British humiliation of the Igbo elders in jail?
8. In Chapter One, how does Achebe foreshadow the presence (and ultimate fate) of Ikemefuna?
9. Describe the judicial function of the egwugwu and its relationship to the living, particularly to Igbo women. Why is it also related to the spiritual world? How does Achebe illustrate the blending of the spiritual and real worlds?
10. When and how is the white man introduced? Trace the chronology of the Igbo people's responses to the arrival and settlement of the white man. What attitudes toward the Igbo people do the white men bring and how do their attitudes determine their treatment of the Igbo people?

**Required Questions (Turn These in, too!):**

Generate at least **four questions that you can pose to your peers during the Socratic Seminar**. They could be questions that will help you understand the material more clearly, open-ended questions to inspire discussion, etc. Please have them composed and with you, ready to reference, for our Seminar.

**Grading:**

A+ =All four questions are answered with two pieces of textual evidence (correctly cited) to support each answer. Four or more questions have been generated to pose to peers during the Socratic Seminar.

B+= Three questions are answered with two pieces of textual evidence (correctly cited) to support each answer. Four or more questions have been generated to pose to peers during the Socratic Seminar.

C+= Two questions are answered with two pieces of textual evidence (mostly correctly cited) to support each answer. Three or more questions have been generated to pose to peers during the Socratic Seminar.

D+= One question is answered with two pieces of textual evidence (somewhat correctly cited) to support. Two or more questions have been generated to pose to peers during the Socratic Seminar.