

Cultural Relativism

- Concept that the importance of a particular cultural idea varies from one society or societal subgroup to another, the view that ethical and moral standards are relative to what a particular society or culture believes to be good/bad, right/wrong.
- The view that no culture is superior to any other culture when comparing systems of morality, law, politics, etc. It's the philosophical notion that all cultural beliefs are equally valid and that truth itself relative, depending on the cultural environment.

Moral Absolutism

- Ethical belief that there are absolute standards against which moral questions can be judged, and that certain actions are right or wrong regardless of the context of the act. Thus, actions are inherently moral or immoral, regardless of the beliefs and goals of the individual, society or culture that engages in the actions. It holds that. Rials are inherent in the laws of the universe, the nature of humanity, the will of God or some other fundamental source. Thus stealing, for instance, might be considered to be always immoral, even if done to promote some other good (stealing food to feed a starving family).

Emulate: Match or surpass (a person or achievement) typically by imitation.

Proverb: A short popular saying that gives advice about how people should behave or that expresses a belief that is generally thought to be true.

"The apple doesn't fall far from the tree"

This saying means that a child will have similar traits as their parents and will be different but not completely different.

Okonkwo and Unoko are foils

Foils: Two characters who are developed to demonstrate the dramatic contrast between them and highlight each other's traits.

Under the Vulture Tree

1. What is the poem about? How are vultures described?

Appreciation of vultures as they eat the remains of animals and they are like angels and spend time with the dead and help them transition to their next life. Vultures are misunderstood and they are compared to old people who emphasize everything and that vultures are animals who care about everyone.

2. What is the mood of the poem?

Sympathy "I never callers them, what they are"

3. What is the tone of the poem?

Appreciation as he is thanking the vultures for giving care to the abandoned animals.

Reflected/Fascinated. Is interested in his new perception of vultures.

4. What is the theme of the poem?

The theme is that you can't judge a book by its cover as you need to take time to look at things before making a judgement.

Death is not the end. Last two lines.

As vultures come at the creatures worst moment and help them move on.

Connection or When things fall apart

As it connects to death

The vulture serves as a bridge between life and death

My Papa's Waltz by Theodore Roethke

1. This poem is about a drunk father beating his child OR the dad is a bit drunk but is genuinely trying to waltz with his child
2. The mood is sympathetic for the boy-"such waltzing was not easy"
3. The tone is detached.
4. The theme is that children are vulnerable but still with their parents
5. This connects to *Things Fall Apart* because a boy clings to his father to try to satisfy him despite the beating he will receive.

Father by Frances Frost

1. What is the poem about?

This poem is about her father being jovial but it can differentiate. Loving and a good provider for the family. Positive aspects.

"Clear blue or gray as rain: They change with the swinging change of days"

2. What is the mood of the poem?

Jovial as his father is calm.

3. What is the tone of this poem?

The tone is security. "His hands are gentle with beast or child"

Loving, the girl is admiring her father and pointing out his good qualities

4. The theme is that people who work hard work for the better of everyone

Connection

The father here is working hard to bring happiness and success to their family but Okonkwo brings his family respect and a good living.

Unoka vs Okonkwo

Unoka: "Unoka had loved...gentleness and another was idleness" (17)

"He often wandered around looking for a kite sailing leisurely against the sky...He would sing with his whole being" (9)

"He was in fact a coward and could not bear the sight of blood" (10)

"You...are known for the weakness of your machete and your hoe...on exhausted farms that take no labor to clear." (20)

Okonkwo: "Even as a little boy he had resented his father's failure and weakness"

"He was still young but he had won fame as the greatest wrestler in the nine villages. He was a wealthy farmer and had two barns full of yams, and had just married his third wife." (12)

"despite these disadvantages he worked hard for a prosperous future"

"He was a man of action, a man of war. Unlike his father, he could stand the look of blood" (14)

"this meeting is for men"

"It was the fear of himself lest he be found similar to his father" (16)

"Perhaps down in his heart Okonkwo was not a cruel man but his whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and of weakness" (17)

"And indeed he was possessed by the fear of his father's contemptible life and shameful death"

Nwoye: “he feigned that he no longer cared for women’s stories (53)

“Nwoye...already causing his father’s great anxiety for his incipient laziness” (17)

“and so he was always happy when he heard Nwoye grumbling about women” (51)

“Nwoye knew that Ikemefuna had been killed, and something seemed to give way inside him” (59)

Ikemefuna: “he seemed to know everything. He could fashion out flutes from bamboo stems and even from the elephant grass. He knew the names of all the birds and could set clever traps for the little bush rodents” (30)

“Ikemefuna looked at them sternly and they held their peace” (44)

“He grew rapidly, like a yam tendril in the rainy season, and was full of the sap of life. He had become wholly absorbed in his new family” (51)

Okonkwo post-Ikemefuna: “Okonkwo drew his machete and cut him down. He was afraid of being thought weak”

“Okonkwo did not taste any food for two days...He did not sleep at night...he drank palm-wine from morning till night...you have become a woman indeed...if only he could find some work to do he would be able to forget”

How Could I Embrace a Village? by Mary Helen Specht

1. She tries to assimilate by staying in the village, trying to help with the yams, eating all the meat, and sleeping on the floor.
2. She experiences culture shock when she eats the all the bad meat, she cannot participate in cooking, and the girls touch her hair.
3. Author thinks she is not ready for all the village life and dedication to the village.
4. The village is similar to Umuofia because people still have compounds, use yams, and drink palm-wine.

Body Rituals Among the Nacirema by Horace Miner

Week of Peace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Women cook and clean ○ Dead thrown to Evil Forest 	People feared Earth god No crimes No violence or bad harvest
New Yam Festival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Feast during the first day ○ Inter-tribal wrestling contest on 2nd night to determine strength 	All cooking utensils are cleaned thoroughly Old yams are disposed Gave thanks to Ani
Food and cooking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sky high foo-foo ○ Kola nuts used as offering 	People cook yams daily Women used cocoa yams, beans, cassava Eat locusts
Agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Men grew yam ○ Yam is a staple crops and determine status 	People could sharecrop Women and children help Sacrifice made for good crops Tap palm-wine every afternoon
Family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Men rule household ○ Father eats a dish from each of his wives ○ Eldest Son = highest expectations ○ A man who doesn't take care of his family is insulted by society ○ Twins are thrown into pots and into the forest to die ○ Ogbanje is a child, that repeatedly comes back to life in mothers stomach to haunt her/keep dying 	Each wife lives around the man's hut Ogbanje terrorize mother Suitors pay bride price 2 members could be given to avoid war Each person made own life and status There is polygamy Father has right to beat wife and children Each person can make their own way into the world # of wives determine status
Religious and spiritual beliefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The village holds a feast and sacrifices to the goddess ○ Village prays to gods and ancestors for a good harvest ○ Consult an oracle ○ Ancestral spirits come to the clan and are not to be shown to women 	Ogbanje terrorize mother Priestess speaks for gods Praise Ani the earth goddess for fertility Chi determines success Egwugwu were ancestor spirits Agbala controls a priest/priestess so that he/she can do his bidding Mutilated Ogbanje child to scare him from coming back, had to find its stone to stop evil spirit
Wrestling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Women cannot wrestle 	Winning a match brings honor Entertainment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of a wrestling match determines one's status among a tribe • Women were allowed to watch • The last match was between leaders of teams • Wrestlers come from all 9 villages 	<p>Major event at yam festival Took place at <i>ilo</i> Different divisions Possessed by the spirit of the drums Wrestling determines social status</p>
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