

Words from Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

Avocabo Wordlist 87

ABOMINATION, AKIN, ANCESTRAL, CALLOW, CONDEMN, COWRIE, DEBTOR, DISCORDANT, ENTHRALL, GNASH, HARBINGER, HARMATTAN, IDOLATROUS, IMPERIOUS, INCIPIENT, MALEVOLENT, MUTILATE, PROPHECY, PROWESS, QUAVERINGLY, SONOROUS, TRUDGE, ULTIMATUM, VOLUBLE

Things Fall Apart tells two intertwining stories, each centering on Okonkwo, a “strong man” of an Ibo village in Nigeria. The first, a powerful fable of the immemorial conflict between the individual and society, traces Okonkwo’s fall from grace with the tribal world. The second, as modern as the first is ancient, concerns the clash of cultures and the destruction of Okonkwo’s world with the arrival of aggressive European missionaries. These perfectly harmonized twin dramas are informed by an awareness capable of encompassing at once the life of nature, human history, and the mysterious compulsions of the soul.

Exercise 87-1 Fill in the Blanks: Complete these sentences from the novel with the best list word. Definitions are provided to help you determine the correct word or variant. (24 Marks)

1. Ekwefi _____ behind, neither getting too near nor keeping too far back. *v. walked slowly and with heavy steps.*

2. The interpreter explained each verse to the audience, some of whom now stood _____. *adv. had the quality of captured fascinated attention*

3. But although Okonkwo was a great man whose _____ was universally acknowledged, he was not a hunter. *n. skill or expertise in a particular activity or field; bravery in battle*

4. And so when Okonkwo of Umuofia arrived at Mbaino as the proud and _____ emissary of war, he was treated with great honor and respect, and two days later he returned home with a lad of fifteen and a young virgin. *adj.*



assuming power or authority without justification; domineering

5. Each group there represents a debt to someone, and each stroke is one hundred _____. *n. yellowish shells of small money, formerly used in parts of Africa and the Indo-Pacific area*

6. A(n) _____ was immediately dispatched to Mbaino asking them to choose between war on the one hand, and on the other the offer of a young man and a virgin as compensation. *n. a final demand or statement of terms, the rejection of which will result in retaliation or a breakdown in relations*

7. That was many years ago, twenty years or more, and during this time Okonkwo’s frame had grown like a bush-fire in the _____. *n. a dry, dusty easterly or northeasterly wind on the West Africa coast*

8. Our dead fathers are weeping because of the shameful sacrilege they are suffering and the _____ we have all seen with our eyes. *n. anything that causes a feeling of hatred*

9. The egwugwu house was now a pandemonium of _____ voices. *adj. shaking or trembling in speaking*

10. Nwoye’s _____ mind was greatly puzzled. *adj. inexperienced and immature*

11. He brought out a sharp razor from the goatskin bag slung from his left shoulder and began to _____ the child. *v. to inflict serious damage or a violent and disfiguring injury on*

12. Mr. Brown begged and argued and _____. *v. said that a specified thing will happen in the future*

the AVOCABO VOCABULARY SERIES

13. Unoka was, of course, a(n) _____, and he owed every neighbor some money, from a few cowries to quite substantial amounts. *n. a person or institution that owes a sum of money*

14. For the first time in many years Okonkwo had a feeling that was _____ to happiness. *adj. of similar character*

15. Tortoise was very happy and _____ as he flew among the birds, and he was soon chosen as the man to speak for the party because he was a great orator. *adj. speaking or spoken incessantly and fluently*

16. They were the _____ sent to survey the land. *n. people or things that announce or signal the approach of another*

17. It was deeper and more intimate than the fear of evil and capricious gods and of magic, the fear of the forest, and of the forces of nature, _____, red in tooth and claw. *adj. having or showing a wish to do evil to others*

18. When they had eaten they talked about many things: about the heavy rains which were drowning the yams, about the next _____ feast and about the impending war with the village of Mbaino. *adj. of, belonging to, inherited from, or denoting (an) ancestor(s)*

19. Okeke had not been on the best of terms with his master since he had strongly _____ Enoch's behaviour at the meeting of the leaders of the church during the night. *v. expressed complete disapproval of*

20. To fill the Lord's holy temple with a(n) _____ crowd clamoring for signs was a folly of everlasting consequence. *adj. treating someone or something reverently*

21. The silence was broken by the village crier beating his _____ ogene. *adj. capable of producing a deep or ringing sound*

22. _____ bells clanged, machetes clashed and the air was full of dust and weird sounds. *adj. harsh and jarring sounds because of lack of harmony*

23. He always _____ his teeth as he listened to those who came to consult him. *v. grinded (one's teeth) together, typically as a sign of anger*

24. But now she found the half-light of the _____ moon more terrifying than darkness. *adj. in an initial stage, beginning to happen or develop*

Exercise 87-2 Anagrams: Our words have fallen apart! Unscramble these mixed up words to produce list words. (15 Marks)

1. boatmaninio _____
2. venalemlot _____
3. hyperops _____
4. uloblev _____
5. hallrent _____
6. caddinrots _____
7. lacowl _____
8. riseimuop _____
9. knia _____
10. ragherbin _____
11. atudorsoil _____
12. thatraman _____
13. hangs _____
14. alunitumt _____
15. onusorso _____

Exercise 87-3 Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Usage

Indicate whether the bold list word has been used appropriately or inappropriately . (10 Marks)

1. The auction-goers were willing to pay large sums for the **voluble** merchandise.
2. He is expected to make a payment to his wife's **akin**.
3. The crevice in the earth was **callow** and continued for five straight miles.
4. The coaches issued an **ultimatum** stating that the players would lose their spots on the team if they did not religiously follow the off-season training schedule.
5. "You bloody **cowrie!**" the British man spouted, as he gulped down the remaining sips of his brew. "The only reason you refuse to fight me is 'cause you know you'll lose."
6. Bombs, guns and engines mingled in **discordant** sounds of war.

☑ ☒ 7. The dusty **harmattan** was the reason for the failure of our crops last season; this year, it is imperative that we harvest before November commences.

☑ ☒ 8. A **prophecy** is most commonly recited by an individual in a trance, or one seeming to be under the influence of hypnosis.

☑ ☒ 9. **Enthralled** by its many opportunities, its natural beauty, and cultural diversity, they decided to move to Canada after graduation.

☑ ☒ 10. Lupita Nyong'o, a Kenyan actress, was very honoured when the presenters announced she was the **incipient** of the 2014 Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress.

Exercise 87-4 Parts of Speech Change each word to the indicated part of speech. (10 Marks)

1. imperious *to a noun* _____
2. ancestral *to a noun* _____
3. abomination *to a verb* _____
4. quaveringly *to a verb* _____
5. enthrall *to a noun* _____
6. prophecy *to an noun* _____
7. idolatrous *to a noun* _____
8. discordant *to a noun* _____
9. debtor *to a different noun* _____
10. condemn *to a noun* _____

Exercise 87-5 Synonyms: Select the multiple choice answer that is closest in meaning to the listed word. (24 Marks)

1. **quaveringly**
a. steadily b. tremulously c. stoically
2. **voluble**
a. audible b. ebullient c. loquacious
3. **prowess**
a. stealthy movement b. mastery c. incompetence
4. **akin**
a. related b. opposite c. a kinsmen
5. **incipient**
a. developing b. just having occurred c. donor

6. **cowrie**
a. weakling b. ambition c. currency

7. **gnash**
a. run into b. collapse c. grate

8. **ultimatum**
a. of highest quality b. threat c. pinnacle

9. **malevolent**
a. extreme violence b. malicious c. benevolent

10. **ancestral**
a. inherited b. prehistoric c. ancient

11. **enthrall**
a. awe b. captivate c. fatigue

12. **idolatrous**
a. agnostic b. appalling c. reverence

13. **condemn**
a. reprimand b. congratulate c. acquit

14. **imperious**
a. inferior b. undeniable c. commanding

15. **abomination**
a. obliteration b. deep affection c. atrocity

16. **trudge**
a. scavenge b. plod c. trail

17. **discordant**
a. agreeing b. inharmonious c. courteous

18. **mutilate**
a. deteriorate b. disfigure c. demolish

19. **harbinger**
a. precursor b. fetal c. fatal

20. **callow**
a. empty b. insincere c. juvenile

21. **sonorous**
a. foreboding b. cautious c. booming

the AVOCABO VOCABULARY SERIES

22. **debtor**

- a. dutiful b. borrower c. obligatory

23. **prophesy**

- a. foretell b. divulge publically c. proceeding

24. **harmattan**

- a. dry, dusty wind b. harangue c. an old couch

Exercise 87-6 Fill in the Blanks Complete each sentence with the most appropriate list word. (10 Marks)

1. Rather than remain in denial, the company should have listened to his constructive suggestions. Quite unmistakably, he _____ the downfall in their sales.

2. When the _____ medallion was given to me, the third in a family of darts champions, it was unscathed, yet attached to a rusting pendant.

3. "This must be taken seriously! People's lives are on the line, including your own," the sergeant scowled. "I will not tolerate _____ behavior."

4. The pupil spoke _____ throughout the entire spelling bee. With each articulated letter, she became increasingly more anxious.

5. Upon hearing the major and minor scales being played simultaneously, the audience was left with a(n) _____ impression.

6. He was unable to conceal what had really happened, due to his _____ black eye.

7. Though I had expected her to feel remorse, all I could see spread across her face was _____.

8. The bleak sky was the first _____ that a detrimental storm was coming our way.

9. The public speaker did not require a microphone; she had a naturally _____ voice.

10. Elton John has been acknowledged worldwide for his _____ as a singer-songwriter.

Exercise 87-7 Creative Writing Compose a sentence that correctly uses the two listed words. (2 marks each)

a) sonorous and discordant

b) abomination and malevolent

c) condemn and mutilate

d) cowrie and debtor

e) idolatrous and prowess

f) quaveringly and voluble

Exercise 87-8 Matching Definitions This one is for those who have read the book. Match each term from the book to its closest meaning. (8 Marks)

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| ___ chi | 1. elders |
| ___ ilo | 2. changeling |
| ___ iyiuwa | 3. special stone forming link between spirit world and ogbanje |
| ___ umunna | 4. village green |
| ___ ndichie | 5. personal god |
| ___ obi | 6. wide group of kinsmen |
| ___ ochu | 7. living quarters of the head of the family |
| ___ ogbanje | 8. murder or manslaughter |

ANSWERS TO EXERCISES

87-1: 1. trudged 2. enthralled 3. prowess 4. imperious 5. cowries 6. ultimatum 7. harmattan 8. abomination 9. quavering 10. callow 11. mutilate 12. prophesied 13. debtor 14. akin 15. voluble 16. harbingers 17. malevolent 18. ancestral 19. condemned 20. idolatrous 21. sonorous 22. discordant 23. gnashed 24. incipient

87-2: 1. abomination 2. malevolent 3. prophesy 4. voluble 5. enthrall 6. discordant 7. callow 8. imperious 9. akin 10. harbinger 11. idolatrous 12. harmattan 13. gnash 14. ultimatum 15. sonorous

87-3: 1. inappropriate 2. inappropriate 3. inappropriate 4. appropriate 5. inappropriate 6. appropriate 7. appropriate 8. inappropriate 9. appropriate 10. inappropriate

87-4: Answers may vary from the answers provided
1. imperiousness 2. ancestor, 3. abominate, 4. quaver 5. enthrallment 6. prophecy 7. idolatry 8. discord or discordance 9. debt or indebtedness 10. condemnation or condemner

87-5: 1.b 2.c 3.b 4.a 5.a 6.c 7.c 8.b 9.b 10.a 11.b 12.c 13.a 14.c 15.c 16.b 17.b 18.b 19.a 20.c 21.c 22.b 23.a 24.a

87-6: 1. prophesied 2. ancestral 3. callow 4. quaveringly 5. discordant 6. incipient 7. malevolence 8. harbinger 9. sonorous 10. prowess

87-7: Answers will vary, but clarify that the word has been used in the correct context.

87-8: 5, 4, 3, 6, 1, 7, 8, 2

Word Search for review purposes is attached.