

# **Student Essay on Okonkwo's Tragic Life in "Things Fall Apart"**

## **Okonkwo's Tragic Life in "Things Fall Apart" by Chinua Achebe**

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# Essay

Things Fall Apart, by Chinua Achebe is a very tragic story. In the beginning Okonkwo wins over his town by throwing Amalinze the Cat in a wrestling match. Unfortunately things descend for Okonkwo from this moment.

Okonkwo's father was a very unsuccessful man. He was always heavily in debt. This was how he died. When Okonkwo was a grown man he drove more for success so he wouldn't end up like his father. At the end of the story, Okonkwo does end up like his father by choosing a cowardly way to die, by hanging himself.

The first tragedy that Okonkwo encountered during the story was the death of his 'temporary son,' Ikemefuna which Okonkwo assisted with. He felt horrible and considered himself a woman for feeling bad about killing a boy when he had already killed five men in war before. The next tragedy occurred when Ezeudu, the oldest man in the village, died. When all the people of Umuofia came to celebrate his life, Okonkwo accidentally shot Ezeudu's son. His punishment for this was banishment from Umuofia for seven years. Okonkwo and his family then fled to Mbanta. This was Okonkwo's mother land. During the seven years Okonkwo was banished, the white men moved in and brought their government, religion, and weapons to Umuofia.

When Okonkwo returned to Umuofia after his seven years, he found out that the white men had started a school there. It seemed like the Egwugwu were the only ones besides Okonkwo that seemed to care. When Okonkwo brought up the topic to fight the white men, everyone in his tribe backed away and no one was behind his thoughts. At a meeting the white men's messenger came up and told them to stop the meeting and Okonkwo the messenger. When the District came to look for Okonkwo, they found he had hanged himself. This was how Okonkwo took the cowardly way like his father would have done.

I enjoyed reading Things Fall Apart. It was a great book full of tragedy which improved the novel greatly.