

Lesson Guidance 30	
<b>Grade</b>	11
<b>Unit</b>	2
<b>Selected Text(s)</b>	Elements of a Tragedy in Things Fall Apart <a href="#">Why tragedies are alluring - David E. Rivas</a>
<b>Duration</b>	1 day

*Plan with guidance from the [ELA Instructional Expectations Guide](#)*

### Learning Goal(s)

*What should students understand about today's selected text?*

Students will be able to identify and explain the main elements of dramatic tragedy, and how they relate to the text. They will analyze these closely in stations, and through discussions.

### CCSS Alignment

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2

Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

### End of lesson task

*Formative assessment*

Do we all agree on Okonkwo's 'fatal flaw'? How does Okonkwo as the tragic hero relate to the deeper themes of the novel? What deeper commentary might Chinua Achebe be presenting? How might the concept of the tragic hero relate to your life/world today?

### Knowledge Check

*What do students need to know in order to access the*

### Background knowledge

- The ending of Things Fall Apart

text?

### Key terms (*domain specific terms to analyze the text*)

- **tragic hero:** a type of character in a tragedy, and is usually the protagonist. Tragic heroes typically have heroic traits that earn them the sympathy of the audience, but also have flaws or make mistakes that ultimately lead to their own downfall
- **hamartia or tragic flaw:** a flaw in character that brings about the downfall of the hero of a tragedy
- **conflict:** any form of struggle or opposition faced by a character
- **catharsis:** a literary device used to simulate a release of emotions.
- **poetic justice:** a literary device when good is rewarded and evil is punished or when everything comes to a fair and just ending

### Vocabulary Words (*words found in the text*)

- N/A

## Core Instruction

*Text-centered questions and ways students will engage with the text*

### Opening Activity:

Have students watch [Why tragedies are alluring - David E. Rivas](#) and take notes. Students will answer the following questions:

- What do you think Okonkwo's **hamartia– or tragic flaw–** is? Argue your reasoning using examples from the text.

### [ELD Tasks and Scaffolding](#)

### Content Knowledge:

Webster's Dictionary defines a tragedy as "a serious play or drama typically dealing with the problems of a central character, leading to an unhappy or disastrous ending brought on – as in ancient drama – by fate and a tragic flaw in this character, or, in modern drama, usually by moral weakness, psychological maladjustment, or social pressures."

There are **5 specific elements of a tragedy** including the tragic hero, hamartia, conflict, catharsis and lack of poetic justice.

The **tragic hero** is typically the protagonist or main character and also typically a character of high status who will suffer because of some flaw of their character.

This **fatal flaw** is also called **hamartia**, which is the tragic hero's fatal flaw that leads to their downfall. The word hamartia comes from the Greek word meaning "to miss the mark."

Tragedies also always have a **central conflict** which creates the essential drama of the story. This conflict can be internal, external or a combination of both.

Tragedies also rely on the audience experiencing strong feelings for or with the characters on stage so that they take on their emotions too. This is called **catharsis**, which comes from the Greek word meaning



“cleansing.” Catharsis is a literary device used to stimulate emotions in the audience or reader. It is an emotional experience through which one can achieve a state of moral or spiritual renewal, or achieve a state of liberation from anxiety and stress.

Lastly, tragedies contain a **lack of poetic justice**. Poetic justice is when good is rewarded and evil is punished or when everything comes to a fair and just ending.

## Group Stations:

Teachers can create 5 different stations around the room. Students can work collaboratively, going to each station one at a time. At each station, instruct students to discuss the topics they’ve been designated at their table and to answer the questions on their sheet. When students switch stations, the groups will repeat this process at each station.

### 1. Station 1: The Tragic Hero

- How does Achebe characterize Okonkwo as the hero?
- In what way is Okonkwo a sympathetic character in the eyes of the audience?
- What evidence is there that Okonkwo is of high or noble status?
- What are key quotations that relate to Okonkwo being the tragic hero?

### 2. Station 2: Hamartia

- What is Okonkwo’s tragic flaw? Can you think of more than one possibility?
- How does Okonkwo’s tragic flaw make him relatable?
- How does Okonkwo’s tragic flaw result in his downfall?
- What are key quotations which relate to Okonkwo’s tragic flaw?

### 3. Station 3: Conflict

- What are examples of internal conflict in the novel?
- What are examples of external conflict in the novel?
- What/who is responsible for most of the conflict in the novel?
- What are key quotations which relate to the central conflict in the novel?

### 4. Station 4: Catharsis

- Identify the possible emotions which the audience might experience during the course of the novel.
- How might the novel have a positive impact on the audience?
- Which character might evoke the most response from the audience?
- What are key quotations which relate to catharsis in the novel?

### 5. Station 5: Lack of Poetic Justice

- In what way is the ending of the novel unjust?
- How does the lack of poetic justice relate to a deeper theme of the text?
- Who does get some justice in the novel?
- What are key quotations which relate to the lack of poetic justice in the novel?

## Formative Assessment:

**Note:** the following questions could be completed verbally or in writing. Teachers can decide to have a lengthier discussion using the questions from the collaborative learning stations.

Do we all agree on Okonkwo’s ‘fatal flaw’? How does Okonkwo as the tragic hero relate to the deeper themes of the novel? What deeper commentary might Chinua Achebe be presenting? How might the concept of the tragic hero relate to your life/world today?



### Fluency, Comprehension and Writing Supports

Fluency	<a href="#">Fluency Protocols</a>
Sentence Comprehension	<a href="#">Juicy Sentence</a> protocol with sample sentence N/A
Writing	<a href="#">Pattan Writing Scope and Sequence</a>  N/A

### Additional Supports

<a href="#">ELD Practices</a>  <a href="#">ELD ELA Tasks and Scaffolding Directions</a>	<a href="#">ELD Tasks and Scaffolding</a>
<a href="#">SpEd Practice</a>	Practices to promote Tier 1 access
<a href="#">MTSS Practices</a>	Practices to promote Tier 1 access
<b>Enrichment Practices</b>	Practices to promote Tier 1 access