

Marriage Is a Private Affair

FICTION SELECTION
Unit 1, Part 2, Grade 10



Preparing to Read

Connect to Your Life

Marriage customs vary greatly throughout the world.

- In some cultures, people's marriages are traditionally arranged by their parents.
- In others cultures, the partners make up their own minds.



Preparing to Read

Connect to Your Life

What do you know about arranged marriages?

- What purpose do they serve?
- What advantages and disadvantages might they have?



Preparing to Read

Build Background

- The story takes place in the West African country of Nigeria, a land of great cultural diversity.
- Centuries-old traditions continue to govern life in Nigerian villages, where parents often play a decisive role in choosing mates for their children.



Preparing to Read

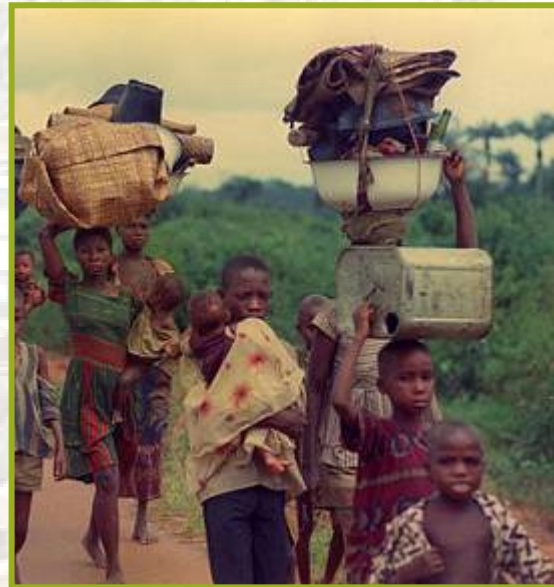
Build Background

- In the cities, however, modern practices have displaced many of the village traditions, including the role of parent as matchmaker.
- The tension between old and new ways of living sometimes creates conflict within families, especially between generations.

Preparing to Read

Build Background

- The following story focuses on a conflict between a father and son about the choice of the son's marriage partner.
- Both men are Ibo, members of one of Nigeria's largest ethnic groups.



Preparing to Read

Build Background

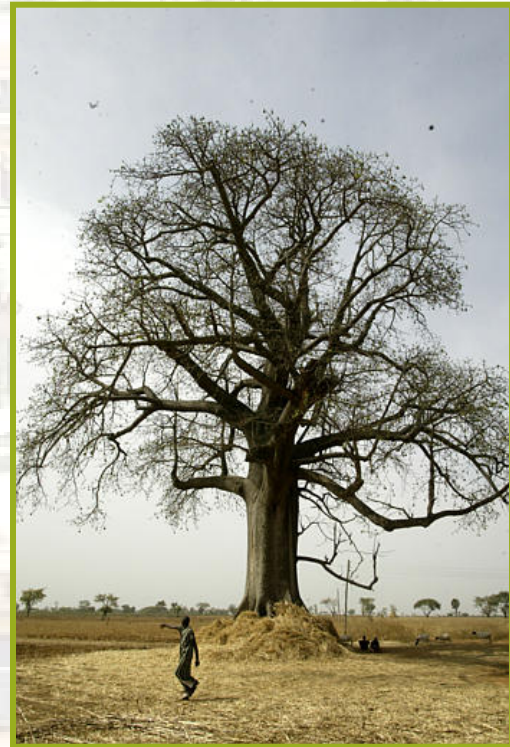
The son, like many of his contemporaries, has moved away from the village of his birth and lives in a city, Lagos, the economic and commercial center of the nation, with a population of 1.4 million.



Preparing to Read

Build Background

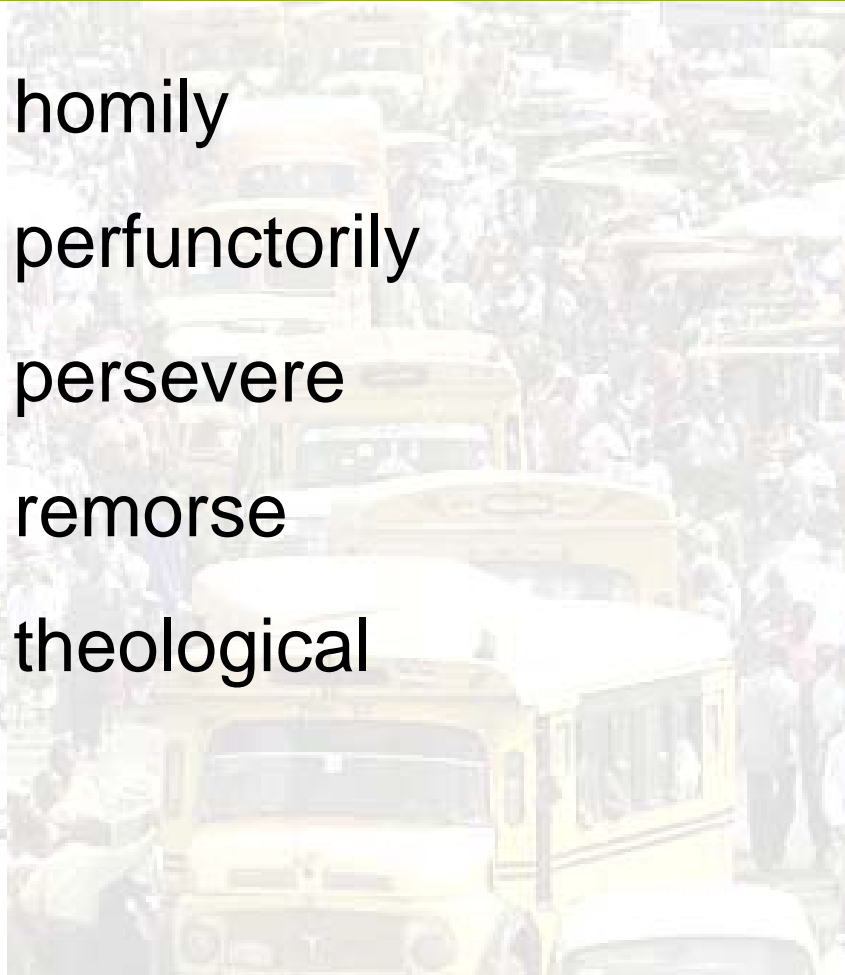
- In the villages of Nigeria, the Ibo live apart from other peoples, maintaining their traditional way of live.
- In Lagos, ethnic groups, cultures, and religions mingle freely.



Preparing to Read

Words to Know

- commiserate
- cosmopolitan
- deference
- dissuasion
- forsaken
- homily
- perfunctorily
- persevere
- remorse
- theological



Preparing to Read

Focus Your Reading

- The plot of story is constructed around **conflict**, or the struggle between opposing forces.
- In some stories, struggles occur as a result of cultural differences; these **cultural conflicts** arise from differences in values, beliefs, or customs.
 - As you read, look for conflicts arising from cultural friction.

Preparing to Read

Focus Your Reading

- In order to understand the conflict in this story, you will need to pay close attention to the cultural context.
- The following passage shows a tension between city ways and tribal ways of life.
 - *In the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the city, it had always seemed to her something of a joke that a person's tribe could determine whom be married.*

Preparing to Read

Focus Your Reading

Reader's Notebook

- As you read, take notes on the cultural characteristics of the village and the city.



Culture of the City

Culture of the Villages

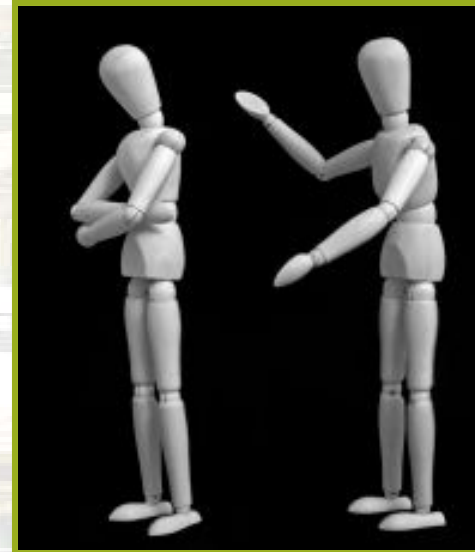


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Reading and Analyzing Literary Analysis

Cultural Conflict

- The chief conflict in this story is over a clash of cultures.
- Students should recognize the distinctive characteristics of the cultures.
 - » What are the values, beliefs, and customs on both sides that are the source of this conflict?



Reading and Analyzing Active Reading

Identifying Cultural Characteristics

- As you read continue to keep track of the differences between the culture of Okeke's village and that of Lagos.

The graphic organizer consists of two side-by-side rectangular boxes with blue borders. The left box is titled 'Culture of the City' in red text, with a small icon of a city skyline above the title. The right box is titled 'Culture of the Village' in red text, with a small icon of two thatched-roof huts above the title. Both boxes are currently empty, intended for students to write their observations.

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Reading and Analyzing

Active Reading

- Summarize
 - Summarize the conversation among Okeke and the other men of the village.
- Evaluate
 - What do you think Nnaemeke's father was trying to win?
 - Do you feel that the father truly won something?