


Marriage Is a Private Affair

FICTION SELECTION
Unit 1, Part 2, Grade 10



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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.




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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?



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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.



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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.

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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.



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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.



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Preparing to Read
Build Background

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



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Preparing to Read
Words to Know

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

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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.

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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 he married.*

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Preparing to Read

Focus Your Reading

Reader's Notebook

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



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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?

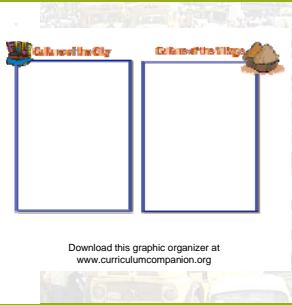


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Reading and Analyzing
Active Reading

Identifying Cultural Characteristics

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



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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?

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