**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Culture Comparison**

Much of the first half of the novel focuses on developing the Ibo tribe as a culture—it shows a variety of different cultural traditions, many of which are similar to our society.

With your group, you will examine one of the cultural traditions presented in the book, and then share out with the class as a whole.

**Group 1: Law and Order**

* The Ibo people have a very specific way of handling legal disputes. In order to see an example of one of these disputes, read the following pages and answer the questions.
* **Read pages 87-94**
  1. What are the egwugwu?
  2. If this were an American trial, what person would the egwugwu be?
  3. What is Uzowulu’s complaint? (why has he come before the court?)
  4. What do Mgbafo (the woman)’s brothers say in response to Uzowulu’s complaint?
  5. What is the result of the trial?
     + Do you think the result was a fair one? Why or why not?
  6. In what ways is this trial similar to trials you would see in the United States?
  7. In what ways is this trial different to trials you would see in the United States?

**Group 2: Weddings**

* Though Ibo men take more than one wife, they do have a wedding that is similar to ours. Read the following pages and answer the questions.
* **Read pages 115-119**
  1. What are two things that they do to the bride to get her ready for the wedding?
  2. What was the significance in the amount of wine the family brought?
  3. Why do you think they brought out the giant goat?
  4. What is a tradition that the men have, that is performed when the women are not there?
  5. What did the women, especially the bride, do when they finally came back to the party?
  6. Where did the bride and groom go after the wedding?
  7. In what ways is this wedding similar to one you would see in the United States?

**Group 3: Medicine**

* Obviously their medicine is not as advanced as ours, but they do have a variety of beliefs that explain their world.
* **Read pages 75-85**
  1. Briefly describe Ekwefi’s troubles.
  2. How is Ezinma different from other children?
  3. What is an *ogbanje*? What do they do to the dead *ogbanje* in order to keep it from returning?
  4. What does the priest believe they need to do to keep Ezinma from dying?
  5. Do you think Ezinma knew what an *iyi-uwa* was? Explain your answer.
  6. How do you respond to their methods? What would you believe if you had no explanation for why her children kept dying, when other children lived?

**Group 4: Differences in culture**

* Read page Page 31-32, starting with “Ogbuefi Ezeudu, who was the oldest man in the village…”

1. What are some customs that are discussed from other villages?
2. How do the villagers feel about the customs in other places?

* On page 69, it says: “I don’t know how we got that law,” said Obierika. “In many other clans a man of title is not forbidden to climb the palm tree. Here we say he cannot climb the tall tree, but he can tap the short ones standing on the ground. It is like Dimaragana, who would not lend his knife for cutting up dogmeat because the dog was taboo to him, but offered to use his teeth.”
  1. What does Obierika mean with this quote? With what is he dissatisfied?
  2. Continue reading through the break on page 70. What other concerns does Okonkwo bring up?
* Read page 73 through 74, starting at “It was only this morning…”
  1. What other customs are different in Abame and Aninta?
  2. What do they say about the “white man”? Why do they laugh?
  3. How do you think these men will respond to seeing a real white man?
* Overall questions
  1. Why do you think the author included these sections in which the clan discuss the culture and customs of other clans?
  2. How does this relate to our own culture?
  3. Why do you think these differences would be important to recognize when thinking about people in Africa?