



Oral Tradition

Oral traditions are important means of communicating and preserving the history of societies that did not have written records. Stories were told to the children so that the history could be kept alive through the generations.

There are two main types of oral tradition:

- Oral history informs on what, when and why things happened to a person or a community.
- Fictional stories or folklore give reasons for occurrences that the community is unable to explain.

Oral Tradition in *'Things Fall Apart'*

The narrative is rich with stories that include Igbo proverbs and folktales. Wisdom is transmitted through these proverbs and folktales. They give clarity to the traditions and customs that define the Igbo people and give emphasis to the importance of oral communication and the complexity of Igbo culture. The figurative language used in the oral tradition highlights the significance of the aspects of nature that are so central to the lives of the Igbo people.

Proverbs are compared to palm oil: proverbs are common in their speech and add flavour to their conversation the way palm oil adds flavour to food.

Adapted from: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/oral-tradition-and-indigenous-knowledge>

<http://www.gradesaver.com/author/chinua-achebe/> <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/things/themes.html>