

## Assignments for Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood*

Assignments are to the NY: George Braziller, 1979 edition. *The Joys of Motherhood* is one of the most famous novels by an African woman.

### **Assignment One:**

1. Read the essay about Emecheta's life and works in the Contemporary Literary Criticism database in Literature Resource Center. (Click on the link to get the essay.)
2. Read Chapters 1 - 3 (pp. 7-39) of the novel.
3. On your 3x5 card, 1) the thing you find most interesting about these chapters, and 2) the thing you find most puzzling.

### **Assignment Two:**

1. Read Chapters 4 - 7 (pp. 40 - 81).
2. On your 3x5 card, 1) the thing you find most interesting about these chapters, and 2) the thing you find most puzzling.
3. Be prepared to discuss the conflicts that are developing in the novel.

### **Assignment Three:**

1. Read Chapters 8 - 10 (pp. 82 -125).
2. On your 3x5 card, 1) the thing you find most interesting about these chapters, and 2) the thing you find most puzzling.
3. Be prepared to discuss the importance of the setting in the novel.

### **Assignment Four:**

1. Read Chapters 11 - 13 (pp. 126-156).
2. On your 3x5 card, 1) the thing you find most interesting about these chapters, 2) the thing you find most puzzling, and 3) your view of polygamy.

### **Assignment Five:**

1. Read Chapters 14 - 16 (pp. 156 - 197).
2. On your 3x5 card, 1) the thing you find most interesting about these chapters, 2) the thing you find most puzzling, and 3) the significance of one symbol that you think is important in the novel.
3. Be prepared to characterize Nnu Ego.

### **Assignment Six:**

1. Read Chapters 17 - 18 (pp. 198 - 224).
2. On your 3x5 card, 1) the thing you find most interesting about these chapters, 2) the thing you find most puzzling, and 3) your statement of the theme of the novel.
3. Be prepared to discuss the irony in the novel.

## **First week back (August)**

### **Assignment Seven: In-class Essay**

Read and take notes on the following three essays. (Click on the link to get them. If the link does not work right, go to the library page, then to full text databases and search the appropriate database for the article.) Bring your notes and copies of the essays to class, where you will write an essay about the novel and one or more of the essays.

Emecheta, Buchi. "Feminism with a Small 'f!," in *Criticism and Ideology: Second African Writers' Conference*, edited by Kirsten Holst Petersen, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1988, pp. 173-85. [LRC]

Brouwer, Ruth Compton "Books for Africans: Margaret Wrong and the Gendering of African Writing, 1929-1963." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1. (1998), pp. 53-71. [JSTOR]

Nnoromele, Salome C. "Representing the African woman: Subjectivity and self in *The Joys of Motherhood*." *Critique*; Washington; Winter 2002 Vol. 43, No. 2. 178-190. [PreQuest Direct]