



Have you ever heard the expressions "The early bird gets the worm" and "Actions speak louder than words"? These are examples of proverbs. A **proverb** is a brief saying that expresses a larger truth about life. Every culture has proverbs that reflect the culture's traditional wisdom and values. Take a moment to think about some common proverbs you know and use. When do you use them and why?

Achebe sprinkles proverbs throughout his novel *Things Fall Apart*. Sometimes characters speak these proverbs, and at other times, the narrator presents them to the reader. Either way, each proverb in the text serves an important function and delivers a specific message.

Complete the chart below by choosing five to seven proverbs in the novel, and categorizing them according to whether they serve a **narrative function** (they relate specifically to an event in the plot), a **social function** (characters use the proverb in their interactions), or serve as **general commentary** (general proverbs spoken by the narrator).

Narrative Function	Social Function	General Commentary
<p>“Never kill a man who says nothing.” (p. 140)</p>		

RL.9-10.6 Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

L.9-10.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.