



# Literature of Africa (Literature as Windows to World Cultures)

*Douglas Killam*

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As more works of African Literature are being incorporated into the Language Arts and Cultural Studies curriculum, it becomes increasingly important to offer students and educators a meaningful context in which to explore these works. As part of *Greenwood's Literature as Windows to World Culture* series, this volume introduces readers to the cultural concerns of 10 of Africa's most renowned writers. Written in clear accessible language, close analysis is given for 14 novels, including Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, and Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country*, chosen because of their literary importance and the frequency with which they are assigned. The ten analysis chapters each begin with a brief account of the authors' lives and their writing careers, noting especially the experiences and influences which have shaped their writing. Following this section is a major essay on their most prominent and best known work. Discussion of the historical and cultural issues in the novels is integrated into the literary commentary. Students will gain not a deeper appreciation for the fiction, but a more solid understanding of the core historical issues and cultural concerns that influence and shape the writing.

The Introduction outlines the general history and development of Sub-Saharan African Literature. The colonial experiences and postcolonial struggles, the principal subject matter of African writers, differs from region to region. The geographic organization of this guide into West, East and South Africa reflects these different perspectives. Each section ends with a list of critical works that will assist readers and researchers further their understanding of the authors and their works. Short biographical sketches on 80 authors are also provided to expand readers' contact with African literature. The index assists users in identifying not only title and authors but also major themes and topics that the writings reveal.

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