

The Novelist as Teacher Key Facts

Writer: Chinua Achebe | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

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Key Facts

- **Full Title:** The Novelist as Teacher
- **Author:** Chinua Achebe (1930–2013)
- **Language:** English
- **Written Date:** 1964
- **First Published:** 1965 (in the essay collection “Morning Yet on Creation Day”)
- **Genre:** Literary Essay / Cultural Criticism
- **Form:** Non-fiction prose essay (argumentative, reflective, cultural)
- **Type of Work:** A critical essay explaining the social, cultural, and moral duties of an African writer
- **Period:** Postcolonial African Literature
- **Narrative Style:** Clear, logical, calm, persuasive; first-person argumentative and reflective tone
- **Tone:** Serious, thoughtful, instructive, culturally conscious
- **Climax:** Achebe strongly declares that African writers must help people “regain belief in themselves” after colonial damage.
- **Famous Line:** “The writer cannot expect to be excused from the task of re-education and regeneration that must be done.”
- **One-Line Summary:** Achebe argues that an African novelist must teach, guide, and rebuild the dignity of African people after colonialism.
- **Point of View:** First-person critical and reflective, grounded in African identity and historical experience
- **Setting**

- **Time Setting:** Post-independence African era, a time of cultural rebuilding after colonial rule
- **Place Setting:** Nigeria (intellectual and cultural context of African society, literature, and political change)

Key Notes - English

- The Novelist as Teacher is an important essay by Chinua Achebe. It was published in 1965. In this essay, Achebe says that the responsibility of an African novelist is not only to tell stories but also to shape people's thinking and sense of identity. Colonial rule had destroyed the self-respect of African people. Therefore, the writer's task is to present true history, remove false ideas, and help people understand their own value. Achebe says that the writer is a teacher of society. Literature can change the human mind. Presenting African culture, traditions, and real-life truthfully is the primary role of a writer. In this essay, he shows that literature is not only an art but also a powerful social force that can restore confidence and a sense of identity in people.