THE THING AROUND YOUR NECK

“JUMPING MONKEY HILL”
By: Bridgette, Molly & Alex
Issues & Themes

- Relationships (Between the writers)
- Prejudice and Racism (Edward and his views on Africa)
- Abuse of Power and Women (Unjunwa documenting her own experiences of abuse and discrimination in the workplace)
- Immigration & Adaption (Edward, as a British fitting in with the African society)
How is the sexual discomfort created by Adichie?

- At the start of the story we see Edwards feelings towards Ujunwa, he is seen as a character to is very affectionate towards her even though they have never met before.

- The first scene when Edward is picking up Ujunwa, he is touching her and becoming close with her, she feels uncomfortable and pretends to yawn so he would stop talking. This shows us that Ujunwa may had have previous experiences that were negative with men and the way they were affectionate towards her.

- In Ujunwa’s story she writes about her protagonist, Chioma. She mentions how she is abused by men in her job both physically and mentally. If she wants to succeed she needs to tolerate this.

- Unjunwa’s experiences parallel her character Chioma’s

- Edward abuses his power by making comments about the bodies of the women and in particular Unjunwa because of the power discrepancy between them, she doesn’t really know how to react and on reflection decides she hates it and is frustrated by her own inability to respond honestly “Why do we always say nothing?”

- Edwards criticism of her story as being “implausible” and the “victory in his eyes” makes her laugh at him and confess that the story was really about her own experience. However, she is on the verge of crying which indicates she doesn’t feel she has “beaten” him.
Why does Edward insist he knows what makes an ‘African’ story? What are the underlying assumptions and values behind this belief?

- Edward believes he is an expert on the African story because he used to lecture at the University of Cape Town, the writing workshop was his idea and “African literature had been his cause for forty years, a life long passion that had started at Oxford.”
- He had spent many weekends at the African resort and felt he knows a lot about Africa because his wife was an “old Africa hand who had spent her teenage years in Botswana.”
- In addition the Ugandan who won the Lipton prize and is leading the workshop tends to agree with Edward.
- The assumption is that his privileged British experiences in Africa have shown him the real Africa and all its diversity. In actuality, he has only experienced a narrow part of Africa.
- He tells the people who have lived and experienced the African society that their stories are “implausible.”
- Edward considers the stories which are suitable should be like those in the African newspapers dealing with big issues such as War or the terrible events that happened under the “horrible Mugabe.” He doesn’t consider personal stories on different themes such as Homosexuality to be “reflective of Africa.”
Describe the characters in this story, complete with a quote.

- Edward: Lacks agency
- Unjunwa: Initially lacks agency
- Ugandan: He is competitive, and withholds high expectations
- Senegalese: Has an initial friendly appearance that is welcoming to those that don’t know her.
In what way is the story of Chioma ironic?

- The Real story of Unjunwa parallels her own story of Chioma
- Relationship with Edward also parallels with the story of Chioma and the men
- Ironic because Edward says its implausible but from the story we see that this is exactly the way he has been treating Unjunwa and the Senegalese woman
- The way Edward acts towards Unjunwa is seen as uncomfortable for Unjunwa, like Chioma had been described as uncomfortable because of the men being around her
What would Edward have to say about Adichie’s short stories? Discuss.

- Didn’t reflect the true Africa and were too focused on individuals and their private emotional concerns
- “Implausible”
- Didn’t fit in with what his views of Africa were