

Reading Skill

UNDERSTAND AUTHOR’S BACKGROUND

Understanding an **author’s background** can help you appreciate the details and meaning of a work. An author’s biographical information might provide you with clues about why a writer chose a particular setting or plot event. Knowing information about a writer’s values, traditions, and beliefs can help you interpret the important themes in a poem or story.

Directions: Complete this chart to connect Soyinka’s background with elements in this poem. Reread the biography of Soyinka on page 1308 in your textbook to review the details of his life.

Experience, Value, or Belief	How It Is Reflected in the Poem
Soyinka grew up in a family “where words were an integral part of the culture.”	
Soyinka was an African student in England.	
He studied theater and wrote plays.	
Soyinka’s lifetime of activism shows that he values fair and humane treatment for all.	
His play <i>Invention</i> was a satire about skin color, reflecting his belief that pigment is a ridiculous basis on which to judge a human being.	