"Decolonizing the Mind" by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o Comprehension Qs and Extended Response Directions

1. What is Thiong'o's claim about language? How do you know?

2. What is his **purpose** in writing this essay? Consider Speaker and Occasion. (You may need to do some background digging on Thiong'o.)

3. In what ways is English the language of the oppressor? (ie. **How** is there a language of power? What does it allow/limit?)

4. While Thiongo's anecdote references his time outside of the United States, in what ways does his experience reflect that of American's and their native language that is *not* English?

5. Let's connect this notion to Claude McKay. How are Thiongo's experiences with language similar to McKay during the Harlem Renaissance?

6. What are the consequences of limiting language or promoting one voice over another?

7. Let's connect this to the First Amendment. Do McKay and Thiongo' feel they have true "freedom of speech" that is afforded to them through the First Amendment? How is their ability to exercise their right limited?

8. Extension to Humanities: How does Kynes' reaction to the Atreides show the effects of Harkonnen oppression on Arrakis?