Modern World History

This lesson focuses on the student’s ability to analyze, interpret, and synthesize social studies resources to make inferences and draw conclusions. The purpose of this lesson is to have students examine Adinkra symbols from West Africa and explain the importance of these symbols to West African culture. Additionally, students will create their own Adinkra symbol and will be able to justify why they created their symbol and explain what the symbol means. These skills will require students to critically think and problem solve, in addition to further developing their global perspective as defined in the Profile of a South Carolina Graduate. The estimated time frame for this lesson is one, ninety minute class period.

Standard(s) and/or Indicator(s)

Targeted:
Standard MWH 3: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the impact of religious movements throughout the world in the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries.
Indicator MWH 3.6: Analyze various indigenous religions practiced in Africa and the Americas and their impact on the culture of the region, including animism and polytheism.

Standard MWH-2: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the benefits and costs of the growth of kingdoms into empires from the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries.
Indicator MWH 2.6: Describe the impact of the competition among European countries on the various kingdoms of the Americas and Africa, including the Columbian Exchange and the slave trade.

“I Can” Statements

“I Can” statements are learning targets of what students need to know and be able to do as it relates to the standard/indicator(s).

- Day 1: I can explain the importance of Adinkra symbols in West African culture (MWH 3.6).

Essential Question(s)

This is a suggested essential question that will help guide student inquiry.

- Why do people develop non-linguistic representations to help them express their culture? (MWH 3.6)

Academic Vocabulary

Some students may need extra support with the following academic vocabulary in order to understand what they are being asked to do. Teaching these terms in an instructional context is recommended rather than teaching the words in isolation. An appropriate time to deliver explicit instruction for the terms is during the modeling process. Ultimately, the student should be able to use the academic vocabulary in conversation with peers and teachers.

- Adinkra symbols
- Asante people
- Gyaman
- Cote D’Ivoire
- Ghana
- “Golden Stool”
- Nana Kofi Adinkra
- Asantehene
- Textile
- Badie Tree
- Twi (or Akan) language
- Annexed
- Kente
- Akwasidae

### Prior Knowledge
Students should have knowledge of the reasons why Europeans were interested in Africa during the early fourteenth century (MWH 1.1). Students should have some prior knowledge of African civilizations (6-4.2).

### Subsequent Knowledge
The student will be able to explain the disruption within West African kingdoms as a result of the competition between European countries over slave trade (MWH 4.7). The student will demonstrate an understanding of European imperialism in Africa (MWH 7.1). The student will be able to explain the impact of collapsing imperial regimes and growing nationalist movements in India, Africa, and Southeast Asia, including Pan-Africanism and the emerging civil rights movement in the United States (MWH 7.5).

### Potential Instructional Strategies
**Day 1 “I Can” Statement:** I can explain the importance of Adinkra symbols in West African culture (MWH 3.6).

**Bell Ringer/Discussion:** Start class with a question that has the students think about modern cultural symbols. Have the question(s) displayed on the SMART board or white board and have the students construct a short response to the question. The question(s) could be, but is not limited to the questions listed below:
- What are symbols that represent American culture? (i.e. think about the U.S. flag, an eagle, etc.) What meaning do those...
symbols hold?

- What symbols or images represent your culture in your home? Explain their significance.

After having the students think about various cultural symbols, ask the students how those symbols have changed over time. Example: the U.S. flag changing the number of stars as the country added more states. Once this short class discussion takes place, explain to the students that cultures all around the world have their own cultural symbols. Some of these symbols stretch beyond national pride and symbolism, and often, the symbols can represent events, phrases and words. Inform the students that the day’s lesson will focus on West African culture, specifically looking at Adinkra symbols.

**Discussion:** On the white board, display for the students a world map. On the map, point out to the students the continent of Africa. Then highlight the region of West Africa, specifically Ghana. (Possible map to use: Africa Map—United Nations [http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/africa.pdf](http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/africa.pdf)). Remind the students about their prior knowledge about Europeans exploring Africa. Pose a question to the students to help engage a class discussion:

- Why were the Europeans interested in West Africa?

Europeans were interested in West Africa in particular because of the rich natural resources. Some examples of the natural resources found in West Africa were: gold and ivory. It is also important to note the significance of the West African slave trade. Many European countries, such as the Netherlands, France, and England were involved in the buying and selling of slaves. For more information of the Atlantic Slave Trade, a suggested resource is the following Ted-Ed Video:


After the recall of the prior knowledge, discuss with the students that Africa is a continent that is made up of hundreds of thousands of different ethnic groups. Ask students some questions about West Africa to see what they already know about West Africa. These questions are suggestions and are not limited to the ones listed below:

- Do you know any religions or cultures from West Africa?
- Is there anything you can tell me about West Africa that you already know?

**Academic Vocabulary and Language/Mini-lecture:** After the stage has been set for the day’s lesson, give the students the graphic
organizer found in the Resource section below. This graphic organizer goes with a presentation. As you go through the presentation, have the students fill out the graphic organizer.

**Non-linguistic representations:** After the mini-lecture, have the student’s review Adinkra symbols from the following website: [http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra_index.htm](http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra_index.htm). After the students have reviewed the symbols, have the students pick a symbol that they feel is important to them. After they select a symbol, have the students draw the symbol on a sheet of paper. Go around the room and select volunteers to share why they selected that particular symbol. Following this, ask the students to draw their own Adinkra symbol. This symbol should be unique and not copied from an online source. The symbol can use color, but does not have to. The symbol needs to be hand drawn on a half sheet of 8x11 paper. Additionally, they must write a short description of what the symbol represents. This response should be a minimum of five sentences. Please see rubric in Resource section below.

**Calendar Connection:** Dr. Burnett W. Gallman, Jr. serves as a member of several boards of directors, including the National Board of the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations (ASCAC). The mission, as stated on the ASCAC website, “is to promote the study of African civilizations for the development of an African world view”. This lesson focuses on symbols from a West African civilization and helps increase the student’s global perspective. The students will be introduced to Dr. Gallman at the beginning of the lesson. The teacher should discuss the inspiration of the lesson is based on Dr. Gallman. Possible sources to help highlight Dr. Gallman could include, but are not limited to:


- Can discuss with the students his page in the calendar.


- Can share the website with students and/or show website with class and discuss the mission of the group and how Dr. Gallman is connected to this organization.

**Potential Assessment Task**

**Day 1:**

South Carolina Department of Education | Office of Standards and Learning 2017
Create your own Adinkra symbol (MWH 3.6).
Exit Slip: Adinkra symbols are always changing. Currently, West Africa is facing war, terrorism, and political violence. How might these symbols change to reflect the current issues in West Africa? Explain. (MWH 3.6)

Resources


ADINKRA SYMBOLS: ORIGINS

Adinkra symbols are believed to have their origin from Gyaman, a former kingdom of what is today Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast).

The name Adinkra, according to an Asante/Ashanti legend from Ghana, come from the King of Gyaman—Nan Kofi Adinkra

Adinkra was defeated in battle by the Asante people for having copied the “Golden Stool”

Represented absolute power and tribal cohesion
ADINKRA SYMBOLS: ORIGINS

Legend stated that Nana Adinkra wore patterned cloth—which was interpreted as him expressing sorrow for being captured.

In the 1800s, the Asante people began to paint traditional symbols of the Gya mans onto cloth.

Adinkra mean “goodbye” or “farewell”.

Comes from the Twi language of the Akan ethic group which Asante were a part of.

Wearing of cloths decorated with Adinkra symbols for important occasions, especially at funerals of family member and friends.
EXAMPLES OF ADINKRA SYMBOLS

- **Nkyere ko**
  - "Father is the home"  
  - Hope

- **Bi nyi a**
  - "You are my father, how can I do this?"
  - Life after death

- **Nkyere ko**, **Nkyere ko**
  - "People who are beautiful and trustworthy"
  - Love, wisdom, sanctity

- **Nkyere ko**, **Bi nyi a**
  - "My father is here, let them be satisfied"
  - Decency, virtue, asceticism

- **Odo ray**
  - "Northern star"
  - Power of love

- **Okroko, odo ray**
  - "Northern star"
  - Power of love

- **Nkyere ko**, **Odo ray**
  - "Father is my home"  
  - Power of love

- **Okroko, odo ray**
  - "Father is my home"  
  - Power of love

- **Nkyere ko**, **Odo ray**
  - "Father is the home"  
  - Hope
ADINKRA SYMBOLS:
SYMBOLISM/SIGNIFICANCE

Adinkra symbols express various themes that relate to the history, beliefs and philosophy of the Asante people.

Mostly have rich proverbial meaning; use of proverbs is considered as a mark of wisdom.

Other symbols depict historical events, human behavior and attitudes, animal behavior, plant life forms and shapes of objects.

Adinkra symbols continue to change as new influences impact Ghanaian culture. *i.e. technology developments.
The Adinkra cloth is stamped or printed with Adinkra symbols. It is one of the few examples of traditional cloths in Africa.

The Adinkra cloth was hitherto the preserve of the royalty and spiritual leaders of the Asantes. They wore it during very important sacred ceremonies.

Today the Adinkra cloth is used for a wide range of social activities such as festivals, marriage, and naming ceremonies among others.
WHY A CERTAIN DESIGN OR SYMBOL?

The designing is done according to the message the wearer or owner of the cloth intends to convey to the participants of the event.

The quality of the cloth also shows the status of the one wearing it.

The original Adinkra cloth is not meant to be washed since it faded easily as a result of the natural ink used without any chemical additives.
HOW ADINKRA WAS ORIGINALLY MADE

The Asante people have developed their unique art of Adinkra printing.

They use two traditional printing methods; the block-stamp technique,

Which involves the use of wooden or metal stamps and the screen printing.
MAKING OF THE DYE OR INK

Badie tree bark is boiled with iron scraps. When the colour (deep brown) emerges from the pulp it is sieved and engraved onto a piece of calabash or pot.
THE STAMP PROCESS

The Adinkra cloth was originally printed from hand carved stamps from calabash or gourd (apakyiwa).

The various stamps carved from the calabash are tinted with dye and pressed in sequence onto plain cotton cloth, pegged on the ground.
YOUR TASK—WHOLE CLASS ACTIVITY

Review the various Adinkra symbols in the attached handout.

Select one Adinkra symbol that you think best describes you. When reviewing the handout, be sure to look in the column on the far right to see what the symbol stands for.

After you make your selection, draw the symbol on a sheet of paper.

After you draw the symbol, write down its meaning next to it. On the back of that paper write 1-2 sentences about why you selected that symbol.

After everyone has finished, I will take some volunteers to share the symbol they picked.
YOUR TASK - INDIVIDUALLY

It is time to design your own Adinkra symbol!

Think about what things in your life are important to you. This can be people, pets, etc.

After you design your own symbol, unique to you, you must write a 5 sentence paragraph explaining why you designed the symbol the way you did and what it means.
WORK CITED PAGE

Slides 2-3 and 5-6 were adapted and copied from:

Slide 4 was adapted from:

Slides 7-11 were adapted and copied from:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adinkra Symbols: Origins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adinkra Symbols: Symbolism/Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why a Certain Design or Symbol?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Adinkra was originally made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Stamp Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples of Everyday Symbols</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create Your Own Adinkra Symbol Rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent: 5 points</th>
<th>Adequate: 3 points</th>
<th>Fair: 2 points</th>
<th>Minimal: 1 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design-Creativity and Originality:</strong> Creative design and original artwork</td>
<td>Design was unique and interesting and fits well on the half sheet of 8x11 paper.</td>
<td>Design was original and mostly fits well on the half sheet of 8x11 paper.</td>
<td>Design was original, but does not fit well on the half sheet of 8x11 paper.</td>
<td>Design was not original.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing-Conventions:</strong> Correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, usage</td>
<td>No spelling, grammar, capitalization or punctuation errors. Sentences are all well-formed.</td>
<td>Fewer than 3 spelling and grammar errors. Fewer than 3 capitalization and punctuation errors. One or two flawed sentences.</td>
<td>More than 3 spelling and grammar errors. More than 3 capitalization and punctuation errors. Less than 3 sentences show flawed structure.</td>
<td>More than 5 spelling and grammar errors. More than 5 capitalization and punctuation errors. Many sentences show flawed structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence Requirement:</strong> Details about Adinkra symbol meets the 5 sentence minimum.</td>
<td>The 5 sentence minimum was met.</td>
<td>Only 4 sentences were written, not meeting the 5 sentence requirement.</td>
<td>Only 2-3 sentences were written, not meeting the 5 sentence requirement.</td>
<td>No sentences, or only 1 sentence was written, not meeting the 5 sentence requirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing-Ideas:</strong> Interesting, informative details</td>
<td>All details were unique, interesting, and related to and supported the importance of the symbol.</td>
<td>Writing had many interesting details which supported the importance of the symbol.</td>
<td>Writing had little to do with supporting the importance of the symbol.</td>
<td>No writing or writing had nothing to do with supporting the importance of the symbol.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: ________/20