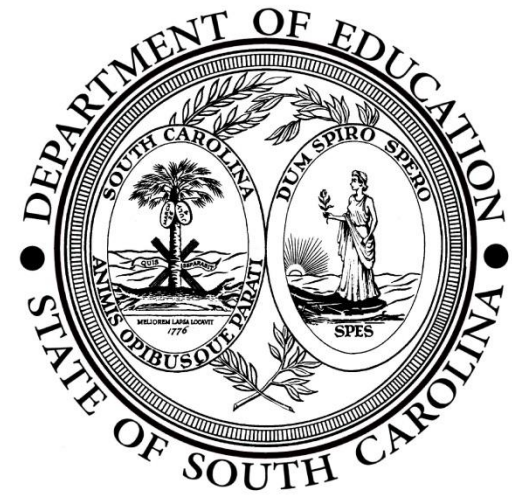


Modern World History: Adinkra Symbols

Instructional Resource for the
South Carolina Social Studies Academic Standards

South Carolina Department of Education
Office of Standards and Learning
June 2017



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)
<p>Targeted:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
“I Can” Statements
<p>“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).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Day 1: I can explain the importance of Adinkra symbols in West African culture (MWH 3.6).</i>
Essential Question(s)
<p>This is a suggested essential question that will help guide student inquiry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do people develop non-linguistic representations to help them express their culture? (MWH 3.6)
Academic Vocabulary
<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>). 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:

- Ted-Ed. “The Atlantic Slave Trade: What Too Few Textbooks Told You.” Online Video. YouTube. YouTube, 2014, December 22. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NXC4Q_4JVg&t=90s

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). 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:

South Carolina African American History Calendar from the South Carolina Department of Education. Retrieved from http://scafricanamerican.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SCAAHCCALENDAR_2018_web.pdf

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

The Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations. Retrieved from <http://ascac.org/>

- 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:

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. (2011, October 11). Retrieved from <https://www.learnakan.com/adinkra-symbols/>

Boateng, B. (2014, September). Adinkra and Kente Cloth in History, Law, and Life. *Textile Society of America*. [PDF document]. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1885&context=tsaconf>

Danzy, J. (2009, May). Adinkra Symbols: An Ideographic Writing System. (Masters Thesis). [PDF document]. Retrieved from <https://dspace.sunyconnect.suny.edu/bitstream/handle/1951/48176/000000570.sbu.pdf>

Frimpong, C., Asinyo, B.K., and Amankwah, A. (2013, March 22). Contemporary Trends in Adinkra Cloth Production: Design, Printing Technique, Base Fabric, and Printing Paste (Dye). *International Journal of Fiber and Textile Research*. [PDF document]. Retrieved from https://www.urpjournals.com/tocjnls/14_13v3i1_7.pdf

South Carolina Department of Education. (2017). South Carolina African American History Calendar. [PDF document]. Retrieved from http://scafricanamerican.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SCAAHCCALENDAR_2018_web.pdf

South Carolina Department of Education. (2015). Profile of the South Carolina graduate. [PDF document]. Retrieved from <https://ed.sc.gov/newsroom/profile-of-the-south-carolina-graduate/>

St. Lawrence University. Adinkra-Cultural Symbols of the Asante People. [PDF document]. Retrieved from http://www.stlawu.edu/gallery/education/f/09textiles/adinkra_symbols.pdf

The Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations. Retrieved from <http://ascac.org/>

Thee Afro Nerd. "Adinkra Symbols and Meanings." Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 2017, January 16. Web. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5LbR4zalvQ>

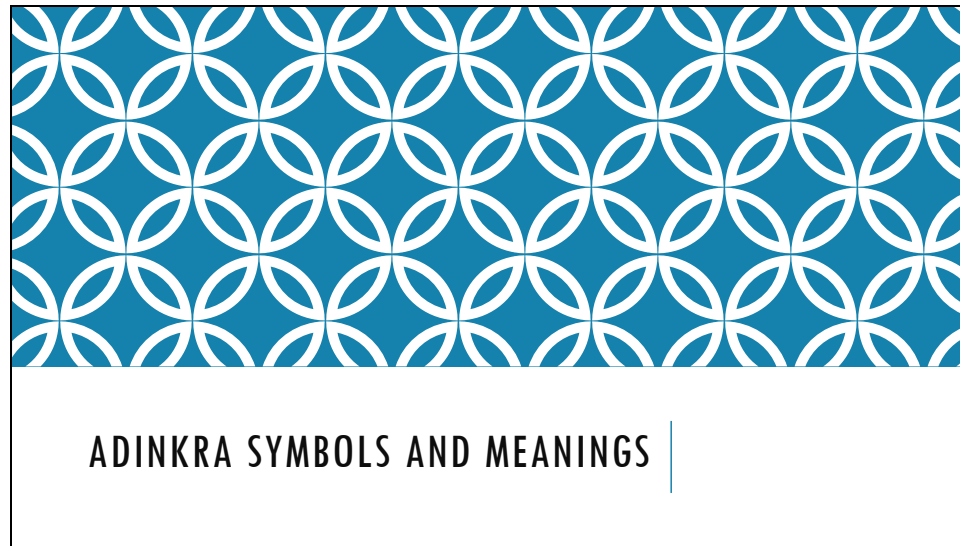
United Nations. Map of Africa. [PDF document]. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/africa.pdf>

Ventura, Carol. (2012, September). The Twenty-first Century Voices of the Ashanti Adinkra and Kente Cloths of Ghana. *Textile Society of America*. [PDF document]. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1750&context=tsaconf>

West African Wisdom: Adinkra Symbols and Meanings. Retrieved from http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra_index.htm

Adinkra Symbols and Meanings Presentation

Slide 1



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 Gyamans onto cloth

Adinkra mean “goodbye” or “farewell”

Comes from the Twi language of the Akan ethnic 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

	NYAME BIRIBI WO SOBRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "God is in the heavens" 	hope
	NYAME NNWU NA MAWU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "God never dies, therefore I cannot die" 	life after death
	NYAME NTI	"by God's grace"	faith & trust in God
	NYAME YE OHENE	"God is King"	majesty and supremacy of God
	NYANSAPO	"wisdom knot"	wisdom, ingenuity, intelligence and patience
	ODO NNYEW TIE KWAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "love never loses its way home" 	power of love
	OKODEE MMOWERE	"talons of the eagle"	bravery, strength
	ONYANKOPON ADOM NTI BIRIBIARA BCYE YIE	"By God's grace, all will be well"	hope, providence, faith
	OSRAM NE NSOROMMA	"the moon and the star"	love, faithfulness, harmony

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.

Slide 6

The Adinkra cloth

The image shows a rectangular piece of Adinkra cloth. It features a repeating pattern of Adinkra symbols, which are traditional symbols from the Akan people of West Africa. The symbols are printed in a dark color, likely black or dark brown, on a light pink background. The cloth is bordered by a yellow and black striped pattern. The symbols include various geometric shapes and patterns, such as circles, squares, and triangles, arranged in a grid-like fashion.

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.

Slide 7

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.

Slide 8



Slide 9

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.

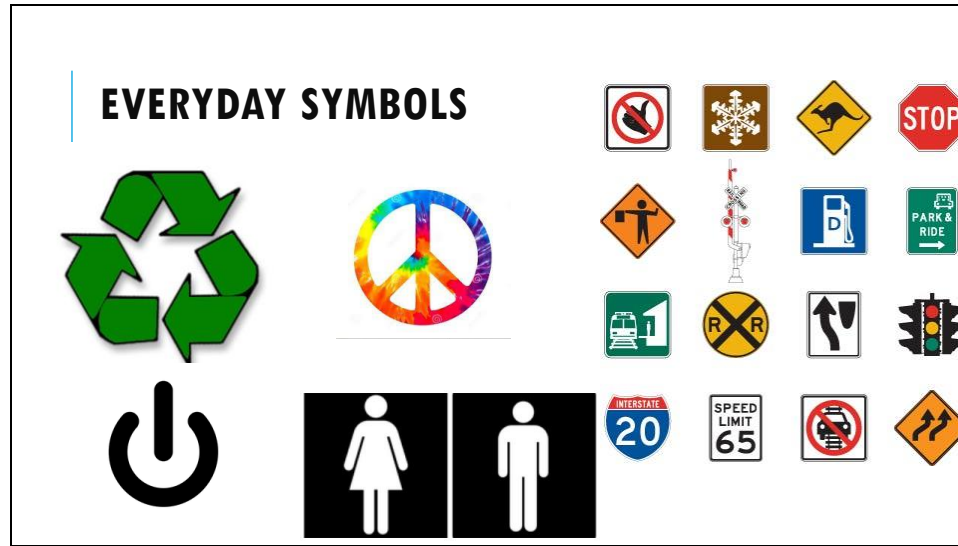


THE STAMP PROCESS

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

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:

- St. Lawrence University. Adinkra-Cultural Symbols of the Asante People. [PDF document]. Retrieved from http://www.stlawu.edu/gallery/education/f/09textiles/adinkra_symbols.pdf

Slide 4 was adapted from:

- West African Wisdom: Adinkra Symbols and Meanings. Retrieved from http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra_index.htm

Slides 7-11 were adapted and copied from:

- Somerville Public School District. Adinkra Symbols and Meanings. [PDF document]. Retrieved from <https://www.somervillenjk12.org/cms/lib5/NJ01001815/Centricity/Domain/89/Adinkra%20Symbols%20and%20%20Meanings.pdf>

Adinkra Symbols and Meanings—Graphic Organizer

Adinkra Symbols: Origins

Adinkra Symbols: Symbolism/Significance

Why a Certain Design or Symbol?

How Adinkra was originally made	Making of Dye or Ink
The Stamp Process	
Examples of Everyday Symbols	

Create Your Own Adinkra Symbol Rubric:

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

Total: _____/20