



Lesson Plans Digital Booklet

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Introduction

Exploring Africa is a comprehensive curriculum designed to educate about Africa in a true, objective way. Each unit is designed with a theme in mind: *Why Study Africa?*, *Studying Africa through the Social Studies*, *Studying Africa through the Humanities*, *Regional Perspectives*, and *Country Case Studies*. Using these themes allows Exploring Africa to provide a well-rounded, interdisciplinary, and holistic approach to learning about Africa. Within each unit, there are modules constructed in a more specific thematic organization, which creates an even more accessible format for learning in a systematic way. Finally, within each module there are activities designed to help students comprehend the lessons they just learned. Each of these activities is aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). It is here in this Exploring Africa Lesson Plan Digital Booklet that we offer lesson plans designed for the physical classroom space, to be used and implemented in your own classroom, and adjusted in any way you see fit to meet your individual classroom's needs. It is highly recommended that these lesson plans for activities are supplemental to the lessons in the modules in Exploring Africa. These lesson plans are for the activities only, and not the lessons for which they are designed.

Unit Three

Studying Africa through the Humanities

Module Twelve: African Art

This module will highlight the visual arts of the African continent, including historical and contemporary developments. Students will be able to explore the rich artistic history of Africa and learn about the different meanings and uses art can serve for individuals and societies in Africa and beyond. Because a survey of African art is beyond the scope of this module, each activity will focus on specific artists or art traditions. Each activity uses art objects as a springboard into larger discussions of the rich histories, ideas, and lives of people living in Africa. The main objective of this module is to introduce students to the concept that African artists and patrons use artworks to express their ideas and attitudes towards their own culture and the rest of the world. By studying specific art traditions in detail, students will begin to understand that art can have a very different 'life' in Africa than in the West.

Module Twelve

Yoruba Beaded Regalia

Sande Masquerades

Kente Cloth in Ghana

The Art and Life of Zerihun Yetmgeta

Yoruba Beaded Regalia

Time Needed	Approximately 35 minutes
Prior Knowledge	None needed
Lesson Assessment	Formative: worksheets
Standards	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7 <i>Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.</i> NCAS.Re.8. <i>Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.</i>
Materials Needed	Yoruba Beaded Regalia worksheet ¹ , pencil, coloring utensils

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Explain the significance of symbolism in demonstrating power and authority in different cultures
- Analyze artwork for meaning

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
5 min	Students receive Yoruba Beaded Regalia worksheet and listens to instructions.	Teacher distributes worksheets and instructs students to read the text on the first two pages and use it to answer the questions on the following pages.
25 min	Students read the text on Yoruba Beaded Regalia and study the pictures to answer the questions on the worksheet. ²	Teacher monitors and assists as needed
5 min	Students may use coloring utensils to design their own beaded crown.	Teacher monitors and assists as needed

¹ Handouts and Worksheets, pgs. 12-15

² Teacher may wish to project a large version of the pictures from the worksheet so that the class can see more details. This can be found in Answer keys and Examples, pg. 24

Sande Masquerades

Time Needed	Approximately 30 minutes
Prior Knowledge	None needed
Lesson Assessment	Formative: worksheet
Standards	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7 <i>Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.</i> NCAS.Re.8. <i>Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.</i>
Materials Needed	Pencil, projector, Sande Masquerades worksheet ³ , access to YouTube: “Sierra Leone Heritage : Soweï Mask : Curator’s Notes with Bill Hart”

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Analyze artwork for meaning
- Understand the use of representing ideas in an abstract form rather than realistically
- Describe the role of women in the Sande association
- Understand the use of art as a tool to teach moral integrity, social values, and proper behavior.

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
3 min	Students listen to instructions and receive worksheets.	Teacher hands out Sande Masquerades worksheet to each student and instructs them to read the text and then answer the following questions.
15 min	Students read the text and answer the questions about Sande masks on their worksheets.	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists as needed.
2 min	After 15 minutes has gone by, students should turn to the last page of their worksheet (whether they are finished or not) and read the directions for the final activity.	Teacher instructs students to read the final directions, and then pulls up the YouTube video while they read. Link to video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCX2MRvlezk Video title: “Sierra Leone Heritage : Soweï Mask : Curator’s Notes with Bill Hart”
10 min	Students watch video and write down notes.	Teacher plays full video and monitors classroom.

³ Handouts and Worksheets, pgs. 16-18

Kente Cloth in Ghana

Time Needed	Approximately 35 minutes
Prior Knowledge	None needed
Lesson Assessment	Formative: worksheet
Standards	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7 <i>Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.</i> NCAS.Re.8. <i>Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.</i>
Materials Needed	Pencil, Kente Cloth worksheet ⁴ , coloring utensils, graph paper

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Analyze artwork for meaning
- Understand the use of representing ideas in an abstract form rather than realistically
- Explain the diffusion of culture from an African context to an American context
- Describe the symbolism of Kente Cloth, both in history and in modern times

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
5 min	Students receive worksheet and listen to instructions.	Teacher distributes Kente Cloth worksheet and instructs students to read the text and answer the questions on the following pages.
25 min	Students read the text and study the pictures to answer the given questions.	Teacher monitors and assists as needed.
5 min	Students may use coloring utensils and graph paper to design their own Kente cloth.	Teacher monitors and assists as needed.

⁴ Handouts and Worksheets, pgs. 19-22

The Art and Life of Zerihun Yetmgeta

Time Needed	Approximately 40 minutes
Prior Knowledge	None needed
Lesson Assessment	Formative: question answers, artwork
Standards	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7 <i>Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.</i> NCAS.Re.8. <i>Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.</i>
Materials Needed	Access to Exploring Africa, notebook paper, pencil, computer paper, coloring utensils

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Analyze artwork for meaning
- Explore the life of a contemporary Ethiopian artist, and explain his artistic decisions
- Express themselves through their own artwork

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
2 min	Students listen to instructions and get on Exploring Africa.	Teacher instructs students to get on Module Twelve, Activity Four of Exploring Africa.
15 min	Students read through the text in Activity Four. Whenever they come across a red box of text, they should answer the questions in it on a sheet of notebook paper. Students stop when they reach the words “Your Traditions” (without completing the final activity).	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists as needed.
15 min	Students get out two pieces of computer paper. On the first piece of paper, they consider the prompt: <i>What traditions are important to you? What issues do you think about? Draw a picture in the style of Zerihun that lets people know what is important to you. Include images that represent your culture or yourself.</i>	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists. Teacher may wish to display the example picture of a Museum Placards on the projector, so students can write their own description.

	On the second piece of paper, they should write the artists (their own name). Underneath they should write a Title for their piece of art. And underneath that they should write a description of their piece of artwork. (This should be in the style of a museum placard)	
3 min	Students hang their art around the room, with the descriptions next to it.	Teacher monitors and assists
5 min	Museum walk; students are allowed to roam the room and study the pictures and descriptions by their peers, as if they were observing art in a museum.	Teacher facilitates museum walk

Handouts and Worksheets

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Yoruba Beaded Regalia

Yoruba peoples in Africa live mainly in southwestern Nigeria (green) and the neighboring Republic of Benin. Yoruba peoples are one of the largest cultural groups on the continent, numbering over twenty million. Many Yoruba peoples were brought to the Americas forcibly through the trans-Atlantic slave trade from the sixteenth century until the second half of the nineteenth century. In the Americas, Yoruba culture has contributed to many African American traditions in the United States, Cuba, Haiti and Brazil.

Oral literature recounts that Yoruba people originated in the city of Ile-Ife when the Supreme Being, Oludumare, sent Oduduwa and Obatala down to create the earth. Although this creation myth has many variants, it is traditionally accepted that Yoruba culture began at Ile-Ife, and it was there that the first kings and queens ruled.

The Yoruba kingdoms stretched over swampy forests along the coast of the southern Atlantic and inland—rain forests, savannas, and grasslands—to the Niger River. Each of the kingdoms was an autonomous city-state, and today their names are used to designate the sub-groups of Yoruba peoples (Ife, Oyo, Owo, and Ijebu in the Nigerian part of Yorubaland; and Ketu Shabe, and Ifonyin in Nigeria and what is now the Republic of Benin). Although many people live in villages and farms, Yoruba peoples have a long history of urbanization and most live in large cities such as Ibadan and Lagos, the capital of Nigeria.

According to Yoruba mythology, Oduduwa became the first Yoruba king (oba) at Ile-Ife. The various Yoruba city-states trace their founding to one of his sixteen sons, who all left Ile-Ife to establish their own kingdoms. Therefore, Yoruba kings guard and use their divine origins, since they are considered direct descendants of Oduduwa. As is typical of many divine kingship traditions, kings (and queens) are not only political leaders but also play important religious roles as well. As a divine king, the oba shares the responsibility to mediate over spiritual matters with the priests, elders, and other religious specialists.

The Yoruba cosmos is conceived of two distinct but interrelated realms: the world of the living (aye) and the other world (orun), which is the realm of the Supreme Being, the ancestors, spirits, and gods (orisa). The king is considered to be important to the spiritual wellbeing of Yoruba peoples because he has been accepted to be a link between these two worlds, as a representative of orun living in this world. As divine kings, they have access to special powers and extraordinary wisdom. The king of course has many responsibilities and privileges that come with his high-status role.

Archeological evidence shows that Ile-Ife was already commercial and cultural center in the eleventh century and many others were also thriving. These city-states were independent of each other, each being ruled by an oba, or king. Because most kingdoms depended economically on commerce and trade, competition between each independent city-state was often fierce, sometimes resulting in war. Today there are still many obas throughout Yorubaland, although their role has changed since both the Republic of Benin and Nigeria now have democratically elected leaders. Just as in the past, each royal

court commissions artists to create beautiful artworks that are symbols of power and prestige for each royal lineage. Especially important to any king or queen are their regalia, which are all the accessories

and costumes that a king or queen wears on official occasions. Consider the following symbols and their meaning:



Figure 1 –Beaded crown made from beads, thread, feathers, cloth, wood, and shells



Figure 2 –Beaded crown made from glass beads, fiber, cloth, and wood

- **Birds:** A commanding bird at the top protects the powerful medicines inserted in the crown's summit. Other birds may be added on the crown's body. Birds are symbols of the mystical powers of women whose support is needed for the oba to rule effectively.

- **Faces:** Their representation is said to honor Oduduwa (the first oba and the first ruler to wear a beaded crown). The face also represents the royal ancestors who are said to watch and protect the royal line. Faces can also represent Olokun, the sea divinity who is patron of bead artists and the symbolic source of the very beads that are used to create the crown.

- **Interlace patterns:** This interconnected and never-ending design refers to the continuity and balance important to life. On a crown it can symbolize the chain of divine ancestors that are all connected and linked to Oduduwa.

- **Triangles:** These are divided into smaller triangles and diamond shapes, repeated in a continuous pattern, imbuing the crown with a 'shininess' that reflects its sacred qualities.
- **Beaded veil:** It shields the face of the oba from the people who are not to look directly at his head because of the divine power he embodies. It signals that the king is connected to the gods.
- **Beads:** That these crowns are completely covered with expensive beads is a sign of royalty. Each color represents a different orisha or god and the king is protected by all the gods, and this symbolizes his divine ancestry.
- **White:** White represents Obatala, the king of the orisha. He is considered to be highly ethical, merciful, cool, composed, and patient.
- **Red:** Red is often associated with the Shango, a god who is often characterized as being proud and a great warrior. He is the protector and guardian of people.
- **Elephant:** A symbol of longevity and power

Directions: In the following activities you will explore Yoruba royal regalia, highlighting how African artists create beautiful objects that are worn and used by high-status people to reinforce their authority. You will investigate how art forms can actively project privilege and power. You will identify the symbolic meaning of visual signs and consider how these images can be 'read' as messages that connects kingship to the divine.

1. Look for each symbol in the crowns in figures 1 and 2. Identify each symbol that you see and explain in your own words why each symbol was chosen and how they reinforce the position of the kings.
2. Tell us what the Yoruba kings in figures 1 and 2 want us to know about them by reading the symbols you see in the crowns. How do you think the two kings might have been similar? How might they have been different? Which king would you have preferred to have governed you?



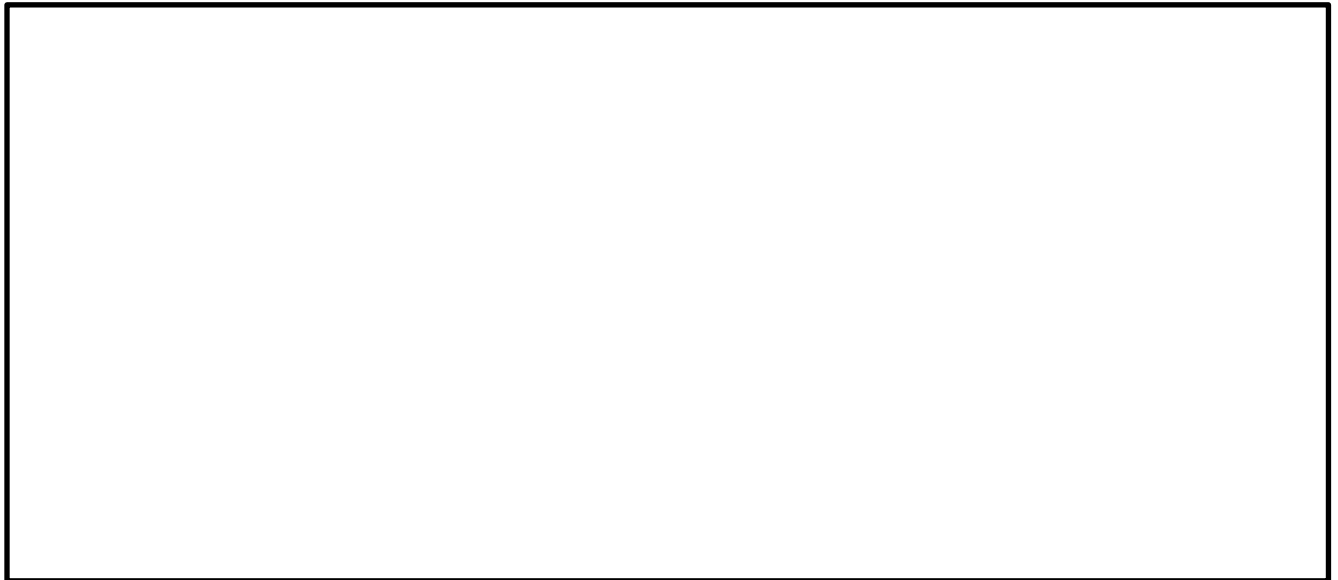
3. The above picture shows Deji of Akure with young attendants holding ceremonial swords, in 1959. How is the oba presenting himself? What is he wearing? How is he sitting? What attitude does he project?

4. How can you tell this is an important, powerful man? What if he was sitting in an ordinary chair, dressed in a business suit –would your perceptions be the same?

5. How do the arts establish and communicate power and authority? When these symbols are no longer being worn by their owner and are displayed in a museum, how do they seem different to you? Do they have the same power?

6. Think of other leaders in the world. What do they wear to symbolize their power and authority? What do authority figures in the United States wear? The president of the United States dresses the same as any other man in a suit; are there other special clues to his role that are apparent when he arrives at a public or ceremonial event?

7. Design your own Yoruba beaded crown in the box below. What symbols do you want it to have to display how you would rule as a king? Feel free to create your own symbols, and describe their meaning in a sentence underneath the box.



Sande Masquerades

Many cultures in Africa have institutions or social associations that educate community members, uphold moral values and preside over public life. Mende peoples established institutions known as Sande associations a long time ago to educate young women and to address women's issues in the local community. In theory, all women belong to Sande. The formal role of Sande begins in women's lives at puberty, when girls must undergo a rigorous training period that marks their transformation from child to adult.

The role of the Sande association is most visible when a group of girls is undergoing this educational process. The girls are taken to secluded camps away from the village and town and are taught proper female behavior, rules of conduct, and their roles as adults by older and respected women who are also leaders in the Sande association. During this period, which also includes the teaching of songs, dances and secret lore, a masked dancer will appear to mark important occasions. Like membership into Sande, the right to wear and dance the mask is exclusive to women.

The Sande masquerader (*sowei*), wearing a blackened wooden helmet mask and raffia costume, represents a water spirit. The masquerader is regarded as a personification of Sande power and knowledge, on both a political and religious level. The mask is also seen as the embodiment of Sande's spiritual and healing forces. When the mask is not being performed in public with its complete costume, it is kept hidden and only certain leaders of Sande have access to it since it represents the sacred knowledge of the association. When the Sande masquerader appears, it communicates with gesture and dance. The lustrous blackness, beautifully arranged hair, downcast eyes, and closed mouth give the mask an air of inner spiritual concentration and refined physical perfection—ideals that women should strive for as member of Sande.



Sande Masks in the collection of the Fowler Museum of Cultural History, UCLA

1. When you look at images of a mask in a museum (above), what do you notice? What stands out to you?



2. When a mask is being worn and performed (above), what do you think the audience focuses on?
3. Considering the fact that the masquerade represents the power and spirit of the Sande association, why do you think the identity of the performer is a secret and that every inch of her body is kept hidden?

Kente Cloth in Ghana

Ghana is located in West Africa, on what was formerly known as the Gold Coast. Ghana has a complex history and many different languages and cultures coexist in this diverse country. Beginning about 1500, numerous states rose to power, known as the Akan kingdoms. While there are many Akan states, the most historically powerful and well-known is the Asante kingdom, whose leaders have been a dominant force in West Africa since the seventeenth century until British colonial forces defeated them in 1896. The paramount chief, the Asantehene, of the Asante confederacy continues to be an important cultural figure and patron of the arts. The royal court, both in the past and now, commissions artists to create elaborate regalia, palaces, furniture, sculpture, sumptuous fabrics and shrine objects.

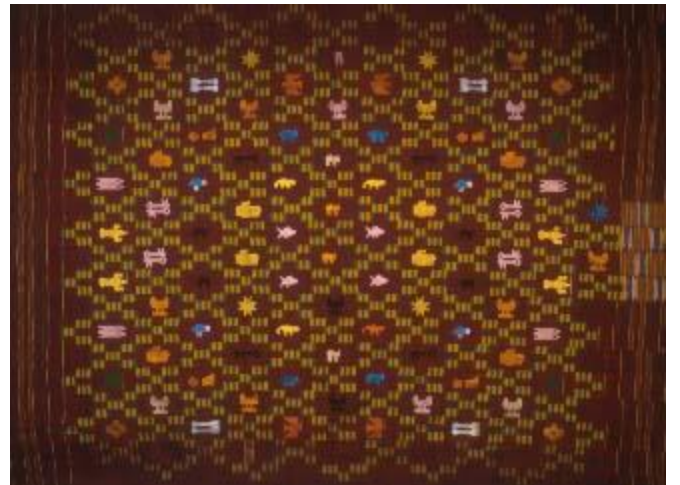
One of the key features of Asante visual art is its complex symbolic connection to verbal arts. That is, the graphic decorations, symbols and figural compositions are always directly related to proverbs, traditional sayings, or historical events. Thus, a person well versed in Asante history and proverbs, can 'read' the specific meanings represented in art objects. Because the most significant patrons are the royal courts, most of the symbolic meanings of Akan art are elaborations on good governmentship and philosophical commentaries on the necessity of wisdom in political and social situations.

Asante artworks celebrate the power and prestige of the Asante confederacy and ensure that Kumasi (the capital of the Asante kingdom) continues to be a thriving center of artistic creativity. The work of Asante artists have gained an international reputation. While their work inspires pride and a sense of history among many people in Ghana, in the United States Asante artworks have become important to African American heritage and celebrations of multiculturalism.

The Asante strip woven cloth called *Kente* is unquestionably the most popular and best known of all African textiles. It is produced in greater quantity, exported to more places, and incorporated into a greater variety of forms than any other African art form. Originally *Kente* was exclusively worn by royalty since at least the eighteenth century. The names and meanings of *Kente* designs can allude to proverbs, historical events, social status, and the gender of the wearer. Each Asante king would create a new *Kente* design after close consultation with master weavers during his reign. This new *Kente* design had to be chosen with great care because its pattern and symbolic meaning would always be associated with this particular king.

Since Ghana's independence from Britain in 1960, *Kente* has become a symbol of national pride and ordinary citizens wear it for special celebrations. *Kente* cloth has also become an important symbol for African Americans to highlight their connection to the African continent. *Kente* has figured prominently in celebrations of African American heritage, such as Black History Month. Many Americans wear it to show their awareness or support of "Black Pride." Thus the United States and other parts of the world are today central to the African art market and the livelihood of artists in Ghana.

The following page has images of Kente cloth. Observe them closely, and then use these and the text to answer the following questions.



1. Each Kente cloth is given a different name that is determined by the pattern of the individual strips. If you look at each individual pattern of every Kente cloth, notice that none are the same. There are over 1,000 specific Kente patterns, all with different names, and new ones are being designed all the time. What color seems to be repeated in each cloth? Why do you think this color is repeated?

2. Look at the image of the man wearing Kente. What can you learn by looking at his clothes? Using your knowledge of Asante culture, what kind of observations can you make? What kingdom does he come from? What is his occupation and rank? What is his body language like?

3. What do your own choices in clothing say about you?

4. Look at pictures related to the African American holiday of Kwanzaa. *Kente* has become a symbol of African American identity. Within the context of the Pan African Movement and the civil rights struggle, *Kente* became a popular symbol of pride. Have you noticed *Kente* in the United States? In what context? When someone in America is wearing something with *Kente* patterning, what are they saying about themselves?



5. How has the meaning of *Kente* changed from its African to its American context?
6. Now that you know the symbolic significance of *Kente* patterns, design your own pattern. Carefully think what symbolic meaning you would want your design to have. What colors would you choose? What meaning can you attach to your choices? What name would your pattern have? What does your pattern tell about your history? (Describe the pattern here, and then if you'd like, draw it on a piece of graph paper!)

Answer Keys and Examples

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Yoruba Beaded Regalia Figures



Yoruba Beaded Regalia

Look for each symbol in the crowns in figures 1 and 2. Identify each symbol that you see and explain in your own words why each symbol was chosen and how they reinforce the position of the kings.

Answer:

- Birds –used to show women support for the oba
- Faces –represents royal ancestors, protects the royal line
- Interlace patterns –symbolizes the continuity and balance of life
- Beads –a sign of royalty
- White –represents Obatala, the King of Orisha
- Red –represents Shango, a warrior god, and protect of the people
- Elephant –a symbol of longevity and power

Tell us what the Yoruba kings in figures 1 and 2 want us to know about them by reading the symbols you see in the crowns. How do you think the two kings might have been similar? How might they have been different? Which king would you have preferred to have governed you?

Answer: answers should include reference to the symbols described above. Answers will vary

The above picture shows Deji of Akure with young attendants holding ceremonial swords, in 1959. How is the oba presenting himself? What is he wearing? How is he sitting? What attitude does he project?

Answers will vary. Students may say he is projecting an attitude of authority and power.

How can you tell this is an important, powerful man? What if he was sitting in an ordinary chair, dressed in a business suit –would your perceptions be the same?

Answers will vary

How do the arts establish and communicate power and authority? When these symbols are no longer being worn by their owner and are displayed in a museum, how do they seem different to you? Do they have the same power?

Answers will vary

Think of other leaders in the world. What do they wear to symbolize their power and authority? What do authority figures in the United States wear? The president of the United States dresses the same as any other man in a suit; are there other special clues to his role that are apparent when he arrives at a public or ceremonial event?

Answers will vary

Sande Masquerades

When you look at images of a mask in a museum, what do you notice? What stands out to you?

Answers will vary

When a mask is being worn and performed, what do you think the audience focuses on?

Answers will vary. Students may say the dance, the dress, the music, etc.

Considering the fact that the masquerade represents the power and spirit of the Sande association, why do you think the identity of the performer is a secret and that every inch of her body is kept hidden?

Answers will vary. Students may talk about different Sande ideals such as “a wise woman never reveals the secrets of Sande” or the strive for physical perfection.

The training period during which the Sande masker often performs is a very difficult time for the young girls. It is a serious moment, testing their mental, physical, and emotional strength. How do you think the appearance of the Sande mask can help them during this period.

Answers will vary. Students may say that the mask will allow them to hide any negative emotions.

Knowing that the mask represents ideas about beauty, morals, and good behavior, look at the mask carefully. Does it represent your idea of beauty? Is this a realistic representation of a beautiful woman? What makes it abstract?

Answers will vary

Kente Cloth in Ghana

Each Kente cloth is given a different name that is determined by the pattern of the individual strips. If you look at each individual pattern of every Kente cloth, notice that none are the same. There are over 1,000 specific Kente patterns, all with different names, and new ones are being designed all the time. What color seems to be repeated in each cloth? Why do you think this color is repeated?

Answer: Yellow is repeated in each, because it is the color for royalty in Ghana.

Look at the image of the man wearing Kente. What can you learn by looking at his clothes? Using your knowledge of Asante culture, what kind of observations can you make? What kingdom does he come from? What is his occupation and rank? What is his body language like??

Answer: the man is of high rank (a king). He most likely comes from a kingdom in Ghana. Students may make other observations.

What do your own choices in clothing say about you?

Answers will vary. Students may mention their own culture, personality, or history.

Look at pictures related to the African American holiday of Kwanzaa. Kente has become a symbol of African American identity. Within the context of the Pan African Movement and the civil rights struggle, Kente became a popular symbol of pride. Have you noticed Kente in the United States? In what context? When someone in America is wearing something with Kente patterning, what are they saying about themselves?

Answer: Someone in America who wears Kente cloth is identifying themselves with African American heritage.

How has the meaning of Kente changed from its African to its American context?

Answer: Kente cloth used to be a symbol of royalty in Africa. Now, in America, is used as a symbol of African pride and heritage.

Example Museum Placard

Kambriel

Midnight Bustle dress

Black satin finished brocade, netting, and lace
2005, USA

Lent by Kambriel

“For me, gothic is all about finding beauty in the shadows,” says goth designer Kambriel. “It’s about viewing the world through a Tim Burton-esque lens, in which dark humor meets intelligent irony.”