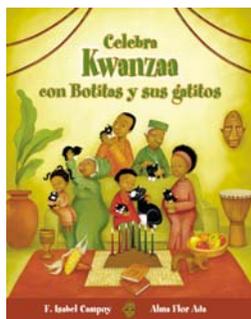


CELEBRA KWANZAA LESSON PLAN FOR GRADES 3–6



Book/Text Set:

Celebra Kwanzaa con Botitas y sus gatitos / ¿Qué es Kwanzaa?

by F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada

Content Overview: In the fiction story, an African-American family celebrates Kwanzaa. They put the seven principles of Kwanzaa to work in their search for Boots, their missing pet cat, who has a surprise for them. The non-fiction section introduces the purpose of Kwanzaa and explains the principles and symbols of this celebration.

Materials and Preparation

- chart paper and markers
- globe
- white construction paper
- assorted picture books on Kwanzaa, Africa, and African-Americans

Standards Covered

NCSS Social Studies Strands

- I. Culture: a, c, d, e
- III. People, Places, and Environments: a, b, c
- IV. Individual Development and Identity: f, h
- V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions: a, b
- VI. Power, Authority, and Governance: a, f, h
- IX. Global Connections: a, b
- X. Civic Ideals and Practices: a, b, j

NCTE/IRA English Language Arts Standards: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12

Vocabulary

F: desaparecido (desaparecer) / solucionar / problemas / equipo / planear / lograr vecindario/vecinos

NF: raíces / continente / unidos / comunidad/comunitarios / reuniones / arte / unión

Pacing Guide 3 days; 45–60 minute sessions, plus optional extensions

Reading and Activities

DAY 1

Before starting the lesson, prepare a chart listing the seven principles of Kwanzaa. At the top of a piece of chart paper, use a black marker to write “Los principios de Kwanzaa,” and then write the following words and phrases in order in a column down the left side of the paper, alternating with red and green markers: 1. Unidad; 2. Autodeterminación; 3. Trabajo, responsabilidad y solidaridad; 4. Cooperación; 5. Propósitos; 6. Creatividad; 7. Fe. Leave enough space on the right and between items for adding definitions for each term later. Two pieces of chart paper may be needed.

Explore the Topic: Kwanzaa / Familia, Comunidad & Cultura

Start a discussion about the meaning of community. Ask students to define the word and give examples of peoples’ contributions to communities. Elicit personal examples as well as some that include well-known people such as teachers, leaders, celebrities, etc. Include in the discussion references to any cohesive group with a common goal, such as the students in a classroom, the people in a school, the members of a family, or the neighbors in a neighborhood.

Vocabulary Introduction

At the top of a piece of chart paper, write the word “Kwanzaa,” and then write the vocabulary words for the fiction section in a column, alternating the use of black, red, and green markers. Read the words aloud with students. Have volunteers use words they know in sentences. Add to their responses as appropriate and necessary to create clear definitions.

Fiction Read-Aloud & Discussion

Activate prior knowledge of the terms that define the principles of Kwanzaa. Post the “Los principios de Kwanzaa” chart and have volunteers read the terms aloud. Ask students to tell what they know about any of the words or ideas. Using as many of the students’ ideas and responses as possible, write a definition of each principle using a black marker. Depending on students’ responses, there may be variation in the exact wording, but answers should be similar to the following:

Unidad: identificarse con un grupo y mantenerse unidos

Autodeterminación: luchar por lo que queremos

Trabajo, responsabilidad y solidaridad: ayudar a los demás,
cumplir con nuestros deberes

Cooperación: trabajar en equipo

Propósito: planear para alcanzar una meta

Creatividad: crear objetos hermosos

Fe: creer en los sueños de uno mismo

Leave this chart on display for the duration of the lesson; it will be used as a reference for the writing activity on Day 3.

In this session you will read aloud only the fiction story, *Celebra Kwanzaa con Botitas y sus gatitos*. Before reading the story, show students the cover and have a volunteer read the title aloud. Have students describe the illustration on the cover. Point out the items on the table in the foreground and have students name as many as they can.

As you read, help students understand the two interwoven stories, and the relationship between the Kwanzaa principles and the search for Botitas. For the Kwanzaa celebration story, point out the dates on the calendar, the presentation of each principle, and the ritual of the candles. For the missing cat story, focus on the application of the Kwanzaa principles in the family's search for Botitas. Be sure to stop whenever necessary to have students use context and examples to define any unfamiliar words.

After reading the story, review the seven Kwanzaa principles, referring to the chart as appropriate, while having students retell the story of the search for Botitas. Then ask the following questions, using the illustrations in the book to help students with their responses:

Beginning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ¿Cómo se llama la gata? ¿Por qué le dicen así? 2. ¿Qué hace la familia para buscar a la gata? 3. Nombra uno de los principios de Kwanzaa y di lo que significa.
Intermediate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ¿Cómo celebra Kwanzaa la familia de este cuento? 2. ¿De qué maneras coopera la familia para buscar la gata? 3. ¿Qué principios de Kwanzaa pone en práctica la familia para buscar a Botitas?
Advanced	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe lo que hace esta familia para la celebración de Kwanzaa. 2. ¿Cómo se involucra toda la familia en la búsqueda de Botitas? 3. Explica cómo se relacionan los principios de Kwanzaa con la búsqueda de Botitas.

Start a Kwanzaa information chart. On the top of a piece of chart paper, using a black marker, write "En Kwanzaa...." Ask students to recall what they've learned so far about Kwanzaa, and invite them to write their own responses on the chart using red and green markers. Make sure responses are worded to make complete sentences.

DAY 2

Vocabulary Activity

Have students read the vocabulary list aloud. Ask volunteers to use the words in sentences. Then add the vocabulary words for the non-fiction section to the list. Read the words aloud with students and ask for volunteers to tell what they know about the meaning of any of the words or to use them in sentences. Have students identify root words and use those root words with different endings to make different forms of the words whenever possible. Add to student responses as appropriate to define each word.

Show students the cover of *Celebra Kwanzaa con Botitas y sus gatitos* and ask for a volunteer to recap the story. Tell them that you are now going to read them a story that tells more about how people celebrate Kwanzaa for seven days.

Non-Fiction Read-Aloud & Discussion

Before reading, review the “Los principios de Kwanzaa” and “En Kwanzaa...” charts.

Open the book to pages 16–17 and have students read the section title with you. Make note of the African masks. Read the story, *¿Qué es Kwanzaa?* Have students identify Africa and other continents on the map and on a globe. Discuss Africa’s size in relationship to other continents and its distance from the United States. As you read, focus on the ritual of the Kwanzaa celebration and ask students to make connections to other celebrations using light. Be sure to make special note of the patterns and all the symbolic items used on the Kwanzaa table. Also stop to have students use context to define or discuss any unfamiliar words.

When the read-aloud is finished, have students answer the following questions:

Beginning	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Señala África y Estados Unidos. Compara el tamaño y la ubicación de ambos.2. ¿Qué actividades disfrutaban las personas en Kwanzaa?3. Nombra los símbolos de Kwanzaa.
Intermediate	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Señala África y América del Norte. Describe ambos continentes. Nombra otros continentes.2. Describe las actividades que disfrutaban las personas durante Kwanzaa.3. Nombra los símbolos de Kwanzaa y di lo que representan.
Advanced	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe el tamaño y la ubicación de África, América del Norte, otros continentes y Estados Unidos.2. Describe las actividades que disfrutaban las personas durante Kwanzaa.3. Describe los símbolos de Kwanzaa y la importancia que tienen durante las celebraciones.

Review the “En Kwanzaa...” chart by having students read their own previous responses aloud. Ask students what new things they’ve learned and have them add the new information to the chart.

DAY 3

Vocabulary Review

Have students work with the [Los principios de Kwanzaa worksheet](#). Do a quick picture walk through the fiction story to review the principles and remind students to refer to the chart as they work.

Allow time for students to browse and read additional picture books about Kwanzaa, African-Americans, and Africa, including books with African textile patterns. After reading, revisit the informational charts to add any new details.

Writing Activity

Explain to students that they will each make a chart about the seven Kwanzaa principles with definitions, examples, and results. On the board, draw a table with the following heads:

Principio **Definición** **Ejemplos** **Beneficios**

Read the words with students, then draw vertical lines between them to create four columns. Explain to students that they will be creating their own charts about the principles of Kwanzaa. Do the first principle, “Unidad,” as a whole group, having students give information for each cell. When finished with “Unidad,” draw a horizontal line across the bottom of the responses to define that row, and then write the word “Autodeterminación” in the next row.

Explain that even though they are working in teams to help with ideas, each student will make a personal chart. Make sure they understand that their charts need to include all the principles, including the model done cooperatively on the board.

Hand out 12”x18” pieces of white construction paper and arrange students in small work groups. Invite students to converse and help each other with ideas. As students finish, invite them to embellish their charts by tracing over the lines with red or green markers, or by making a border with an African art patterns.

Extensions

Writing Choose one of the seven principles of Kwanzaa as the subject of an essay. In the essay, tell what the principle means, give examples, tell about someone you know who exhibits the characteristic, recall a time when you exhibited the characteristic, and tell why this principle is important for society.

Art Make gift boxes out of card stock. Create patterns for cubes or rectangular prisms on flat paper, then cut and fold to make sure they work. Unfold and create a different African design on each face of the prism. Research African textile designs to get ideas: http://www.ikuska.com/Africa/arte_artesanias.htm

Music Listen to some music and learn about some instruments from West Africa:
<http://www.ccd.rpi.edu/Eglash/cbp/ekon.htm>
http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C3%BAsica_de_Nigeria

Math Play Mancala. If you don’t have a Mancala board and/or directions, read how to make your own game: <http://www.acanomas.com/DatoMuestra.php?Id=604>
Read about tessellations used in African hair designs and recreate some of those designs with pattern blocks or cut paper shapes.
Learn about tessellations and get directions for making tessellations:
http://www.oni.escuelas.edu.ar/2002/BUENOS_AIRES/infinito/teselado.htm
Get background information on fractals related to African design:
http://www.oni.escuelas.edu.ar/2002/buenos_aires/infinito/africanos.htm
Learn more about fractals and how to create some common fractal designs:
<http://www.fpolar.org.ve/matematica3/fasciculo24.pdf>

Science

Research the vitamins found in different fruits and vegetables. Make a chart, table, or graph showing the relationship of vitamins to the color of the fruit or vegetable.

Social Studies

Learn more about Africa's people, geography, and animals.
Research how and when the first Africans came to North America.

Technology

Learn more about the history of Kwanzaa:

<http://www.fireworks.com/spanish/holidays/Kwanzaa.asp>

Learn more about Africa:

<http://www.mgar.net/africa/afrigral.htm>

Take an online journey to Africa to learn about different geographic regions:

<http://www.ikuska.com/Africa/natura/>

Put Africa's countries on a map of Africa by matching the shapes:

<http://africa-map-puzzle.softonic.com/>

Creative Reading

Share this book with your students using Alma Flor Ada's Creative Reading methodology based on the principles of Transformative Education. [Suggested questions](#) to initiate the dialogue are provided for Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced levels as well as self-assessment tools for [teachers](#) and students in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

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Renee Goularte started teaching in the late 1980s. She has taught students in all elementary grades, and has worked specifically with English language learners, at-risk students, and GATE students. Renee holds a Master's Degree in Elementary Education from San José State University. In addition to teaching, she also writes and presents workshops for teachers. Renee lives in Northern California.