

AFRICAN ART COLLECTION
Group II
Second and Third Grades
Families, Communities, and Traditional Work

A. Families and Communities:

- 1 & 2: Two Gelede (Gah-Lay-Day) Masks from the Yoruba People of Nigeria
- 3: Akua'bu Doll from the Ashanti Culture of Ghana
- 4A & B Ibeji Twin Figures from the Yoruba Culture of Nigeria
- 5: Adinkra Wrapper with stamped pattern from Nigeria or Ghana
- 13: Lwena culture, Statue from Angola

B. Traditional Work:

- 6: Yam Mask from the Ibo Afikpo Culture of Nigeria (labeled EC9).
 - 7: Egungun mask from the Yoruba Culture of Nigeria (labeled EC4).
 - 8: Traditional Terra Cotta Bowl from West Africa (labeled EC11)
 - 9: Traditional Gourd Container with wood stopper
 - 10: Ebony "Oba" (or King) carving by the Benin People of Nigeria
 - 11: House Mask from the Baule people of the Ivory Coast
 - 12: House Mask from the Baule People of the Ivory Coast
 - 14: Runner's mask, Dan culture
- (For other examples: see Group 1, Item 2 and Items 5A&B)

C. Other Items that must be kept with this group:

- 1. Inventory Folder
- 2. Blue Notebook: A detailed handout on the entire African Art Collection
- 3. Book: *The Discerning Eye: African Art from the Collection of Carl and Wilma Zabel* by Charles Bordogna
- 4. Book: *Masks of Black Africa* by Ladislav Segy (missing)
- 5. A Videotape of Charles Bordogna discussing how to present the African Artifacts that were donated to TIC TOC in the year 2000.
- 6. Labels
- 7. Framed ID

African Art Group II in 2 containers; Outline and Notes as given by Charles Bordogna.

African Collection
Group 2: For Second and Third Grades:
Theme: Families, Communities and Traditional Work

Questions on Families and Communities:

- What type of families are in Africa? (immediate, extended, clan)
- How are Families held together? (descent of a common ancestor)
- Does place matter to Africans? (Yes, one is identified by one's place, village, region, culture, group and country.)
- How are adults and older people honored? (In praise, songs celebrations, and dances with masks. Elders are respected for the wisdom and leadership.)

Items in Collection related to Families and Communities:

Items 1 and 2: Two Gelede (Gah-Lay-Day) Masks from the Yoruba People of Nigeria

Part of elaborate masquerade to honor mothers, grandmothers and lineage mothers and to discourage witchcraft. Gelede focuses on using women's creative powers for good.

For information on Gelede Masks, see the Society of African Missions African Art Museum:

<http://smafathers.org/museum/resources-ebooks/gelede-masks-to-protect-man-from-witches/>

For additional information on Gelede Masks, see Wikipedia.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gelede>

Item 3: Akua'bu Doll from the Ashanti Culture of Ghana

Used by girls as a doll to care for, later representing the baby she'd like to have. The doll represents idealized beauty with a high smooth forehead.

African Art: Aesthetics and Meaning

Bayly Art Museum

University of Virginia

Charlottesville, Virginia

January 25- August 15, 1993

See Item 5

<http://static.lib.virginia.edu/artsandmedia/artmuseum/africanart/Exhibition.html>

For information on similar Akua'bu Dolls, see the following;

African Art Group II in 2 containers; Outline and Notes as given by Charles Bordogna.

Metropolitan Museum of Art:

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1979.206.75>

British Museum of Art

http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aoa/f/fertility_doll.aspx

For additional information on Akua'bu Dolls see Wikipedia:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akuaba>

Item 4A and 4B: Ibeji Twin Figures from the Yoruba Culture of Nigeria

Among the Yoruba, twins (ibeje) are special children whose birth can bless their parents with good fortune. The Yoruba have one of the highest rates of twin births in the world, and the loss of twins is therefore considered a great misfortune. If a twin dies, the mother commissions a memorial figure (two if both twins die), and the soul of the deceased twin is transferred to it. The mother dresses the statuette in cloth and adorns it with jewelry, and keeps it near her bed. She also offers it food and prayers weekly and performs more elaborate rituals on the occasion of birthdays and annual festivals. (The figures represent the deceased twin children and are surrogates that remain with the family, so that they can be honored and approached for intercession.) The figures are carved according to different regional styles. The statuettes conform to the Yoruba aesthetics of physical proportion. The head is one third the size of the body, because the head is associated with a person's destiny or "inner head," which determines success and failure in life. Artistic emphasis is placed on "human resemblance," rather than photographic likeness, and the facial features, though stylized, are carefully delineated and delicate. The smooth surface, which is difficult to achieve without sandpaper, expresses the desired quality of luminosity. Other Yoruba aesthetic qualities are relative straightness, good composition, youthful appearance, and clarity of line.

(Taken from African Art: Aesthetics and Meaning

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See Item 9

<http://static.lib.virginia.edu/artsandmedia/artmuseum/africanart/Exhibition.html>

Item 10: Ebony Carving of the "Oba" or King by the Benin People of Nigeria

The Benin had kings for hundreds of years until the British discontinued the practice.

They have returned to kings in present time. The king actually does dress like this.

This is a form of airport art for the tourist trade.

Items 11 and 12: House Masks from the Baule People of the Ivory Coast

African Art Group II in 2 containers; Outline and Notes as given by Charles Bordogna.

House mask represents the spirit of a deceased ancestor. It is not made to be worn but kept in the house in the rafters perhaps the way we would keep a photograph of an ancestor. Again, the spirit of the ancestor is embodied in the mask so that the ancestor spirit still resides in the house and because the mask is there, serves as a “guardian angel” kind of presence. The slits are used to whisper messages to the revered ancestor.

Questions on Traditional Work:

Why types of traditional work are done? (Farming, hunting, weaving, pottery, cooking, medicine, etc....)

Items in Collection related to Traditional Work:

Item 6: Yam Mask from the Ibo Afikpo Culture of Nigeria (labeled EC9)

This mask, used at the yam harvest and sowing rituals, evokes the earth spirits to provide good crops.

Item 7: Egungun Mask from the Yoruba Culture of Nigeria

Egungun is a hunter, the mask is used in male society to honor deceased men.

Item 8: Traditional Terra Cotta Bowl from West Africa

Item 9: Traditional Gourd container

Interesting projects:

Kid's Africa! Create Your Own Adinkra Cloth

<http://www.pbs.org/wonders/Kids/cloth/cloth.htm>

Symbols of Adinkra

http://www.stlawu.edu/gallery/education/f/09textiles/adinkra_symbols.pdf

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