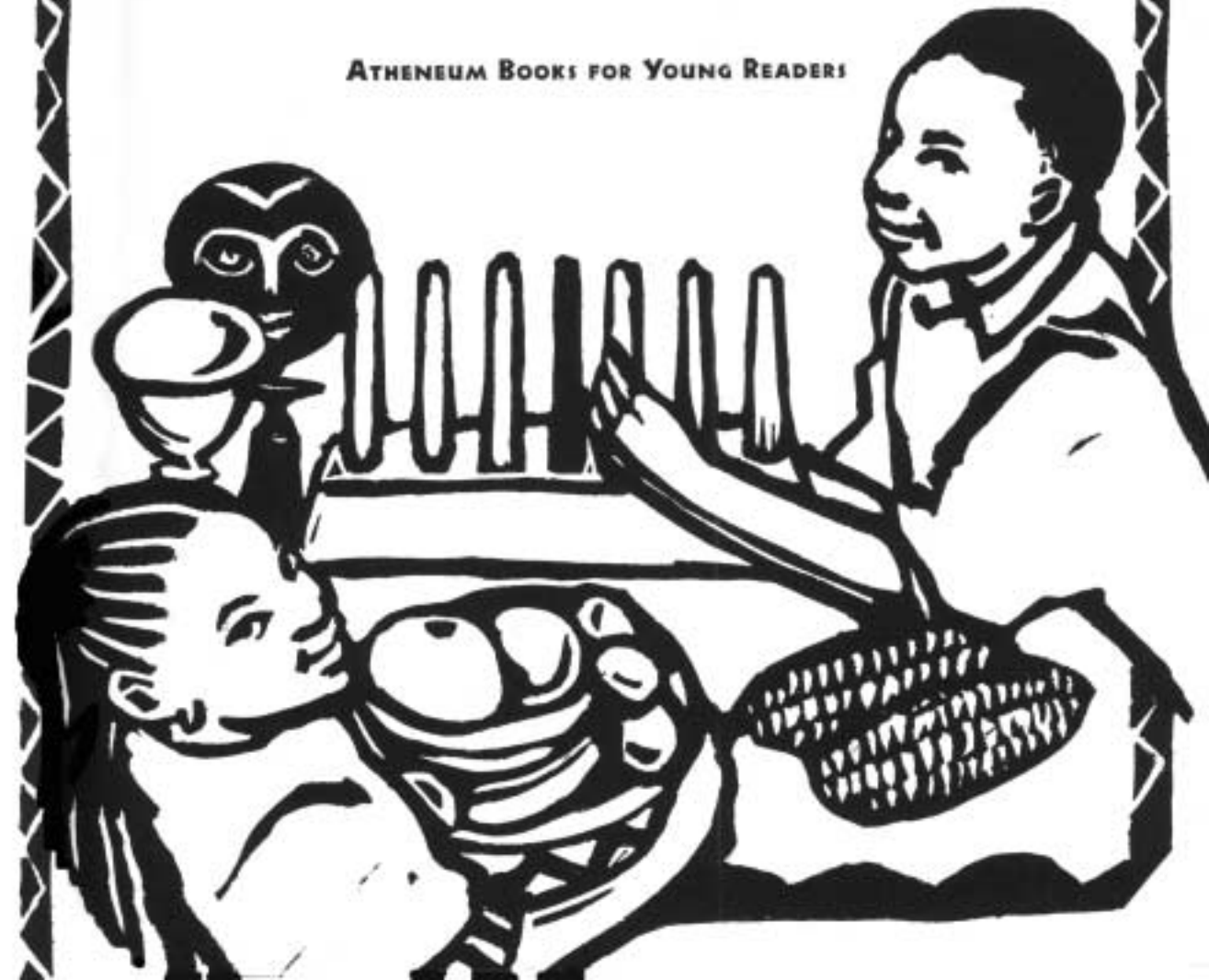


THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF
KWANZAA

A GUIDE TO CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAY

BY
DOLORES JOHNSON

ATHENEUM BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS



WHO PRACTICED UJAMAA?

The fourth principle, Ujamaa, describes cooperative economics, which is a call to open and maintain black shops and businesses.

During the course of history, black people have often been denied the opportunity to live the American ideal of "the good life" because they have been unable to get well-paying jobs or establish their own businesses. When people have the opportunity to gather funds through savings from work or loans, they can sometimes use those monies to establish their own businesses. A black store owner or serviceperson can prosper if other black people make a conscious effort to buy from those businesses, as opposed to businesses based or owned outside of the community. If the neighborhood business prospers, perhaps the owner will hire local employees. When more people work, more of the income stays in the community to maintain neighborhood institutions. When more people work, a greater sense of pride, self-reliance, and commitment results, and the whole community prospers.

When you think of Ujamaa, or cooperative economics, think of the slave Biddy Mason. Mrs. Mason, at age thirty-two, had to trudge on foot from Mississippi to California as she herded the cattle behind the 300 wagons of her master's caravan. When, in 1856, her master decided to return to Mississippi with his slaves, Mrs. Mason sued in court and convinced the judge that she and her three daughters deserved their freedom. She settled in California and, through her shrewd investments and hard work as a nurse and midwife, she was able to acquire large parcels of land in Los Angeles. She was such a generous person that she even



BIDDY MASON

kept an open account at a general store to pay for the purchases of those too poor to pay for their own. She also donated large sums of money to build schools, churches, and nursing homes for black people, some of which still stand today.

A. Philip Randolph, born in Florida in 1889, was another example of a hero who practiced cooperative economics. He organized the first black trade union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids, in 1925, which helped to create better job conditions and higher wages for those who cleaned and carried baggage on the railroads. Mr. Randolph was extremely effective in devising political tactics such as demonstrations, boycotts, and picketing to struggle against discrimination. He once persuaded President Roosevelt to issue an executive order forbidding racial discrimination by threatening a march of 100,000 people on Washington.

A recent example of someone who promotes Ujamaa is the Reverend Jesse Jackson, who was twice a candidate for president of the United States (in 1984 and 1988). Reverend Jackson created an organization called Operation PUSH whose aim was to encourage investment by the major American business corporations in the inner cities. Because of Reverend Jackson's efforts, numerous corporations have provided jobs to black people and sought to support black businesses.



A. PHILIP RANDOLPH



JESSE JACKSON

WHAT IS NIA, AND WHO PRACTICED THAT PRINCIPLE?

Nia, or purpose, is the fifth principle, and its goal is to restore black people to their traditional greatness. Mary McLeod Bethune once said:



**MARY McLEOD
BETHUNE**

We, as African Americans, must recognize that we are the custodians as well as heirs of a great civilization. We have given something to the world as a race and for this we are proud and fully conscious of our place in the total picture of [humankind's] development.

Mary McLeod Bethune was born in 1875 in South Carolina, the youngest of fifteen children. She was committed to improving the lives of young people through education and government service. She founded the Daytona Beach Normal and Industrial School for Negro Girls in 1904, which later became the Bethune-Cookman College. This school became one of the greatest black institutions of higher learning.

Colin Powell is another person who encourages the practice of *Nia*. He was born in 1937 in New York City to Jamaican immigrant parents. The Powells instilled in their

children an appreciation of their West Indian heritage and encouraged them to work hard for their financial security and independence. Young Colin Powell enrolled in college as an engineering major, but floundered a bit, never feeling that engineering was a field in which he could excel. But he became immediately attracted to the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) because he felt the training they offered him while still in college prepared him for a career in

which he could do well. He graduated, joined the army as a second lieutenant, and won both a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart in the Vietnam War. While he served in the army, his rank steadily rose until he became a general, and ultimately the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He directed the United States invasion of Panama in 1989 as well as the successful defeat of the Iraqi forces in the Gulf War in 1991.



COLIN POWELL

He stands as one of the most popular leaders in America of any color and offers himself as a role model for youths by encouraging them to work toward excellence in their own lives, as his parents once encouraged him.

WHAT IS KUUMBA?

The sixth principle, *Kuumba*, describes creativity in doing what we can to beautify our community and to create a better life for all people. Ever since Africans have been in America they have contributed to the beauty of this nation. There are today hundreds of African Americans who display tremendous talents in music, dance, writing, art, and the theater. And while we may be enchanted with the abilities of modern artists, we should, at *Kwanzaa* time, remember the pioneers who created such brilliant art years ago, when being a black artist was a very difficult goal.

Remember Phyllis Wheatley, who was born in 1753, and came to this country as a child from Africa. A tailor named Wheatley bought her as a slave and took her home to his wife, where she was taught to read and write. Ms. Wheatley began to write poetry in her teens, and in 1773 became the first black woman to have her work published in America.

Henry Ossawa Tanner was a painter born in Pittsburgh in 1859. Despite his recognition as a master artist, Mr. Tanner found his widest recognition in Europe rather than in his native country because of racial discrimination. Some of his paintings still hang in major museums throughout America and Europe today.

Paul Robeson, born in 1898, exemplified the principle of *Kuumba* as a celebrated actor, orator, and singer. But he also worked to ease the struggle of the black and white



PHYLLIS WHEATLEY



HENRY OSSAWA TANNER

ITEM: AFRICAN BEAD NECKLACE

EASY: 1 hour preparation time

SUPPLIES NEEDED

Bead cording or leather cord strip

Various-sized beads of wood, ceramic, stone, papier-mâché, as well as metal charms such as washers

DIRECTIONS

Thread the beads on the cord using the same lengths as used for the previous necklace (28" plus 5" for an adult and 24" plus 5" for a child). Thread the beads in an interesting pattern. For example, thread one small round wooden bead, one large tubular stone bead, one metal washer, one large wooden bead. Repeat that pattern until you have threaded half of the necklace. Then thread one large charm on the cord (for example, a large, unusual ceramic disk, or a leather or papier-mâché charm). Finish the pattern you started on the first half. Knot and finish the necklace when you get to a good length. The large charm should hang right in the middle of the necklace. When you have finished, you will have made a one-of-a-kind, exotic necklace that anyone in your family will enjoy.



DECORATIVE ITEMS

ITEM: PAPIER-MÂCHÉ MASK (DECORATION OR GIFT)

SKILLED: 4 hours preparation time over 2 days

SUPPLIES NEEDED

10" paper plates

Pencil

Scissors

Paintbrushes

Small bag of wallpaper paste powder

Bucket

Scrap paper cut into strips and 2" squares

Acrylic gesso, acrylic paints

Picture hanging wire



DIRECTIONS

These masks should be used for wall decorations only because they would be too heavy and restrictive for a person to wear. Draw the face of your mask on the paper plate. (See Figure 6.) Cut out the circles or ovals for the eyes and the mouth slightly larger than they will appear in the finished mask. (See Figure 7.)

After you have covered your working surface with newspaper, and you are wearing old clothes, mix about 1/2 cup



FIGURE 6



FIGURE 7

of the wallpaper paste powder with water so that it is the consistency of a thin paste. Coat your fingers with the paste and cover the strips and squares of the paper with paste on both sides.

Apply to the paper plate until you have created a thickness of at least 1/2". (See Figure 8.) For grimacing masks, you may want to add a thicker wad of papier-mâché to create wrinkles in the forehead or thick cheekbones. Or you can attach a nose shape by taping on a paper nose. (See Figure 9.) Attach a piece of picture hanging wire at the top with pasted strips. Smooth the papier-mâché with your wet fingers so there are no rough ridges other than those you intended.

Wait two days for the masks to dry. Paint them first with acrylic gesso, and then cover them

with exotic designs using the acrylic paints. The beginning of these directions shows some designs you can use. Or use your imagination.

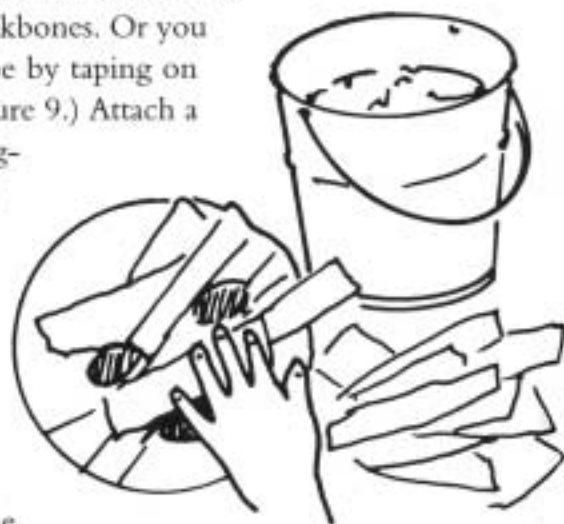


FIGURE 8



FIGURE 9

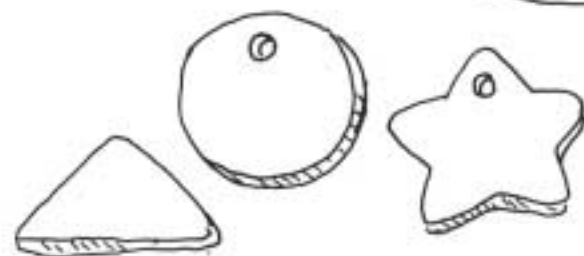
ITEM: KITCHEN CLAY

(clay made with items found in your kitchen. This dough is not to be eaten.)

SKILLED: 4 hours preparation time over 2 days

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- Poster paint
- Water jar
- Lacquer and lacquer thinner
- Paintbrushes



DIRECTIONS

Mix the flour and the salt with a little water until the dough feels a little like modeling clay. Knead the dough on an aluminum foil surface until it is well mixed. Add water if the dough is too dry or flour if it is too sticky.

Shape the dough into different figures by starting with balls, rolls, or shapes cut from a rolled-out slab. (See Figure 10.) Or use cookie cutters to create shapes. You can inscribe lines on the sculpture with pencils, or press different textures into the clay. (See Figure 11.) Let the clay dry overnight.

For beads, you can roll out 30 to 40 balls or tubular shapes. Thread the balls onto straws and let the clay dry at least overnight.

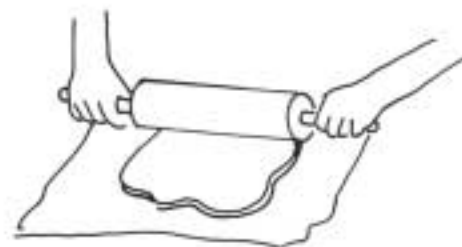


FIGURE 10



FIGURE 11