

## West African Kingdom Museum Exhibit Project



You work for the West African History Museum in Accra, Ghana. The museum is creating a new exhibit telling the story of the West African kingdoms: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. Your task is to create a Griot Mask exhibit that will explain **whether global trade increased the welfare and security of the kingdom?** Your group will be assigned one societal group and your task is to tell their story. **Did trade make your life better or worse?**

### Museum Exhibit Components (Mask and Griot Story):

- Griot Story – Letters from each West African Kingdom
  - The Griot in West African culture is a person who tells a story for the people group to remember their history. The museum is going to use the Griot story as the avenue for telling visitors the impacts global trade had on a person living in the west African kingdoms: **Did trade make their life better or worse?** Your Griot story should be a personal letter from an individual living in each West African Kingdom (Ghana, Mali, and Songhai):
    - Overview of their life early in the trading kingdoms: how did your ancestors live?
    - Changes you experienced because of the larger trading networks. Were these changes positive or negative overall?
- Your story should include at least **five relevant facts from your reading** to support your description of global trade and its impact on your person's life.
- Each letter should be one paragraph in length (5-7 sentences).
- Connect facts with mask ideas to ensure your five facts are consistent with their images, symbols, and colors.
- During the presentation, you will share your letters with the class, in a clear and concise voice.

- Mask: (see next pages for examples)
  - **Your mask should include symbolism for how your Griot story is explaining the impacts trade had on your group in the kingdoms.** Many masks depict an animal, but they don't have to.
  - Complete your mask **AFTER** you have discussed themes in the letters. Your mask and story need to connect.
  - Your mask should visually represent **the five facts from the Griot Story** (talk to your Griot Story writers) through images, colors, and symbols.
    - You can draw your own symbols or use Adinkra symbols (see picture below)
    - All five facts need to be explained in descriptors **AROUND** the mask with arrows pointing to the image, symbol, or color (see example of biographical masks).
  - After the dramatic reading, you will explain the descriptions written around the mask, pointing to the images, symbols, and colors.

### Kente Colors & Their Meanings

- Gold:** royalty, wealth, spiritual purity
- Yellow:** royalty, wealth, holy, precious
- White:** purity, healing, festive occasions
- Blue:** peace, harmony, love
- Green:** harvest, growth, spiritual renewal
- Red:** blood, strong political & spiritual feelings
- Maroon:** mother earth, healing
- Purple:** earth, healing, femininity
- Black:** maturation, spirits of the ancestors

## Biographical Griot Mask Student Examples

