

Art of Identity, Expression, and Adornment: Africa Outreach Suitcase

*"Your suitcases truly make our social studies and culture units come to life for our students."
—Middle School Language Arts Educator*



ABOUT THE SUITCASE

This suitcase explores the diversity of Africa by discussing art objects of identity, expression, and adornment. Students can use the objects in the suitcase, many of which are original from Africa, to gain new understandings of African art and culture and to share perspectives based on their own lives. Using these objects, students have the opportunity to discuss the traditional and contemporary cultural practices of Africans and the global impact of their cultures.

Book this suitcase online at <http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/programs-and-learning/schools-and-educators/education-resource-center/outreach-suitcase-reservation>.

LOOKING QUESTIONS

Encourage your students to look closely at the objects in the suitcase and images from SAM's Collection with questions like:

- How do individuals communicate their identity through objects they own, use, and wear?
- How do symbols help identify a person as a member of a certain community?
- What can you determine about a person based on his or her clothing or possessions?
- What can you tell about your classmates based on the type of items that they carry with them?

WHAT'S IN THE AFRICA OUTREACH SUITCASE?

Educator Resource Guide

- A list of relevant objects in the suitcase
- A list of images on the CD and prints that relate to these objects
- Background information on the object
- Questions to consider
- Activity ideas
- Related resources and glossary
- Washington State, Common Core, and National Core Arts Standards

Objects in the Suitcase (Pictured on Front)

- Ghanaian stool
- Ethiopian cross
- Cowrie shells
- Gelede mask
- Papyrus scroll
- Obama khanga cloth
- Recycled bike sculpture
- Recycled rubber bracelets
- Pop tabs
- Maasai necklace
- Kente cloth
- Adinkra stamps
- Adire cloth
- Books and music CD

Supplemental Images from SAM's Collection (on CD and 11 X 17" Prints)

Theme: Individual Identity

- [Circular Rainbow \(Kontonkorowi\) Stool](#), Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company, 81.17.338
- [Lion Stool](#), after 1957, Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company, 81.17.545
- [Mercedes Benz Coffin](#), 1991, Kane Quaye, Gift of Dr. Oliver E. and Pamela F. Cobb and Mark Groudine and Cynthia Putnam in honor of Pam McClusky, 93.163, © Kane Quaye

SAMPLE ACTIVITY: SYMBOLS AND STOOLS

- Begin with popular symbols used in Ghana (from the booklet in West African Stamps in the suitcase) and ask students to use them to design their own personal stool. Have students think about how they would identify themselves and create stools based on their identities. Students can display their drawn stool designs throughout the classroom or in the hallways.
- Extension: Use either Ghanaian patterns or symbols from another culture to create paper decorations that students can tape to their chairs at school. Sitting on their "stools," have students share with the class what these symbols mean and how they incorporated them in their design to express who they are.

- [Belt Mask of the Iyoba \(Mother of the Oba\) Idia](#), ca. 1517-1550, Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company, 81.17.493
- [Head of Amun](#), ca. 1200 B.C., Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection and Hagop Kevorkian, 51.69
- [Hand Cross](#), Gift of Tom Joyce and museum purchase with funds donated by John and Robyn Horn, 2007.243

Theme: Group Identity

- [Mask \(Ntomo society\)](#), 19th-20th century, Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company, 81.17.16
- [Mukyeem Mask](#), Gift of the Christensen Fund, 2001.44
- [Egungun \(Power Concealed\) Costume](#), 1970s, African Art Acquisition Fund and the General Acquisition Fund, 97.33
- [Gelede Mask: Male with Skullcap](#), early 20th century, Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company, 81.17.585

Theme: Expression

- [Funerary Stele of the House-Mistress Ujadenes](#), 664-610 B.C., Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection and Hagop Kevorkian, 48.224
- [Les Années \(The Nineties\)](#), 1991, Cheri Samba, Margaret E. Fuller Purchase Fund, 93.81
- [Soundsuit](#), 2006, Nick Cave, Gift of Josef Vascofutz, in honor of the 75th Anniversary of the Seattle Art Museum, 2007.70

Theme: Adornment

- [Bull Necklace \(Norkiteng\)](#), General Acquisition Fund, 2000.12.2
- [Sunday Cloth \(Kwasiada Indinkra\)](#), 20th century, Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company, 81.17.472
- [Kente Cloth \(Mmeeda "Something that has not happened before"\)](#), Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company, 81.17.434
- [Cloth \(Adire Alabere\)](#), Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company, 81.17.657
- [Takpekpe \(Conference\)](#), 2006, El Anatsui, Courtesy Jack Shainman Gallery, T2006.105