



Traditions of KWANZAA



Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26 until January 1st. It is a time for African-Americans to remember the past and give thanks for their families and communities. In Africa, people celebrate the harvest of the crops. Some Kwanzaa traditions are based on these celebrations. The word Kwanzaa means “first fruits”.

Kwanzaa lasts for seven days. Each day has a special meaning. On each night of Kwanzaa, families light a candle on the kinara. Fruits, corn, and a cup are placed around the kinara. These represent unity, faith, and the African harvest. Red, black, and green are the colors of Kwanzaa. Each color has a special meaning.



Kwanzaa kinara with symbolic cup and fruit

People dress in African clothing and wear Kwanzaa colors during this holiday. They might also decorate their home with African symbols. Red, black, and green unity chains are a common Kwanzaa decoration. Children make Kwanzaa crafts to give as gifts. On the last night of Kwanzaa there is a big celebration. People sing African songs, dance, and play traditional drums.

What does the word *Kwanzaa* mean? _____

What are some ways families celebrate Kwanzaa? _____

When is Kwanzaa celebrated? _____
