

## BITE RECIPE – ADINKRA PRINTING



*This versatile activity using Adinkra stamps from Ghana can range from a simple “Global Bite” for children using paper and poster paints to a sophisticated workshop for adults using fabric dye and material and producing a permanently printed cloth. The symbols and background materials in GLADE’s Adinkra Printing Topic Box provide inspiration for discussion on race, culture and immigration.*

**Ingredients:** For a simple “bite” for children; more sophisticated workshops will need more detailed planning and different materials).

- **You will need to book GLADE’s “Talking Cloth” collection for this activity or Google Adinkra.** It includes original Ghanaian printing blocks, explanations of the symbols, and background material including pieces of printed cloth, photos, and a delightful story about a small girl who now lives in UK but wants to find out about her past.
- small squares (approx 20cm x 20cm) of cotton cloth or thick paper
- paint brushes – three or four thick ones, plus finer ones for touching up
- poster paint, water, pots and LOTS of paint rags
- plastic cover for the table you use.
- a wadge of newspaper or soft cloth to put under the cloth you are printing on.

**Method:** 5 mins for a simple, single print

**Age range:** 5 years up

- It is **ESSENTIAL** to practise beforehand, even for the very simple method given here, if your “customers” are going to get good results.
- Explain the Adinkra symbols and show pictures and fabric samples of their use. Children or teachers might also be interested in the storybook.
- Let the customer choose the symbol(s) they want to use.
- Go ahead with the printing (see below).
- If you are at a fête or fair, suggest the customer labels the finished item and leaves it to dry, returning for it at the end of the event.

**Global issues raised:** Cultural difference – talk about ceremonial clothing, spiritual significance. If using the story book: second and third generation immigrants, race.

**Where to use this global bite:** fêtes, fairs, holiday schemes (as a slightly longer activity)

### **Watch points:**

Check with parents that children are wearing old clothes that can get painty.

Make sure you use paints which will wash out.

Don’t let the children have pots of water – have small lids or similar on which to put small quantities of undiluted poster paint for them to use. Try to have one brush per colour.

Be in charge of washing brushes yourself.

### **Additional resources and variations on the theme::**

GLADE has a number of resources which use the idea of Adinkra printing, and can be put together a “Bite box” to suit your needs. They include stamps from Ghana made of wood, metal and gourds, and also a set of stamps made from scrap based on the idea of symbolic meaning. At a fête or fair, it will be best to use the “real thing” from the Talking Cloth collection, but for workshops at any level there is the possibility of extending to designing and making your own stamps, assigning special meanings.