

Distance Learning/Videoconferencing
at the



Anansi the Spider:

A West African Folktale



Distance Learning
Study Guide

Pr e-K – 2nd Grade



Visual Communication
Equipment provided by:



Dear Educator:

We are scheduled for an Anansi the Spider: a West African Folktale videoconference with your group. You will need to do some preparation prior to the program. Below are the directions necessary for preparations (REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM).

1. The materials list is the first thing in the study guide. Each student needs these materials for the program. All templates need to be traced onto poster board, file folder or some type of card stock. (HEAVY construction paper may be used as a substitute). You may use any color you want. If you plan to decorate with markers or crayons, a lighter color will work best. Dark colors are best for true shadow puppets.
2. PRE-PUNCH HOLES onto head and body of puppet (refer to template for hole placement).
3. Please bring all pre-cut & pre-punched pieces and other materials to the program. It is helpful if each student has an individual bag with their own puppet parts in it. You can use small paper lunch bags or Ziploc baggies.
4. Pass out all materials PRIOR to program start time. This includes tape and scissors. Please have 4 strips of tape per student precut and ready for each student. Tape should be the length of a bandaid. You can pre-tear pieces and stick them to the sides of the table, OR stick them to yard sticks (just hold out yard stick and students can take a piece of tape from it—teacher recommended!).
5. We will lead all students through the puppet building steps and learning activities.
6. The program does not allow time for students to cut or punch out materials.
7. Students may decorate their shadow puppets with markers, crayons or colored pencils. You can do this in the classroom AFTER the program.

The activities in the study guide are for you to use at your discretion as either pre or post activities. We will be doing different activities with the students during the program.

Please let us know if you have any questions about how to prepare for the program.

If you have any technical questions, please contact us directly at (404) 881-5117.

Thank you!!!



The Distance Learning Team
Center for Puppetry Arts

Direct studio line: 404-881-5117

1404 Spring Street, NW at 18th

Atlanta, GA 30309-2820 USA

www.puppet.org/edu/distance.shtml

<http://vimeo.com/channels/272008>

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Videoconferencing Activity

Anansi Shadow Puppet

Materials List

Each student will need the following materials:

1 Anansi head (template 1 of 6, on page 3)

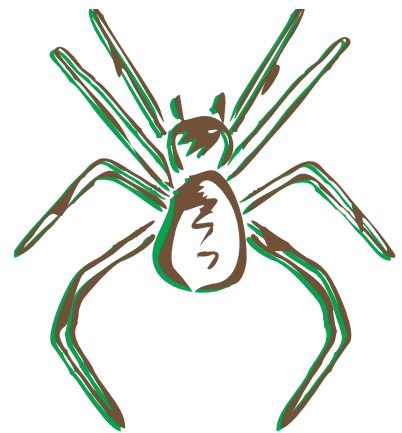
1 Anansi body (template 2 of 6, on page 3)

4 Anansi leg sets (templates 3-6 of 6, on page 4)

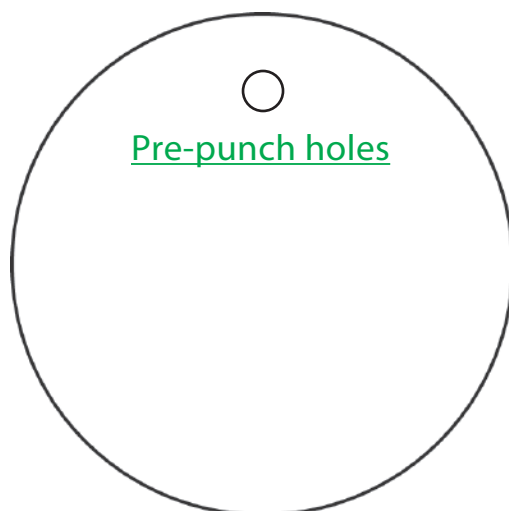
2 drinking straws (preferably flexible or bendy straws)

2 brads (paper fasteners)

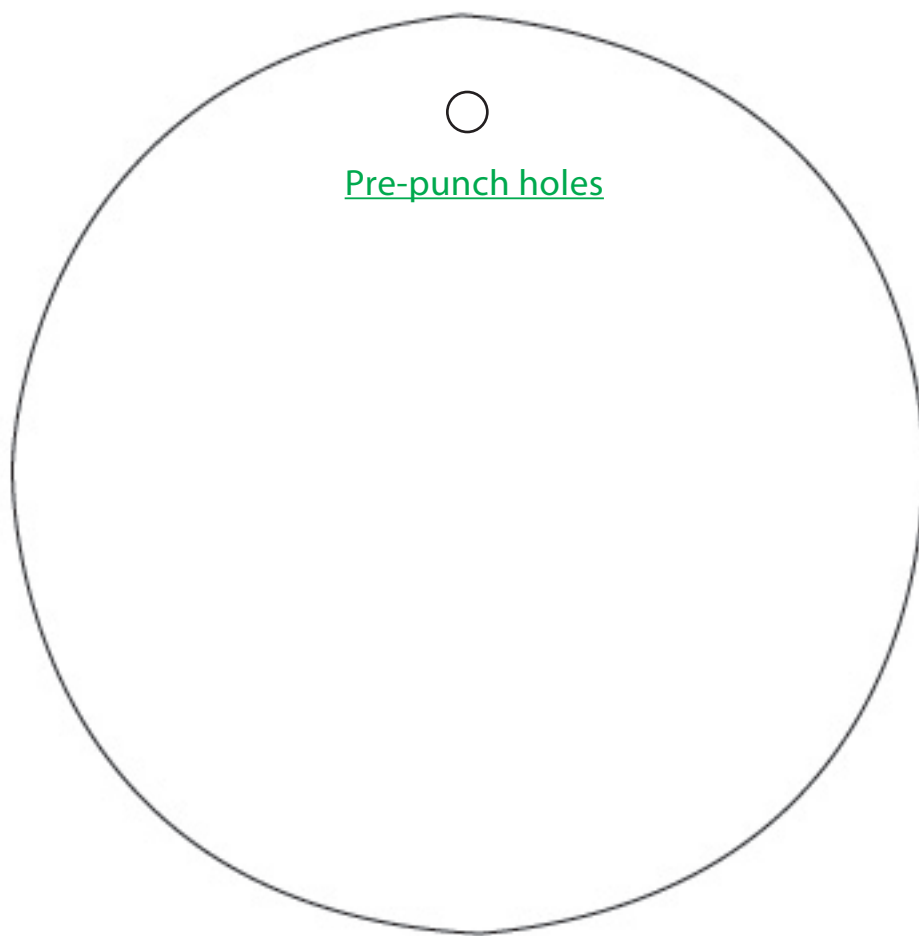
4 pieces of tape (about 2 " each)



Templates:



Anansi head template (1 of 6)



Anansi body template (2 of 6)

Templates, continued:
Anansi leg set (3-6 of 6)



National Curriculum Standards Met During Live Videoconference

Please go to www.educationworld.com for a complete list of national standards.

Language Arts

[NL-ENG.K-12.3](#) Evaluation Strategies

[NL-ENG.K-12.4](#) Communication Skills

[NL-ENG.K-12.9](#) Multicultural Understanding

[NL-ENG.K-12.11](#) Participating in Society

[NL-ENG.K-12.12](#) Applying Language Skills

Fine Arts/Visual Arts

[NA-VA.K-4.1](#) Understanding and Applying Media Techniques and Processes

[NA-VA.K-4.3](#) Using Knowledge of Structures and Functions

[NA-VA.K-4.3](#) Choosing and Evaluating a Range of Subject Matter, Symbols, and Ideas

[NA-VA.K-4.4](#) Understanding the Visual Arts in Relation to History and Cultures

[NA-VA.K-4.5](#) Reflection Upon and Assessing the Characteristics and Merits of their Work and the Work of Others

[NA-VA.K-4.6](#) Making Connections Between Visual Arts and Other Disciplines

Technology

[NT.K-12.1](#) Creativity and Innovation

[NT.K-12.2](#) Communications and Collaboration

[NT.K-12.3](#) Research and Information Fluency

[NT.K-12.5](#) Digital Citizenship

[NT.K-12.6](#) Technology Operations and Concepts

Theater

[NA-T.K-4.7](#) Analyzing and Explaining Personal Preferences and Construction Meaning from Classroom Dramatization and from Theater, Film, Television, and Electronic Media Productions

[NA-T.K-4.8](#) Understanding Context by Recognizing the Role of Theater, Film, Television, and Media in Daily Life

Pre and Post Conference Activities

Anansi (Ananse) the “Spiderman”

Anansi the “Spiderman” originated in Ghana, Africa and once enjoyed his life as a human. However, Anansi was mischievous and his father, the sky god, Nyame, changed him into a spider. He is depicted in numerous forms: a spider, a human, or a combination of both. Anansi is mostly a trickster (plays pranks or otherwise disobeys normal rules and norms of behavior) and sometimes a hero. It is often through his mischievous pranks in folktales or trickster tales that we learn to behave.

Anansi stories spread from Africa throughout the world and can be found in countries such as the Sea Islands, the Caribbean, Belize, Central and South America, and South Carolina (in Gullah communities). In South Carolina *Aunt Nancy* is sometimes used as a folk name for the spider because the term is the Americanized version of Anansi.

Activity 1: Spiders and Folktales: Comparing Stories with a Venn Diagram

National Curriculum Standards Met by This Activity:

Please go to www.educationworld.com for a complete list of national standards

[NA-VA.K-4.3](#) Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

[NA-VA.K-4.6](#) Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

[NL-ENG.K- 12.1](#) Reading for perspective

[NL-ENG.K- 12.6](#) Applying knowledge

[NL-ENG.K- 12.7](#) Evaluating data

[NL-ENG.K- 12.9](#) Multicultural understanding

[NL-ENG.K- 12.11](#) Participating in society

[NL-ENG.K- 12.12](#) Applying language skills

Activity

Fables and trickster stories are short narratives that use animal characters with human features to convey folk wisdom and to help us understand human nature and human behavior. These stories were originally passed down through oral tradition and were eventually written down. Anansi/Ananse trickster tales derive from the Ashante people of Ghana and were brought by African slaves to the Caribbean and parts of the U.S. These tales developed into Brer Rabbit Stories and were written down in the 19th century in the American South.*

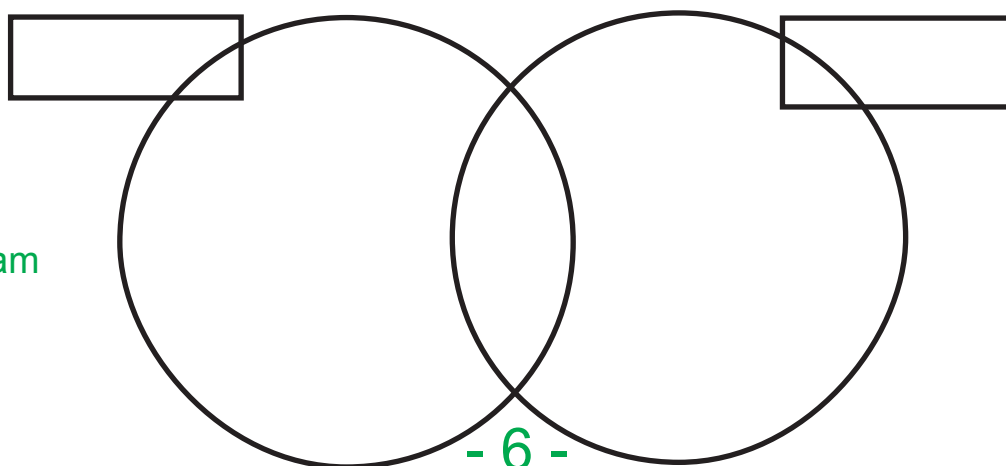
* Excerpt taken from: http://edistement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=237

Objective: Students will compare and contrast elements from two different versions of an Anansi story contributing ideas for a Venn diagram.

Materials: Chart paper, colored pencils or markers, two or three books with Anansi stories such as *Anansi the Spider* by Gerald McDermott, *Anansi and the Magic Stick* by Eric Kimmel, and “The Return of Anansi” story from *Trickster Tales: Forty Folk Stories from Around the world* by Josepha Sherman.

Procedure:

1. First read two versions of an Anansi tale to your students. The books listed above represent Anansi in the Ghana and Jamaican cultures.
2. On chart paper, make a simple Venn diagram (see illustration below). Draw each circle with a different color marker. In the rectangles, label the circle with the book titles.
3. Students should recall elements that are the same in both versions. The similarities should be listed in the space where the circles overlap. Unique elements to each story should be placed under the corresponding circle where it does not overlap.
4. Have students draw spider illustrations or scenes from the books to be displayed with the diagram in the classroom.



Venn Diagram

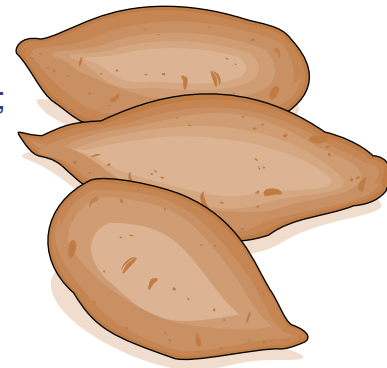
West African Cuisine: It's All About the Fufu (Foo-foo, Foufou, Foutou, fu fu)

Fufu (Foo-foo, Faufau, Foutou, fu fu) is to Western and Central Africa cooking what mashed potatoes are to traditional European American cooking. Fufu is a starchy accompaniment for stews or other dishes with sauce. There are fufu-like staples all over SubSaharan Africa. In Western Africa, fufu is usually made from yams, sometimes combined with plantains. In Central Africa, fufu is often made from cassava tubers. To eat fufu, use your right hand to tear off a bite-sized piece of fufu, shape into a ball, make an indentation in it, and use it to scoop up the soup or stew or sauce, or whatever you're eating. In Western and Central Africa, the more common method is to serve a mound of fufu along with a sauce made from okra, fish, tomato, etc. In Ghana, the ball is often not chewed but swallowed whole in the manner one would swallow pills. In fact, among the older generation, chewing fufu is a faux-pas.

Below is a simple recipe for making fufu:

Materials:

- 2 to 4 pounds of yams (use large white or yellow yams; not sweet potatoes, not "Louisiana yams"); or equal parts yams and plantain bananas
- 1 teaspoon butter (optional)
- 1 large pot with a cover
- cold water
- 2 potato mashers



Procedure:

1. Place yams in large pot and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil and cook until the yams are soft (maybe half an hour). Remove pot from heat and cool yams with running water. Drain.** Remove peels from yams. Add butter. Put yams in a bowl (or back in the empty pot) and mash with a potato masher, then beat and stir with a wooden spoon until completely smooth. This might take two people: one to hold the bowl and the other to stir.

2. Shape the fufu into balls.

** Teachers may choose to do this activity with students. Teachers may want to preball the yams. Wrapping the yams in aluminum foil keeps them warm for several hours.



Activity 2 : Make a Favorite Food Bar Graph

National Curriculum Standards Met by This Activity:

Please go to www.educationworld.com for a complete list of national standards

NM-DATA.PK-2.1 Formulate questions that can be addressed with data and collect, organize, and display relevant data to answer

NM-DATA.PK-2.2 Select and use appropriate statistical methods to analyze data

NM-DATA.PK-2.1 Develop and evaluate inferences and predictions that are based on data

NM-PROB.COMM.PK-12.1: Organize and consolidate their mathematical thinking through communication

NM-PROB.COMM.PK-12.2: Communicate their mathematical thinking coherently and clearly to peers: teachers, and others

NM-PROB.COMM.PK-12.3: Analyze and evaluate the mathematical thinking and strategies of others

NM-PROB.COMM.PK-12.4: Use the language of mathematics to express mathematical ideas precisely

NM-PROB.REP.PK-12.1: Create and use representation to organize, record, and communicate mathematical ideas

NM-PROB.REP.PK-12.2: Select, apply, and translate among mathematical representations to solve problems

NM-PROB.REP.PK-12.3: Use representations to model and interpret physical, social, and mathematical phenomena

NM-PROB.CONN.PK-12.3: Recognize and apply mathematics in contexts outside of mathematics

Activity

Objective: Students will taste and choose their favorite food from those seen in the performance *Anansi the Spider: A West African Folk Tale*. Students will construct a class bar graph.

Materials: 1 Cantaloupe, 1 can of sweet potatoes or 1 baked sweet potato or yam. 1 banana or plantain, peanuts (called groundnuts in Africa), food images (see reproducible sheet on the next page), a marker for the teacher, crayons or markers for students, tape and chart paper.

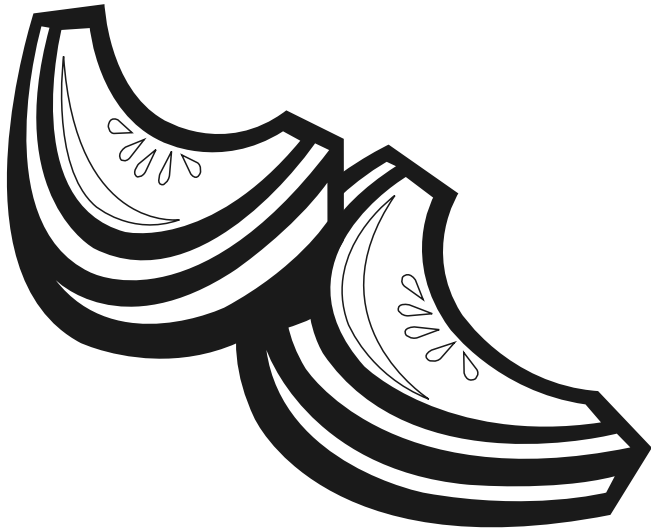
Procedure:

1. Have students recall the food highlighted in the Anansi shadow play performance by “ taste testing” the foods listed above in the classroom.
2. Make a copy of the Food Images Sheet (see next page) for each student. Have students color and cut out each picture.
3. Post a sheet or two of chart paper on the board (or on an easel) in front of the classroom. Divided the paper into four rows or columns (bar graph can be vertical or horizontal). Title your graph and label each row or column with an image of the food or name of the food.
4. Ask students to choose the image that represents their favorite food and put a piece of tape on the back of it. Have each students come up to the graph with his/her image and place it on the corresponding row or column. Adults in the room may also participate.
5. When everyone has placed his/her image on the chart, ask students if they can tell just by looking at the bar graph which food was the most popular, the second most popular, ect. Are any two bars on the graph equivalent? Encourage students to sue the following comparison terms: same as, fewer than, more than, etc.
6. Ask students to count the number of images in each row or column, or do this together as a class. Record numbers for each bar on the graph.
7. Display bar graph in classroom or hallway.

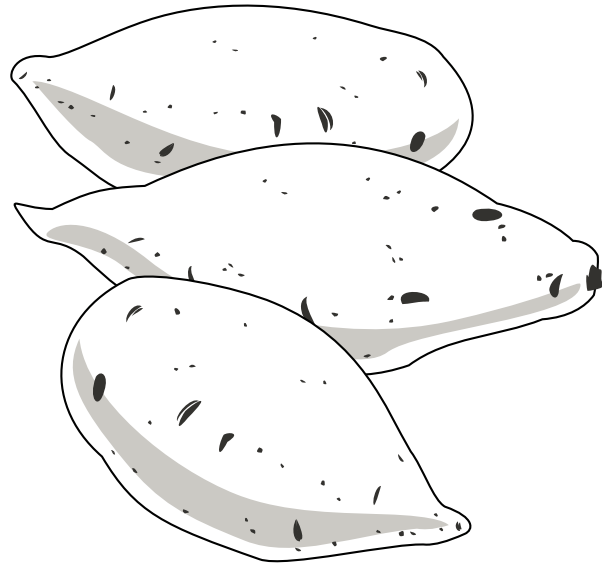


Reproducibles for Activity 2

Food Images



Cantaloupe/Melon



Sweet Potato/Yam



Peanuts/Groundnuts



Banana/Plaintain

Activity 3: Creating an African Mask

National Curriculum Standards Met by This Activity:

Please go to www.educationworld.com for a complete list of national standards.

NA-VA.K-4.1 Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

NA-VA.K-4.4 Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

NA-VA.K-4.6 Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

Activity

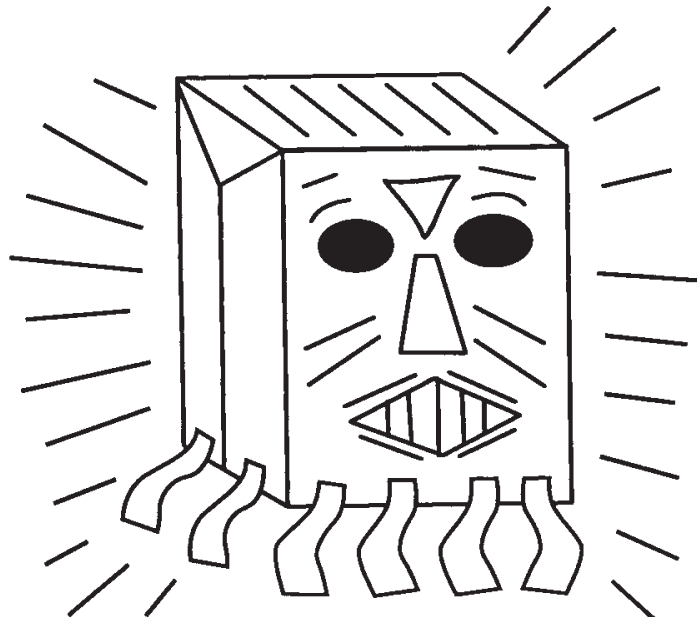
The Dogon tribe lives in West Africa in the country of Mali. Masks are worn by the Dogon to scare away spirits of the dead and help spirits join their ancestors. The masks are brightly colored, rectangular in shape, and often have a bright ruffle around the neck. Other types of masks are also worn in Mali by other tribes that celebrate harvest, hunting and birth.

Objective: Students will create a Dogon Spirit Mask.

Materials: Brown paper grocery bag (large), colored markers, paint, scissors, glue, bright ribbon or strips of colored paper.

Procedure:

1. First, open the paper bags and have students place them on their heads.
2. Teachers should mark eyeholes for the students.
3. Remove the paper bags.
4. Cut out eyeholes with scissors.
5. Glue decorative ribbon or paper strips to create a ruffle around the bottom of the bag.
6. Use markers and paint to decorate the mask.



Activity 4: Talking Drums of Africa

National Curriculum Standards Met by This Activity:

Please go to www.educationworld.com for a complete list of national standards.

NA-M.K-4 Performing on instruments, alone or with others, a varied repertoire of music.

NA-M.K-4.3 Improving melodies, variations, and accompaniments

NA-M.K-4.8 Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

NA-M.K-4.9 Understanding music in relation to history and culture

NA-VA.K-4 Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

Activity

Puppet and mask performances in Africa are always accompanied by traditional African music, various types of drums, rattles, shakers, xylophones and many other instruments may be used during these performances. Drums serve as a way of communicating ideas and feelings. Drum beats are also used to represent different animals during performances. A fast drum beat may represent a cheetah, or a slow drum beat may represent an elephant. Drums are made of different materials, depending on natural resources of a particular area. Have your students create a “talking drum” of Africa.

Objective: Students will create and play an African drum.

Materials: CD of African music, scissors, glue, crayons or paint, construction paper, coffee can with plastic lid, can opener

Procedure:

1. Using a can opener, cut out the bottom of the coffee can. The top should already be cut out if it is a recycled item.
2. Next, have students glue construction paper to the coffee can and decorate the paper with paint, marker, or crayons.
3. Have students play their drums to a tape or CD of African music*.
4. Pausing the music, have students try to repeat beats and rhythms.
5. Attach the plastic lid to the coffee can to complete the drum.

* Suggested CD available at barnesandnoble.com:

African Tribal Music and Dances

Track 5, Dance of the Hunter

Cost: \$5.49

Catalog #: 12179

UPC: 18111217927

Label: Delta, 1993



Other Resources

Websites to Explore

<http://www.pbs.org/wonders/Kids/kids.htm>

PBS Kids website titles *Explore Africa with Anansi!* Geared for older students, but teachers can lead the activity.

<http://www.sacred-tests.com/afr/jas/index.htm>

Great website for teachers on Jamaican Anansi Stories.

<http://www.sallys-place.com/food/cuisines/africa.htm>

Informative website for teachers regarding the history of African cuisine and recipes.

http://www.afrol.com/archive/food_staples.htm

List of African food staples.

<http://www.dancingdrum.com>

Scroll to bottom of home page and select “audio” to hear West African music.

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/ontheline/index.htm>

Hear sounds of Mali or view land scapes from Mali. This Website looks at several countries along the zero meridian line, including the African countries of Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Togo. Simply select a country to find out information on daily life, food, customs and more.

Bibliography

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McDemott, Gerald. *Anansi the Spider: A Tale from the Ashanti*. Henry Holt and Company, 1987.



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