# **ANANSI AND HIS CHILDREN**

## **CHARACTERS:**

The play requires seven actors. At least one must be male and one must be female.

As scripted, *Anansi* calls for 3 men (including a boy), 3 women (including a girl) and one of either gender. However, neither the gender breakdown of the cast nor the ages matter.

The suggested doubling is:

MAN 1 - Fish, Game Skinner

MAN 2 - Anansi

**WOMAN 1 -** Aso, River Drinker

**WOMAN 2 -** Road Builder

**BOY** - Stone Thrower

**GIRL** - See Trouble

**EITHER** - Cushion

**The Setting:** A bare stage or as much suggestion of the locale as the director chooses.

**The Time:** Now and then

NOTE: The Kwanzaa Song may be downloaded at:

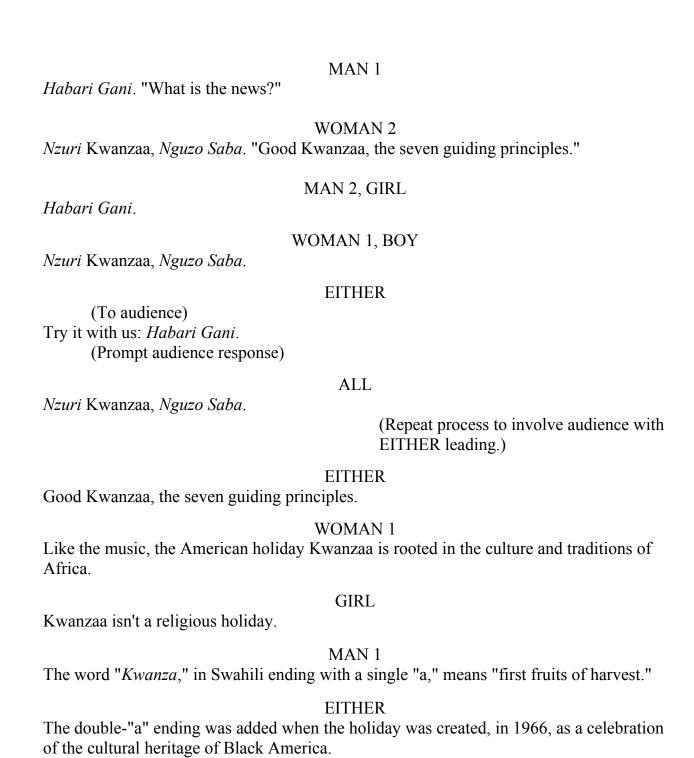
http://www.folktales.net/Kwanza1.html

**AT RISE:** *The Kwanzaa Song* is heard. As it finishes, there are the SOUNDS of DRUMMING and a WOODEN FLUTE and the ENSEMBLE appears. SOUND continues as the Kwanzaa greetings begin.

Habari Gani.	EITHER
Nzuri Kwanzaa, Nguzo Saba.	BOY
Habari Gani.	GIRL
	MAN 2
Nzuri Kwanzaa, Nguzo Saba.	WOMAN 1
Habari Gani.	MANUA.
Nzuri Kwanzaa, Nguzo Saba.	MAN 1
The music of Africa.	WOMAN 2
Drums.	MAN 1
A flute.	WOMAN 2
	(MUSIC segues into African-inspired American jazz and continues under.)
The music of America derived from	(Under the following, the ENSEMBLE continues to greet each other with <i>Nzuri</i>
	Kwanzaa, Nguzo Saba.)

## WOMAN 2

Habari Gani; Nzuri Kwanzaa, Nguzo Saba. Those are the traditional greeting and response that are exchanged among Kwanzaa celebrants.

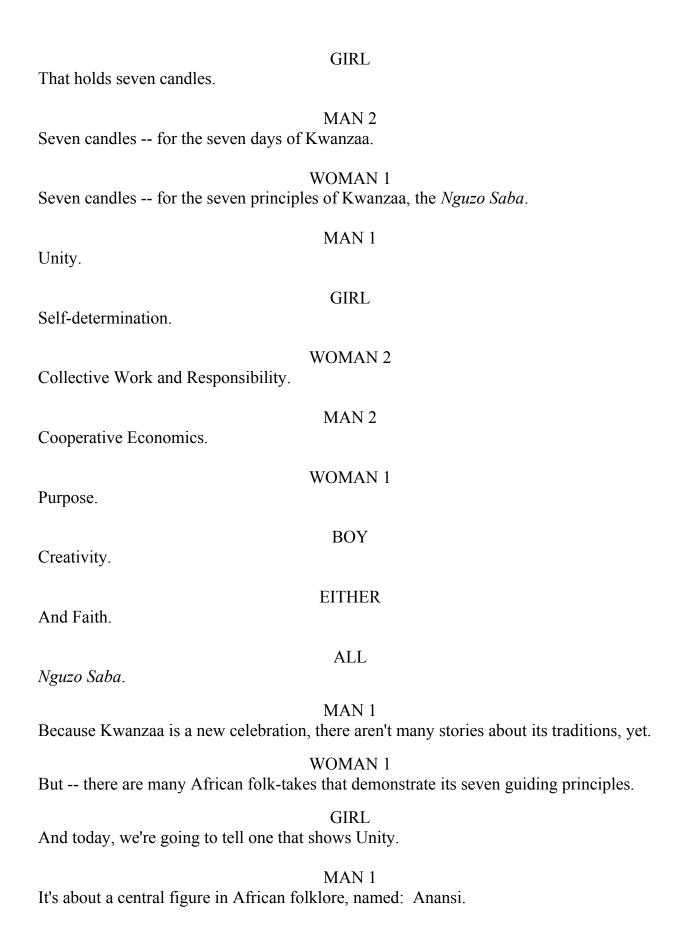


**BOY** 

Kwanzaa lasts several days -- seven, to be exact -- and it's marked by the use of the Kinara --

WOMAN 2

a candleholder



#### ANANSI

(LIGHTS UP on ANANSI.)

And my six children.

#### **CUSHION**

*Nzuri* Kwanzaa! My name is Cushion -- an unusual name, isn't it? You see, Anansi is my father, and one day, he came rushing out of our tent to announce ...

(SOUND OF A BABY CRYING.)

**ANANSI** 

I have a child! I have a child!

MAN 1

You have a child? So? You already have five children, Anansi.

WOMAN 1

And what names you and Aso have given them!

ANANSI

We *haven't* named them; they brought their own names with them!

MAN 1

Indeed. I was at the birth of the first. She came out and -- do you think she cried? -- no! She announced: My name is See Trouble.

WOMAN 1

And the second: Road Builder,

**ANANSI** 

Then River Drinker, and Stone Thrower and - Cushion.

WOMAN 1

Cushion! Of all things!

**ANANSI** 

Perhaps their names *are* odd, but they seem to have special talents that no one else possesses. See Trouble can look anywhere there is trouble and see it. Stone Thrower can hurl a rock a hundred yards and drive a nail into a board with it.

WOMAN 1

(Sardonically)

And Cushion? Does [s/he] serve as a pillow for your feet when they are tired?