

# THE SPIRIT OF KWANZAA

for 2-part voices and piano with optional percussion

Words and Music by  
MARTI LUNN LANTZ and LOIS BROWNSEY

Dignified, with a strong pulse (♩ = ca. 116)

PIANO

*mf*

+(Spoken)

1. The spirit comes from Africa
2. Seven days of Kwanzaa,

*mf*

Af - ri - ca,  
Sev-en days,

*mf*

Af - ri - ca,  
Sev-en days,

PERCUSSION<sup>°</sup>

(Shaker, cabasa, tambourine)

(Play 2nd time only)

(Wood block, hand drum, claves)

*mp*

+One measure spoken solos may be assigned to one person for the entire song, for each verse, or each phrase.

° Percussion parts may be played by soloists or a group on any combination of appropriate instruments.

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and lives here in America:  
seven days to celebrate.

You must understand the past  
Seven candles symbolize

A - mer - i - ca.  
in man - y ways.

A - mer - i - ca.  
in man - y ways.

to have a better future.  
the principles of Kwanzaa.

Un - der - stand,  
Sym - bol - ize,

be the best you can.-  
they will be our guide.

Un - der - stand,  
Sym - bol - ize,

be the best you can.-  
they will be our guide.

13

*f*  
Kwan - zaa,— Kwan - zaa,— will

*f*  
Kwan - zaa,— Kwan - zaa,— Kwan - zaa.—

*mf*

*f*

16  
teach good things to you.— Kwan - zaa,— Kwan - zaa,—

Kwan - zaa,— Kwan - zaa,— take

19

Kwan - zaa! —

pride in what you do. —

(Play both times)

*mf*

22

1. (to m. 5, p. 2) 2.

1. (to m. 5, p. 2) 2.

26

Family and community,

*mf*

strive for peace and unity,

Com - mu - ni - ty,

u - ni - ty,

Com - mu - ni - ty,

u - ni - ty,

*mp*

30

working all together,

using creativity.

now we see;

and faith in you and me. -

now we see;

and faith in you and me. -

34

Kwan - zaa -

Kwan - zaa, -

will

Kwan - zaa, -

Kwan - zaa, -

Kwan - zaa. -

*mf**f*

37

teach good things to you. - Kwan - zaa, - Kwan - zaa, -

Kwan - zaa, - Kwan - zaa, - take

40

Kwan - zaa! - Kwan-zaa!

pride in what you do. - Kwan-zaa!

## Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is a non-religious, non-political African-American holiday lasting seven days, from December 26 to January 1. It was created in 1966 by Maulana (Ron) Karenga. The name “Kwanzaa” means “first fruits of the harvest” in Swahili. Mr. Karenga took elements from many African harvest festivals to create this holiday which is now celebrated by millions of African-Americans.

Kwanzaa is based on seven principles, one for each of the seven days:

1. **Umoja** (u-MO-jah) - Unity. To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.
2. **Kujichagulia** (koo-jee-cha-GU-lee-ah) - Self-determination. To define, create, name and speak for ourselves as opposed to having others do this for us.
3. **Ujima** (oo-JEE-mah) - Collective work and responsibility. To build and maintain our community together and to solve our problems together.
4. **Ujamaa** (oo-JAH-mah) - Cooperative economics. To build and maintain our own businesses.
5. **Nia** (NEE-ah) - Purpose. To collectively build and develop our community.
6. **Kuumba** (koo-OOM-bah) - Creativity. To do whatever we can to leave our community more beautiful than when we inherited it.
7. **Imani** (ee-MAHN-ee) - Faith. To believe in our people.

In Kwanzaa, as in other December holidays such as Christmas and Hanukkah, the candle is an important symbol. Seven candles are arranged in this order: three green, one black, and three red. Each day a candle is lit beginning with the black candle in the center.

For more information on Kwanzaa, see *Kwanzaa: Everything You Always Wanted to Know But Didn't Know Where to Ask* by Cedric McClester (Gumbs and Thomas) and *Kwanzaa: An Everyday Resource and Instructional Guide* by David A. Anderson (Gumbs and Thomas). Or you can search the Internet for more about Kwanzaa.

