

HANDOUT – ADINKRA SYMBOLS

DWENNIMMEN

"ram's horns"



Symbol of humility and strength.
The ram fights fiercely against other rams, but also submits humbly to humans. Even the strong need to be humble.

SANKOFA

"go back and get it"



Symbol of importance of learning from the past.
A proverb says: It is not wrong to go back for that which you have

AYAMPATAPO

"knot of reconciliation"



Symbol of reconciliation and peace-making.
Wrapping a cloth or rope around two people's hands is a sign of reconciliation. 'Mpatapo' is the knot that binds them.

FIHANKRA

"house/compound"



Symbol of security and safety.
The communal housing compound has only one entrance and exit.

OWIA KOKROKO

"greatness of the sun"



Symbolises vitality and renewal.
The sun is the ultimate source of all life and vitality on Earth.

AKOMA

"the heart"



Symbol of patience and tolerance.
A proverb says that if someone "has a heart in their stomach" they are very tolerant.

BOA ME NA ME MMOA WO

"help me and let me help you"



Symbol of cooperation.
The two sides of the symbol are asymmetrical, but they work together as part of a greater whole.

ANANSE NTONTAN

"spider's web"



Symbol of wisdom, creativity and the complexities of life.
Anansi the Spider is a well-known character in West African folklore.

DENKYEM

"crocodile"



Symbol of adaptability.
The crocodile lives in the water, yet breathes the air, demonstrating an ability to adapt to circumstances.

ASASE YE DURU

"the Earth is heavy"



Symbol of providence and the divinity of Mother Earth.
This symbol represents the importance of the Earth in sustaining life.

MATE MASIE

"what I hear, I keep"



Symbol of wisdom, knowledge and prudence.
Understanding means wisdom and knowledge, but it also means listening and taking into account what another person

FUNTUNFUNFU

DENKYEM FUNEFU

"Siamese crocodiles"



Symbol of democracy, and unity in diversity.
The symbol is two crocodiles that share one stomach.