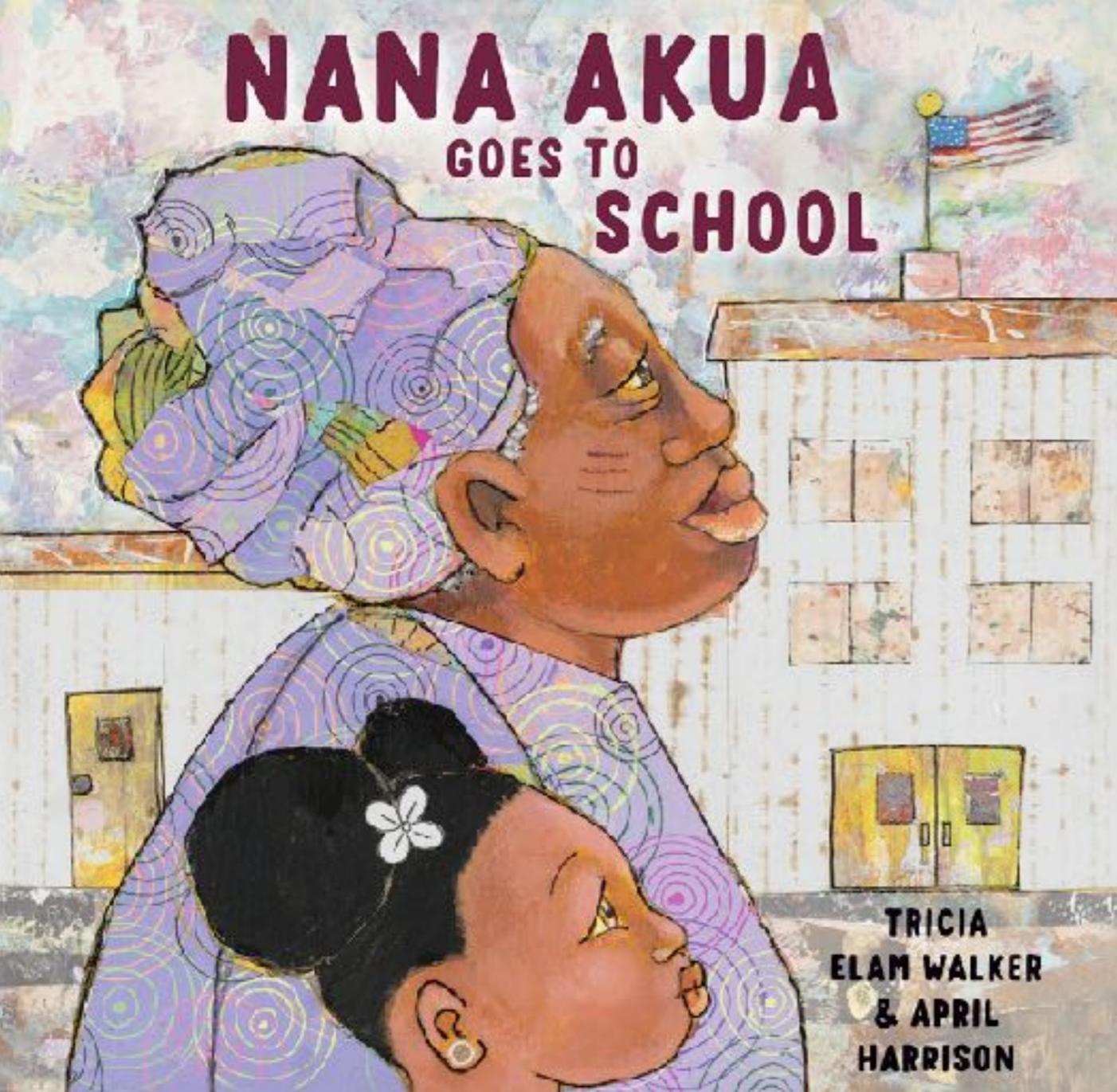


NANA AKUA GOES TO SCHOOL



Summary:

Nana Akua Goes to School takes readers on a cultural journey. Readers are able to learn about Ghana through two separate generations, a grandmother and her granddaughter.

Zura's favorite person in the world is her grandmother, Nana Akua. When grandparent's day rolls around, one would expect Zura to be ecstatic at the opportunity to bring her grandmother to school. However, this is not the case. Nana Akua grew up in Ghana, and per Western African traditions has tribal markings on her face. Zura is nervous that other children will be fearful of her grandmother or make fun of her for these markings. Despite Zura's fears, Nana Akua attends school with Zura and has the perfect idea to ensure that Zura and her classmates will be able to recognize what makes them unique.

Nana Akua Goes to School is not only culturally rich, but also allows readers to explore uniqueness through the eyes of Nana Akua and her granddaughter, Zura. Readers can learn from Nana Akua and be proud of the parts of themselves that make them exceptional, rather than shying away from these qualities.

Nana Akua Goes to School

By: Tricia Elam Walker & April Harrison

**Published by Penguin Random House LLC,
New York (2020)**

**Book Discussion Guide by Ava Daley,
University of Colorado-Boulder, School of**

Discussion Questions:

1. Zura and her friends learned about West African symbols when Nana Akua came to visit on grandparent's day. These symbols are called Adinkra symbols and represent the ethnic group that a person belonged to. The front and back of the book include some of these symbols and their meanings. Which symbol would you choose and why?
2. What is a quality that you have that makes you unique? Have you ever been nervous that someone would make fun of you for this trait?
3. What is a special tradition that your family has? What is your favorite aspect of this tradition?
4. Take a look at Zura in her bedroom. What items in Zura's room tell us about her? Now think about your own room. What is a special item in your room? Who gave it to you? Why is it important to you?



5. In this book, Zura and her classmates learned from one another's grandparents about different cultures and traditions. What are some ways that you can learn more about other cultures and traditions? Why is it important to learn about other cultures and traditions?

Extension Activities:

1. As an in class activity, instead of choosing one of the Adinkra symbols included in the book, students can create their own symbol and share it with the class. In doing so, children can discuss why they chose this symbol and how it relates to them.
2. This book can be used as a tool to spark a conversation about ethnic backgrounds, and traditions of a child's family. As a homework assignment, students can have a conversation about their family tree and learn about their familial traditions from another family member. Students can write a short paragraph about what they learned. This will allow students to make connections with the book, while practicing their conversation, listening, and writing skills.
3. In *Nana Akua Goes to School* there is a scene where Nana Akua is peeling potatoes for dinner. Then, on the next page readers can see the dinner that has been prepared on the kitchen table. As an

extension activity, students can bring a special food dish from their family's cultural background. Students can share about this food in class. In doing so, students can learn from one another about different cultures, while exploring new foods!

