

# Proverbs for Kwanzaa



## Umoja (Unity)

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### *December 26: Day One of Kwanzaa*

- United family eats from the same plate. —*South Africa (Zulu)*
- Unity is strength. —*Zanzibar*
- Unity among the cattle makes the lion lie down hungry. —*Africa*
- Sticks in a bundle are unbreakable. —*Tanzania, Kenya*
- A person is a person because of other persons. —*Lesotho*
- “The heavens will fall” is not the concern of only one individual. —*Africa*
- The wisdom of the white man depends on togetherness. —*Ghana*

## Kujichagulia (Self-Determination)

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### *December 27: Day Two of Kwanzaa*

- To ride a horse is good; to walk on your own feet is better. —*Mali*
- No one can scratch your itch or convey your message like yourself. —*Ethiopia*
- If you rely on someone else's soup pot, you go to bed hungry. —*Ghana (Akan)*
- If you borrow a man's legs, you will go where he directs you. —*Africa*
- If your hand is in someone's mouth, you do not hit him on the top of the head. —*Ghana*
- Each firefly lights its own way. —*Haiti*
- If you want your eggs hatched, sit on them yourself. —*Liberia (Jabo)*
- Blessed are those who can please themselves. —*South Africa (Zulu)*

## Ujima (Collective Work & Responsibility)

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### *December 28: Day Three of Kwanzaa*

- Ants are tiny, but they lift things that are many times their size and weight. —*Africa*
- What is looked for by many will have a finder. —*Uganda (Ganda)*
- When minds are the same, that which is far off will come. —*East Africa*
- If one kindles the fire, others take live coals out of it. —*Ghana (Twi)*
- If birds travel without coordination, they beat each other's wings. —*Kiswahili*
- When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion. —*Ethiopia*
- Thin and lean strings when braided together can tie up the mighty lion. —*Ethiopia*
- The failure of snakes to travel in groups makes it easy for humans to kill them with machetes. —*Africa*
- Two skinny and weak dogs can overcome a fierce animal. —*Burundi (Rundi)*
- Make a bed for the children of other people in the place where your own children sleep. —*Morocco*

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## Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)

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### December 29: Day Four of Kwanzaa

- If you sell a drum in your own village, you get the money and keep the sound. —*Madagascar*
- Money does not stay in one place. —*Ghana (Akan)*
- No one in the presence of a large sum of money goes hungry to bed. —*Ghana (Akan)*
- If ten cents does not go out, it does not bring in one thousand dollars. —*Ghana (Twi)*
- You gain interest only on what you invest. —*Lesotho*
- You cannot get rich if you look after your relatives properly. —*Native American (Navajo)*
- Little and often fills the purse. —*Tanzania (Zanzibar)*
- Generosity is wealth. —*Africa*
- One person does not build a town. —*Ghana (Akan)*
- Eat alone, hungry alone. —*Virgin Islands*

## Nia (Purpose)

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### December 30: Day Five of Kwanzaa

- Accomplishment of purpose is better than making a profit. —*Niger, Nigeria (Hausa)*
- A good purpose is like a doctor and evil purpose corrupts. —*Tanzania (Zanzibar)*
- If you do not build your house firmly, you are afraid to sleep in it. — *Ghana (Twi)*
- If the dance is pleasing, even the lame crawl to it. —*Ghana (Twi)*
- The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people. —*Ghana (Ashanti)*

## Kuumba (Creativity)

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### December 31: Day Six of Kwanzaa

- The wind and the imagination can travel far and wide at no cost. —*Ethiopia*
- Although the snake does not fly, it has caught the bird whose home is in the sky. —*Ghana (Akan)*
- A stumble is not a fall. —*Haiti*
- Do not stop children having fun; otherwise, they will also stop your serious work. —*Gambia (Mandinka)*
- The creator of a dance should not be excluded from it. —*Ghana (Akan)*
- A creature is not completely created until death. —*Kiswahili*
- If you don't desire a thing, you will never get it. —*Africa*

## Imani (Faith)

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### January 1: Day Seven of Kwanzaa

- It is the body of the wind that people do not see. —*Uganda*
- The trees that are growing are tomorrow's forest. —*Zambia*
- The following day begins with a lot of hope. —*Uganda, Congo*
- The darkness of night cannot stop the light of morning. —*Burundi*
- You don't give up to despair before God. —*Burundi*
- Anticipate the good so that you may enjoy it. —*Ethiopia*
- Only a fool believes that the clouds obscure the splendor of the moon. It has shined behind them for eternity. —*Africa*

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