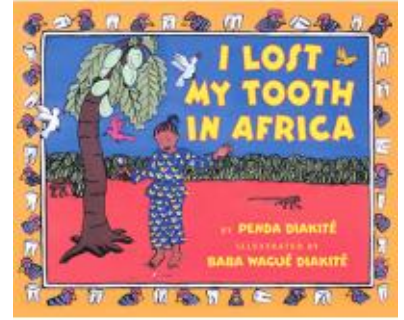
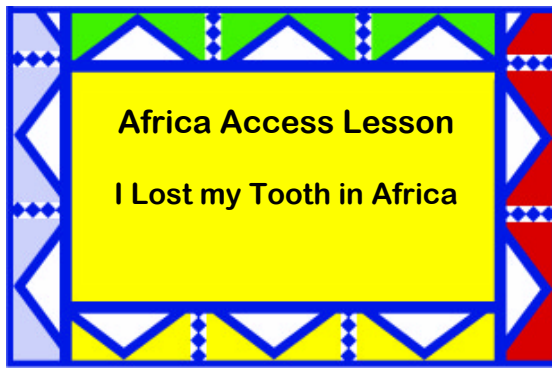


Ages: 5 - 9



## Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn how people in Mali, West Africa celebrate the loss of a child's first tooth.
- Learn about other aspects of life in Mali.
- Make and/or play the game 'Where is Amina's Chicken?'

### Resources Needed

- *I Lost my Tooth in Africa* by Penda Diakité & illustrated by Baba Wagué Diakité
- Map of Africa that shows Mali, West Africa
- Calabash Gourd or picture of one.

### Art Materials to Make Baskets

- Straw doll hats
- Scissors

### Art Materials to Make Chicken

- Scissors
- Guinea Feathers
- Pom Poms
- Glue Dots
- Wiggle Eyes
- Black Magic marker

### Art Materials Needed to Make "Calabash" Bowls

- **Non-firing Air Drying Clay\*** (gray or red) about 1 and ½ cups per student
- 5 or 6 inch rubber ball cut in half
- Vaseline
- Plastic knife
- Dark brown acrylic paint
- Tan acrylic paint
- 1 ½ inch sponge brush
- Rolling pin
- 2 sheets of Baker's parchment paper or wax paper 12 inches by 12 inches
- News paper
- Paper towels and dry bristle brush

## Activating Prior Knowledge

- What happens when you lose a tooth? (Discuss the custom of putting a tooth under your pillow and receiving money.)
- What is a calabash gourd? (Show a gourd or picture of one and discuss how it is used).
- What do you know about chickens?

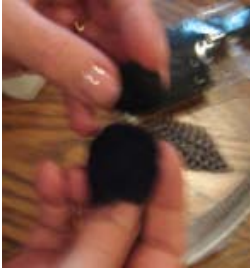
## Story Steps

1. Read *I Lost my Tooth in Africa*
2. Use the map to locate the country of Mali, West Africa
3. Discuss the Malian custom of giving a child a chicken for a lost tooth.
4. Ask children what else they learned about life in Bamako, Mali from the book. (food, games, greetings, family, etc.)
5. Demonstrate and let children play the 'Where's Amina's Chicken' game

### Game: Where's Amina's Chicken?

The game is played like a shell game. It can be played with straw baskets or with clay bowls decorated like calabash gourds. See the illustrated directions to make the game pieces.

**Art steps for grades 3 and up: Older children can make and play the game with children in lower grades.**



Select two pom poms of different sizes



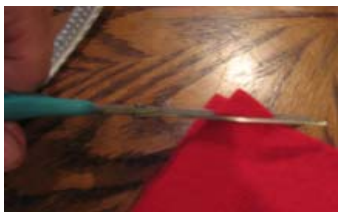
Using glue dots, glue the two pom poms together, using the smaller one for the head.



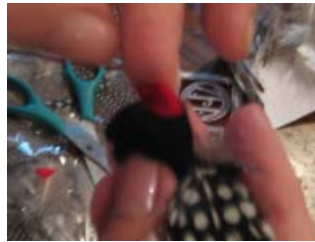
Add a glue dot to the feathers.



Glue feathers on to the large pom pom.



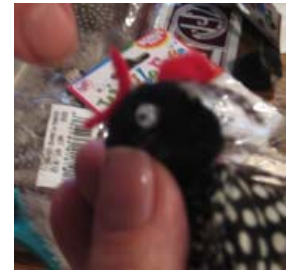
Cut felt to make a beak and crown.



Glue on the beak and crown.



Put the eyes on glue dots.



Glue on the eyes.



To stabilize the chicken, put a glue dot on a plastic top.



Glue the chicken on to the top.



Cut the brim off three doll hats.



Play the game, "Where's Amina's Chicken?"

## Making "Calabash" Bowls

Time: 2- 3 class periods

A calabash gourd (pronounced calabass in West Africa) is used for many purposes. These directions show how to make bowls decorated like calabash gourds.

### Lesson 1



Remove  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of clay from bag. Close bag. Remember this is air drying clay. **DO NOT** leave the bag open. Grease the inside of one of the rubber ball halves with Vaseline. Clean your hands with paper towels.



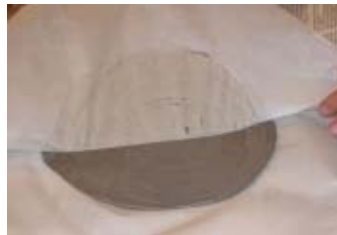
Form a circle from the clay about 4 inches across and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch thick. Place on parchment or wax paper.



Cover the clay with the second piece of parchment.



Roll the clay between the sheets of parchment in all directions until you have a circle about 8 inches across and  $\frac{3}{4}$  " thick.



Remove the clay from the parchment and gently bring the edges of the clay to the center, making a pouch.



Place the clay in one of the rubber ball halves.

### Lesson 2



Fold excess clay inside of the bowl and press the clay firmly into the rubber ball. The walls of the bowl should be even and about  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch thick. Thicker is OK but thinner walls might break through during carving. Avoid thin rims.



*Label the work now by placing the student's name in the bottom of the bowl. I xerox my class lists (different colored paper for different teachers) and snip it apart providing a label for each student. A little smear of clay will keep the label in place. This is much easier than trying to read student handwriting scratched into the clay and provides a reference of those students who are absent or have forgotten to identify their work.*



Do not remove the clay from the rubber mold until the interior of the bowl has hardened enough to hold the shape of the bowl easily (3 to 7 days). The exterior of the bowl will dry more slowly because it is protected from the air by the rubber ball. The interior should be cool and dry and the exterior cool, slightly damp and leather hard.

#### \* General information about air drying clay

*The length of time to allow the bowl to harden in the mold will depend on the original dampness of the clay when you remove it from the bag and the brand that you buy. I recommend non-firing greystone by Sculpture House because it is the most consistent and it smells better than other brands. If you won't see your students until the following week, bag the mold until the day before class. If you allow the work to air dry over night they should be perfect the next day. It's best to make your example a week ahead in order to determine the drying speed of your batch of clay.*



Gently release the bowl by rolling the edge of the mold toward the outside with your thumbs, all the way around.



Gently push upward from the bottom to release the bowl from the rubber mold. If the clay seems too damp and weak to hold the shape of the mold return the clay to the mold.



Pack the bowl with newspaper and place the bowl upside down on the table. Begin incising your design on your bowl taking care to keep the bowl flat on the table.

### Lesson 3



When your design is completed, brush away any loose clay with a dry bristle brush.



Cover the bowl with dark brown paint (burnt umber) using a damp sponge brush. Wiggle the tip of the brush to push the paint into the incised marks. When finished, wash the sponge brush to get rid of the dark brown paint and squeeze it dry in a paper towel.



Now paint the outside of the bowl with the tan paint. Take care not to fill your incised design. It's best if you use the side of the sponge brush and not the tip.



When the outside of the bowl is dry enough to handle, turn it over and remove the name label. Paint the inside of the bowl with tan paint.



To identify each student's bowl, attach the name label on the outside of the bowl with a dab of tan paint.



Admire your completed "calabash" bowl!



Kori Tounkara of Mali demonstrated the "Where is Amina's Chicken" game at Educators Night at the National Museum of African Art 8/23/07