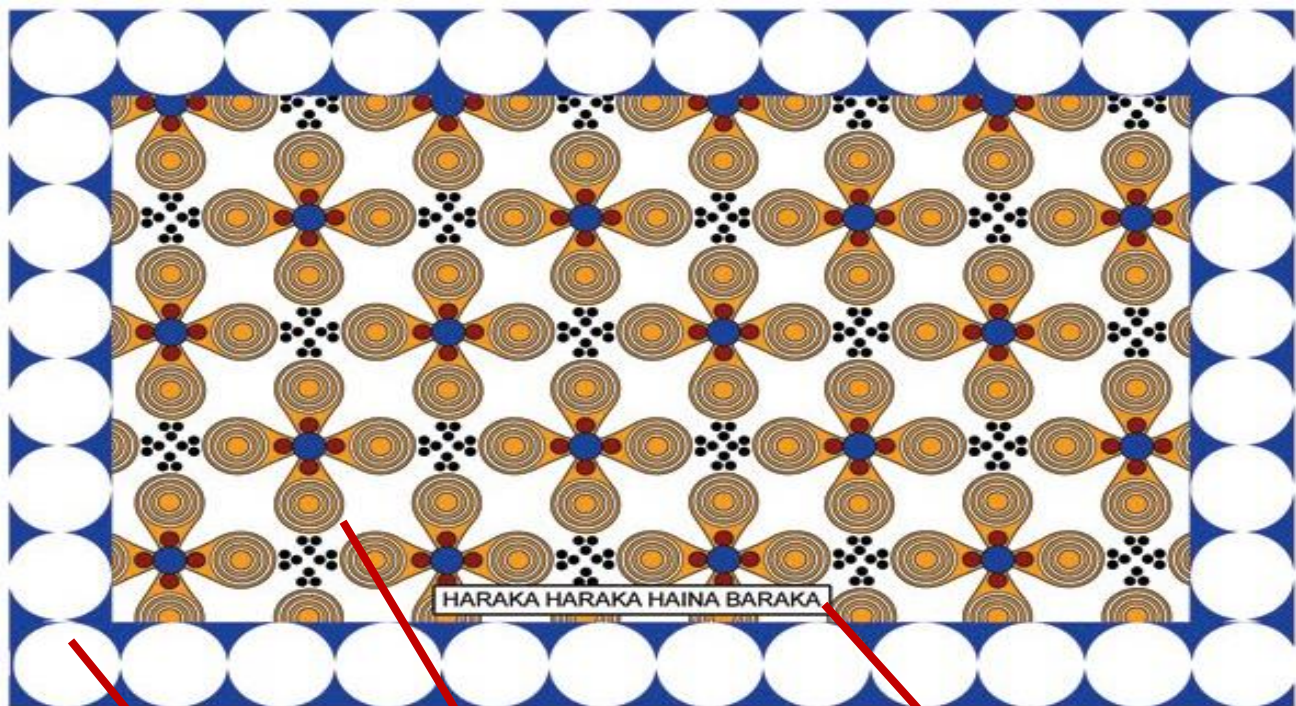


# Design a Kanga

A **kanga** is a traditional garment found in East Africa. It is designed from a rectangular piece of cotton printed with a border that surrounds a bold and bright design, featuring a message written in **Swahili**. Each kanga is designed with extreme care as they are a valuable medium for personal, political, or religious expression.



Take a closer look at the kanga design below to learn more about the elements of traditional designs. Then create a paper version inspired by kanga designs and Swahili proverbs!



## PINDO

A wide border that may have a plain, textured, or patterned background design.

## MJI

The central textile panel traditionally depicts figures, animals, plants, fruits, and abstract designs.

## JINA

Text incorporated in the *mji*, to communicate a message, traditionally in the form of a Swahili proverb.

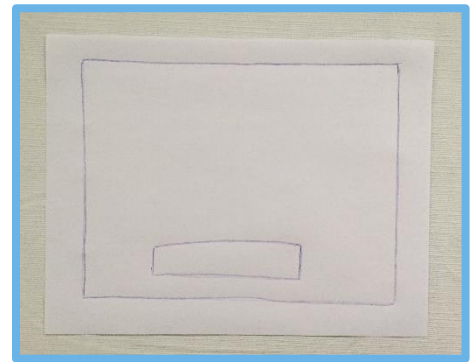
# Design a Kanga

## MATERIALS:

Construction paper 	Safety scissors 	Glue Bottle or Stick 	Writing Utensils 	Crayons, Markers, Pencils 	Paint or Stamps 
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**STEP ONE:** Choose is piece of construction paper to be the background of your design. You can choose any color! Pick out some other pieces to use as decorations. You could also cut out patterns and designs from magazines.

**STEP TWO:** Draw a box about one inch from the edge of your paper. This will be your boarder (**Pindo**). The center box is for your main design (**Mji**). Draw another, smaller box near the bottom edge of your Mji. This will be for your proverb (**Jina**). See an example to the right.



**STEP THREE:** Create a pattern of shapes or designs in the border (**Pindo**), using your crayons, markers, paints, or stamps.



**STEP FOUR:** Start creating a new pattern for the center box (**Mji**). Think about shapes, symbols, or design that have a special meaning to you!

**STEP FIVE:** Pick a special phrase or saying for your design and write it in the smaller box (**Jina**). If you would like to choose a traditional Swahili proverb, find some options and their meanings on these webpages:

[Swahili Proverbs – Center for African Studies, University of Illinois](#)

[A Selection of Common Swahili Proverbs/Sayings/Maxims and Riddles](#)

[Kiswahili Proverbs Lessons – African Studies, Center, Boston University](#)