

Culture Cards Presents:

Names and Kinship Terms

What is in a name? We all have one, but oftentimes our name, or what people choose to call us, takes different forms depending on who we are with. These other names could be nicknames, familial names, and kinship terms.

Ghana is the second most populous country in West Africa. Ghana has a rich cultural heritage full of music, food, fashion, and so much more.

Ghana is home to many native groups. One group, the Akan, are found in the center and southern parts of the country. In this region, people speak Twi, which is a dialect of Akan.

The Akan people have a naming system that identifies which day of the week a person was born on.

For example, a person born on Monday would be named Kwandwo for a male, and Adowa for a female.

This continues throughout the rest of the week.

For males, those that are born on a Tuesday are Kwabena,
Wednesday are Kwaku,
Thursday are Yaw,
Friday are Kofi,
Saturday are Kwame,
And Sunday are Kwasi.

For females, those that are born on a Tuesday are Abena,
Wednesday are Akua,
Thursday are Yaa,
Friday are Efua,
Saturday are Ama,
And Sunday are Akousa.

What would your day name be?

How do other cultures use different names and what is the meaning behind them?