Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration honoring African-American heritage and culture, observed from Dec. 26 through Jan. 1 each year. It features activities such as lighting a candle holder with seven candles and culminates in a feast and gift giving. It was created by African studies professor and activist Dr. Maulana Karenga and was first celebrated in 1966.

COLUMBUS OHIO -- The King Arts Complex along with the Tawi Family Village, Ujamaa Bookstore, African Roots and Heritage Foundation and the Nation of Islam will host the 2011 City Wide Kwanzaa Festival on Monday, Dec. 26, through Saturday, Dec. 31, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the Nicholson Auditorium,
867 Mt. Vernon Ave.

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Kwanzaa Festival activities will be held at the King Arts Complex for six days and will include children's storytellers, drum-making classes, African dance, spoken-word poets, plays and a nationally-known writer known as Supreme Understanding, author of "Taste of Africa." There will be a Cultural Marketplace with vendors, food and a variety of Afrocentric gifts.

A Kwanzaa Grand Affair will be held on Friday, Dec. 30, and will include dancing and a style show. Participants are encouraged to wear African attire.

All events except for the Kwanzaa Grand Affair are free and open to the public. Non-perishable food for the King Arts Complex Holiday Food Drive and monetary donations will be accepted. For more information, call (614) 645-5464 or visit Kingartscomplex.com.