

Learn Ga Now: Lessons 1-5

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About the Authors

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Visit our website for photos and more resources for learning about Ghana and the Ga language. We hope you enjoy learning Ga with us!

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Tips for Using these Lessons

These audio and print lessons were designed to help you quickly begin to learn Ga. Before you dive in to these lessons, think about how you learned your own native language. First you listened. Next, you began speaking by repeating what you heard, then you tried to come up with words to convey your thoughts. Next was reading, then writing. Our brains are designed to learn language in this way, so use this order when learning Ga.

First, listen and speak

Begin by listening to the audio lessons. Then practice repeating everything you can. Try to mimic the words, the tones, the phrasing and the rhythms. After you've listened for awhile, try saying the words and phrases before the audio.

Then, add reading and writing

Once you're familiar with the sounds, then begin studying with the printed lessons. Listen to the audio, while you read the lesson. Then complete the written and oral activities.

Using language in context

As you're learning, you'll see that we present the information first in a conversation where possible. Then, we break it down into more manageable parts. Don't worry about learning the meaning of every word or trying to translate word for word. Remember, this is how you learned your language.

Resist translating

Learn more quickly by speaking and listening in Ga, resisting the temptation to translate into English! Practice with a friend saying what you can in Ga only. Move from controlled to freer activities to build confidence and skill.

Learn about Ghana too...

We also incorporated parts of daily life in Ghana in the lessons. For example in lesson 4, learn about names given based on the day of the week you were born.

Come back for more

Once you make it through and are ready for more, check back to www.learnaganow.com for more lessons.

O kɛ ni kasemɔ jɔ!

...Enjoy your lessons!

Overview

Lesson 1: Niŋmaa Okadii (Letters of the Alphabet)

In this lesson, learn the basic sounds of the Ga language, by learning the alphabet and the 2- and 3-letter consonant combinations (like 'gb'). And you'll learn a Ga word that illustrates each sound. Did you know that compared to English, Ga has some extra letters (ɛ, ŋ, ɔ), and others that are not used (c, q, x)?

Lesson 1 Outline

- a. Ga Alphabet
- b. 2 and 3-Letter Consonants Combinations

Exercises:

Exercise 1.1 Alphabet Practice

Exercise 1.2 Matching

Exercise 1.3 Fill in the Blank

Exercise 1.4 Multiple Choice

Exercise 1.5 Fill in the Blank

Answers to Exercises

Lesson 1: Niŋmaa Okadii (Letters of the Alphabet)

a. Ga Alphabet

Ga Letters	Similar sound in English	Ga word example
a	a in “far”	amɛ (they)
b	b in “ball”	bo (you)
d	d in “do”	duade (cassava)
e	a in “late”, but shorter	ekome (one)
ɛ	e in “get”	ɛhɛɛ or hɛɛ (yes)
f	f in “fill”	fɛo (beautiful)
g	g in “go”	gɔnti (thumb)
h	h in “help”	hɔmɔ (hunger)
i	ee in “seek” but shorter	mi (I, me)
j	j in “jump”	Jufɔ (Tuesday)
k	k in “keep”	kɛɛ (say)
l	l in “lip”	leebi (morning)
m	m in “mean”	mli (in)
n	n in “neat”	nane (leg)
ŋ	ng in “long”	ŋai (charcoal)
o	o in “note”, but shorter	ofa inɛ (please)
ɔ	o in “lot”	wɔ (we)
p	p in “pit”	pɪi (many)
r	dd in “madder”	jara (market)
s	s in “seat”	sabola (onion)
t	t in “tea”	toi (ear)
u	oo in “too”, but short	Ju (Monday)
v	v in “veal”	voo (deep)
w	w in “well”	wɔɔ (egg)
y	y in “yes”	yoo (woman)
z	z in “zero”	zɛro (zero)

Note: c, q, and x are not used in Ga.

b. 2 and 3-Letter Consonants Combinations

In addition to the single consonants, Ga uses these combinations of two or three consonants. It is difficult to get exact English sound equivalents for some of these, especially ‘gb’, ‘kp’, ‘ŋm’ and ‘ŋw’.

Ga Consonant Combinations	Similar sound in English	Ga word example
gb	gb in “tugboat” but with no pause between g and b	agbo (big)
gw	gu in “La Guardia”	gwantɛn (sheep)
hw	wh in “where”	hwanya (shake)
jw	dgew in “Edgewater”, said quickly	ejwɛ (four)
kp	ckp in “stock pot”, with no pause between k and p	kpawo (seven)
kw	qu in “aquarium”	kwɛ (look at, watch)
ny	ny in “own yoke”, with no gap between n and y	nyɛ (you pl.)
ŋm	ngm in “wrong mop”, with no gap between ng and m	ŋma (write)
ŋw	ngw in “wrong way”, with no gap between ng and w	ŋwɛi (sky)
sh	sh in “she”	shia (house)
shw	schw in “Schweppes”	shwane (afternoon)
ts	ch in “chip”	tsofa (medicine)
tsw	chw in the middle of “each way”, with no gap between ch and w	tswaa (free)

Ex 1.1 Alphabet Practice

Practice saying the Ga alphabet.

What letters are missing from the Ga alphabet? _____

What are the extra letters in the Ga alphabet? _____

Can you say it without looking?

Can you say the alphabet backwards?

Ex 1.2 Matching

For each of the two sets of words below, write the letter of the English meaning for each numbered Ga word.

Example: For number 1, the answer is “I”, because “say” is the meaning of the Ga word “kεε”.

Set 1.

_____ I	1. kεε	A. beautiful
_____	2. Jufo	B. cassava
_____	3. mi	C. yes
_____	4. leebi	D. hunger
_____	5. hɔmɔ	E. I, me
_____	6. fεo	F. in
_____	7. gɔnti	G. morning
_____	8. εhεε	H. one
_____	9. amε	I. say
_____	10. bo	J. they
_____	11. duade	K. thumb
_____	12. mli	L. Tuesday
_____	13. ekome	M. you (singular)

Set 2.

_____ G	1. jara	A. charcoal
_____	2. Ju	B. deep
_____	3. nane	C. ear
_____	4. ŋai	D. egg
_____	5. ofainε	E. leg
_____	6. pii	F. many
_____	7. sabola	G. market
_____	8. toi	H. Monday
_____	9. voo	I. onion
_____	10. wɔ	J. please
_____	11. wɔɔ	K. we
_____	12. yoo	L. zero
_____	13. zεro	M. woman

Ex 1.3 Fill in the Blank

Write the missing **Ga word** for each letter of the Ga alphabet that has the English meaning shown.

Example: The Ga word that uses ‘a’ and means “they” is “amɛ”.

Ga Letters	Ga word	Word meaning in English
a	amɛ	they
b		you
d		cassava
e		one
ɛ		yes
f		beautiful
g		thumb
h		hunger
i		I, me
j		Tuesday
k		say
l		morning
m		in, within
n		leg
ŋ		charcoal
o		please
ɔ		we
p		many
r		market
s		onion
t		ear
u		Monday
v		deep
w		egg
y		woman
z		zero

Ex 1.4 Multiple Choice

For each numbered Ga word, look at the three English words to the right. Write the correct answer: a, b or c. Example: For 1, the answer is ‘a’, since “ejwe” means “four”.

a	1. ejwε	a. four	b. big	c. thumb
_____	2. gwantɛn	a. please	b. hunger	c. sheep
_____	3. hwanya	a. beautiful	b. shake	c. me
_____	4. agbo	a. four	b. big	c. in
_____	5. kpawo	a. seven	b. afternoon	c. morning
_____	6. kwε	a. deep	b. egg	c. look at
_____	7. nyε	a. you (plural)	b. you (singular)	c. ear
_____	8. ŋma	a. house	b. write	c. we
_____	9. shwane	a. afternoon	b. many	c. woman
_____	10. shia	a. we	b. onion	c. house
_____	11. tswaa	a. free	b. four	c. medicine
_____	12. ŋwei	a. ear	b. zero	c. sky
_____	13. tsofa	a. they	b. medicine	c. house

Ex 1.5 Fill in the Blank

For each consonant combination, write the missing **Ga word** that has the English meaning shown. Example: Write “agbo”, since it uses ‘gb’ and means “big”.

Ga Consonant Combinations	Ga Word	Word meaning in English
1. gb	agbo	big
2. gw		sheep
3. hw		shake
4. jw		four
5. kp		seven
6. kw		look at, watch
7. ny		you (plural)
8. ŋm		write
9. ŋw		sky
10. sh		house
11. shw		afternoon
12. ts		medicine
13. tsw		free

Answers for Lesson 1: Niŋmaa Okadii

Ex 1.1 Alphabet Practice

Missing letters: c, q, x

Extra letters: ɔ, ε, η

Ex 1.2 Matching

Set 1.

<u>I</u>	1.	kεε	A.	beautiful
<u>L</u>	2.	Jufɔ	B.	cassava
<u>E</u>	3.	mi	C.	yes
<u>G</u>	4.	leebi	D.	hunger
<u>D</u>	5.	hɔmɔ	E.	I, me
<u>A</u>	6.	fεo	F.	in
<u>K</u>	7.	gɔnti	G.	morning
<u>C</u>	8.	εhεε	H.	one
<u>J</u>	9.	amε	I.	say
<u>M</u>	10.	bo	J.	they
<u>B</u>	11.	duade	K.	thumb
<u>F</u>	12.	mli	L.	Tuesday
<u>H</u>	13.	ekome	M.	you (singular)

Set 2.

<u>G</u>	1.	jara	A.	charcoal
<u>H</u>	2.	Ju	B.	deep
<u>E</u>	3.	nane	C.	ear
<u>A</u>	4.	ηai	D.	egg
<u>J</u>	5.	ofainε	E.	leg
<u>F</u>	6.	pii	F.	many
<u>I</u>	7.	sabola	G.	market
<u>C</u>	8.	toi	H.	Monday
<u>B</u>	9.	voo	I.	onion
<u>K</u>	10.	wɔ	J.	please
<u>D</u>	11.	wɔɔ	K.	we
<u>M</u>	12.	yoo	L.	zero
<u>L</u>	13.	zεro	M.	woman

Ex 1.3 Fill in the Blank

Letter	Ga	English
a	amε	they
b	bo	you
d	duade	cassava
e	ekome	one
ε	εhεε	yes
f	fεo	beautiful
g	gɔnti	thumb
h	hɔmɔ	hunger
i	mi	I, me
j	Jufɔ	Tuesday
k	kεε	say
l	leebi	morning
m	mli	in, within
n	nane	leg
η	ηai	charcoal
o	ofainε	please
ɔ	wɔ	we
p	pii	many
r	jara	market
s	sabola	onion
t	toi	ear
u	Ju	Monday
v	voo	deep
w	wɔɔ	egg
y	yoo	woman
z	zεro	zero

Answers for Lesson 1 (continued)

Ex 1.4 Multiple Choice

a	1. ejwε
c	2. gwantɛn
b	3. hwanya
b	4. agbo
a	5. kpawo
c	6. kwε
a	7. nyε
b	8. ŋma
a	9. shwane
c	10. shia
a	11. tswaa
c	12. ŋwei
b	13. tsofa

Ex 1.5 Fill in the Blank

	Ga
1. gb	agbo
2. gw	gwantɛn
3. hw	hwanya
4. jw	ejwε
5. kp	kpawo
6. kw	kwε
7. ny	nyε
8. ŋm	ŋma
9. ŋw	ŋwei
10. sh	shia
11. shw	shwane
12. ts	tsofa
13. tsw	tswaa