

## Strengthen Family-Ties With Family-Fun

Written by Lucy Waters ID1333  
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Prosperity is fun right from the start. Each player begins with 700 million dollars, and that in itself is enjoyable. Once the dice start rolling, the fun escalates. Properties are purchased. Business deals are negotiated. Empires are built. Kwanzaa is celebrated. Cruises are taken. Talent shows are won. And there are trips to Africa, first dates, weddings, karate lessons, protest rallies, and dinners at five star African, Caribbean, or soul-food restaurants.

But fun isn't the only thing Prosperity has to offer. This board game also gives its players three other things, all of which are vitally important to African-Americans.

### Cultural Identification

Dignified, aristocratic looking people of African decent are printed in the center of the game's currency bills, and on either side of them is a culturally relevant image. With the exception of the one thousand dollar bill, the left hand image is of currency which was once used in different parts of Africa. And on the right hand side are images of knowledge knots, symbolizing thinking, intelligence, and wisdom.

Almost all the characters drawn on the Power, Purpose, or Problem cards are Black, and often the theme or instructions of the cards promote cultural pride and awareness, such as the one which wins you 10 million dollars for the prestigious DuBois Peace Prize. Even the player pieces, themselves, have cultural significance, and are everything from an Egyptian pyramid to an African fertility doll.

Due to the multigenerational trauma of slavery and the damaging effects of past and present racism, cultural pride and identification are essential for the psychological healing of African-Americans. This is especially imperative for children, who are forming their identity and need all the positive images and knowledge about their culture they can get to protect them against the bombardment of stereotypes and lies force-fed to them by the media. The fact that they can get this while playing a board game and having fun makes it all the better.

One woman who played the game with her thirteen year old nephew was told by him that he wanted to be just like the man on the 10 million dollar bill. This is exactly the kind of connection

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young people will make when they see these positive images of themselves. They will see options that they never believed were possible, because rarely if ever had they been shown such options before. Of course, not everyone will acknowledge out loud that their envisioned identity is being shifted, because many will not experience this shift on a conscious level. But on an unconscious level, everyone will be affected positively by the images in Prosperity, and an underlying current of influence will be instilled in their spirit, impacting the way they view themselves today and the way they view their possibilities for the future.

### Business Skills Development

Purchase financing, cooperative purchasing, contract options, contract enforcement, fee or commission compensation, tax obligations: you'll learn it all while playing Prosperity. This may sound dry or boring, but like cultural identification, the learning happens in the context of playing a game, and so it is not laborious or strenuous but rather a by-product of the fun and excitement.

These skills are transferable to real life and may even inspire some of its players, young and old, to learn more about business and become entrepreneurs. This would be a great blessing, because economic independence and empowerment are crucial for African-American liberation. And when you consider the fact that Blacks are about seven times less likely than whites to run their own business, the importance of learning these skills becomes even clearer.

Because Prosperity is a game of both learning and fun, it fits perfectly into the tradition of African and African Diaspora board games. This tradition dates back over 3,600 years to the Kush civilization, which is said to be the birthplace of the pit-and-pebble strategy games, and probably the first board game ever. For thousands of years, these games have been used all over Africa as tools for educating children about math, planning, and the principles of cause and effect.

Today, an increasing number of schools are incorporating pit-and-pebble games, such as Oware, into their curriculum. Since African-American board games tend to be fun and educational, perhaps they should also be used in schools. Blackboard, Journey to the Motherland, Black Americans of Achievement, and Easy Street -- all of which can be found at [cushcity](#) or [littleAfrica](#) -- are just some examples. And then of course there is Prosperity, which would be ideal for both upper level elementary school students who are exercising their math skills, and also for high school or college students who are learning more complex business

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skills for future careers.

### Quality Time With Family

More than anything else, Prosperity is a game that the whole family can feel good about playing. It is different from most games, where the goal is usually to defeat the other players or drive them to bankruptcy. Instead of this, Prosperity is true to the Kwanzaa principal of Ujamaa, cooperative economics. Mutually beneficial negotiations and win-win deals are fostered, and even though by the game's end only one player is the most successful, the rest of the players are usually quite successful, too. This means that the focus of the game is on the experience of it rather than winning, which ensures that the time spent playing will be fun, friendly, and fulfilling.

During slavery, families were often torn apart when parents, children, siblings, or spouses were sold to other masters. Although this broke family ties, it strengthened their importance. This tradition is still going strong. Racism has persisted over the decades and African-American families have had to bond together to survive both materially and psychologically. Prosperity is the perfect game to facilitate this bonding, whether it's with immediate family, extended family, or non-related friends and acquaintances who are your soul brothers and sisters. And since the game's physical quality is so impeccable, it will last for generations and generations, so that one day your grandchildren can play with their grandchildren, and keep the tradition alive.

Why not be the one who brings the Prosperity tradition of fun, cultural dignity, learning, and bonding into your family. It also makes an excellent gift for any occasion. So buy a copy and play today.

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