

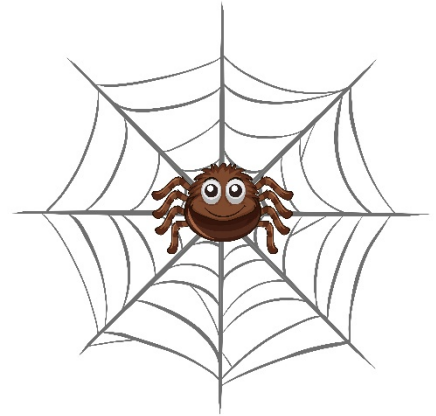
Anansi and the Pot of Wisdom

An Ashanti story retold by Jessica York.

Anansi, the spider, loves to spin a tale! He can regale you for hours with stories full of wonder, stories full of fun, and stories full of facts, too. Because he is so nosy, Anansi knows almost everything about almost everybody. Almost.

But Anansi wants to know everything! So, one day, he goes to the house of the Sun God. "Oh, mighty Sun God! You see everything and everyone! Won't you share your great wisdom with me? I'll use it wisely to spin tales of wonder and fun for everyone."

The Sun God says, "Anansi, I will put all the wisdom in the world here in this clay pot. You must share this wisdom with everyone." Anansi promises to do so.



Anansi takes the pot home. He looks deep into the clay pot and sure enough, he sees sights he has never seen before. He hears sounds he did not know existed. "This is too good to give away. I will keep this great wisdom for myself," thinks Anansi. "I must hide it!" he says, and he looks around for a good hiding place.

Anansi decides to climb to the top of the tallest tree. There he will tie up the clay pot and the leafy branches will hide it. He starts climbing the tree, holding the pot in front of him. The climbing is hard! Have you ever climbed a tree while holding a pot? Anansi wishes he had nine limbs!

His youngest daughter is outside and sees what a hard time Anansi is having. "Father, it would be easier if you tied the pot to your back. Then all your limbs would be free for climbing."

Do you think Anansi is happy to get good advice from his daughter? Think again! "She is right—that would be easier! Why is it some young pup thinks of this when I who possess all the wisdom of the world did not?" Anansi gets so angry that he throws the pot to the ground.

All the wisdom of the world comes flowing out of the pot. Some falls here, some falls there. No one gets all the wisdom, but everyone gets some wisdom. This is why, even today, wisdom is everywhere. If you listen to the stories—stories spun from storytellers all around the world—you will hear it.