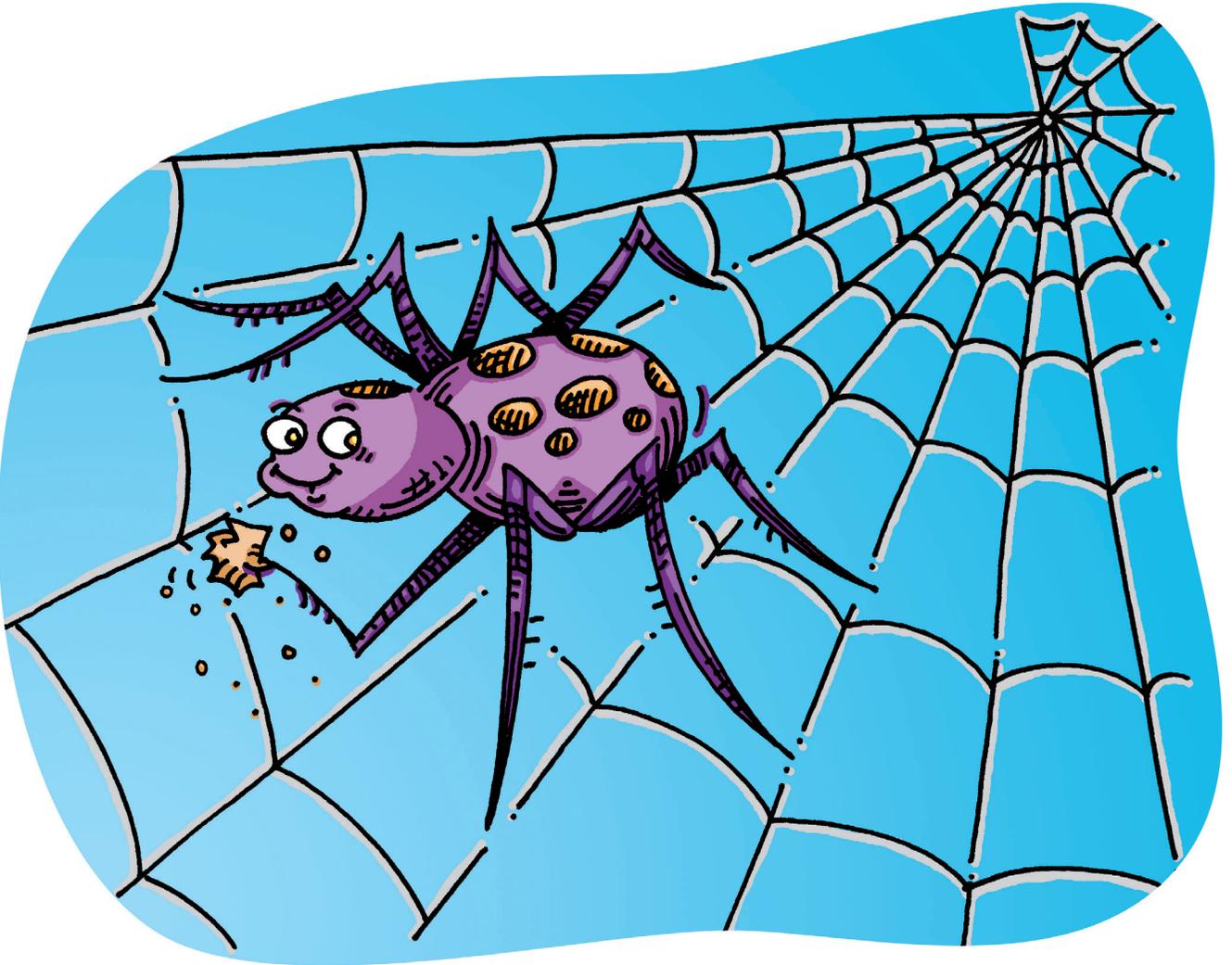


# Anansi, the Spider



Story adapted by Wendie Old and Laura Burton Rice  
Illustrations by Scott Mattern

Green Words and \*Challenge Words:

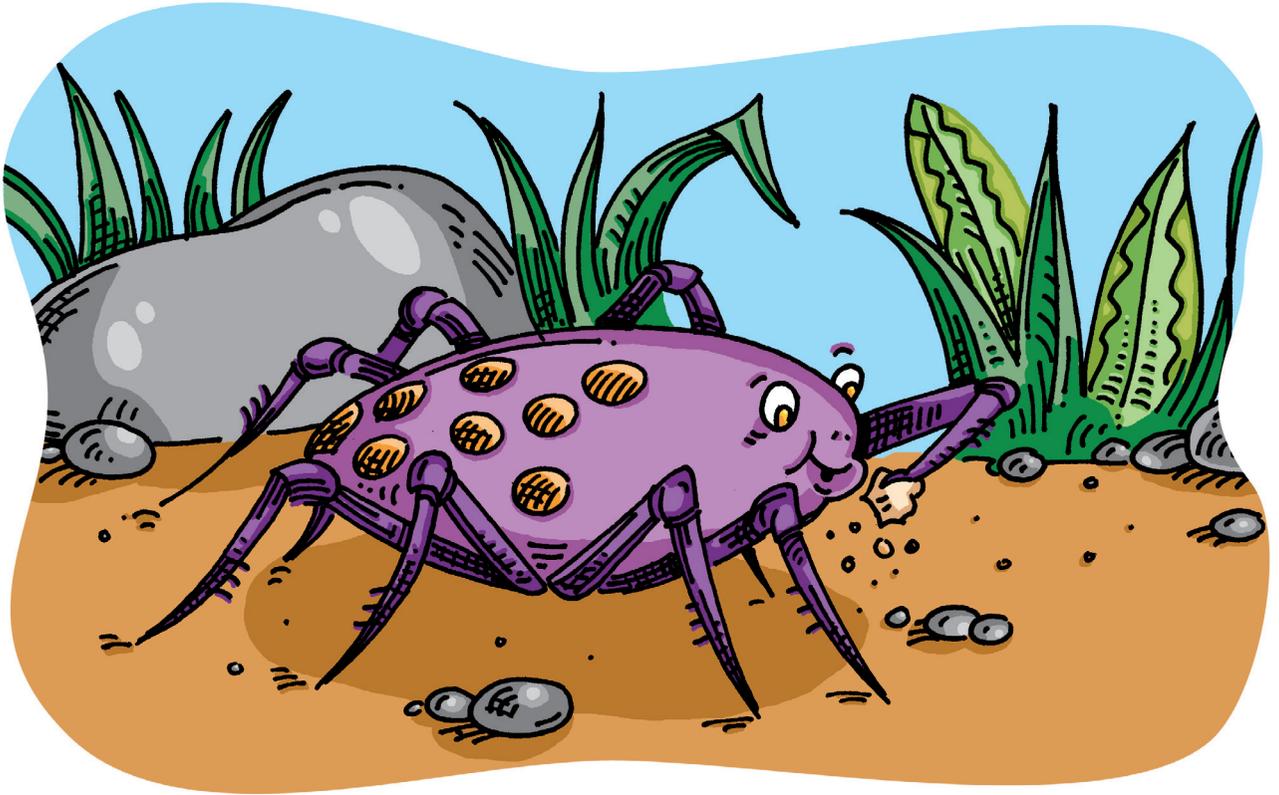
<b>1</b>			
* <b>spider</b> (1)	<u>east</u> (2)	* <u>delighted</u> (3)	<b>could</b> (3)
<u>waist</u> (1)	<u>feast</u> (2)	<b>would</b> (3)	* <b>another</b> (4)
* <b>village</b> (2)	<b>peanuts</b> (3)	<b>should</b> (3)	<b>west</b> (4)
<b>2</b>			
* <u>begin</u> (6)	<b>might</b> (7)	<b>tied</b> (8)	<u>yank</u> (8)
<u>bright</u> (7)	<b>tightly</b> (8)	<u>vine</u> (8)	
<u>yams</u> (7)			
<b>3</b>			
<u>meanwhile</u> (10)	* <b>body</b> (12)	<b>teeny</b> (12)	* <b>today</b> (12)
<u>daylight</u> (11)	<b>fight</b> (12)		

Red Words to practice every day:

<b>child</b> (2)	<b>know</b> (3)	<b>both</b> (7)	<b>idea</b> (7)
<b>coming</b> (3)			

Challenge Words are starred (\*).

Explain how underlined words are used in the story.



A long time ago, spiders had no waist. Anansi was the fattest spider of them all. He ate all the time. He looked like a football.

This tale tells how Anansi got his thin waist.

---

**This is your waist. Put your hands around your waist.**

**Does this spider have a waist?** (WGR) *[no]*

**Why did Anansi look like a football?** *[He was fat from eating all the time.]*



One day, Anansi went to the forest with his children, Osa and Iba. They saw a child running. He was running to the East Village.

“Why are you running?” asked Anansi.

“I am invited to a big feast!” yelled the child.

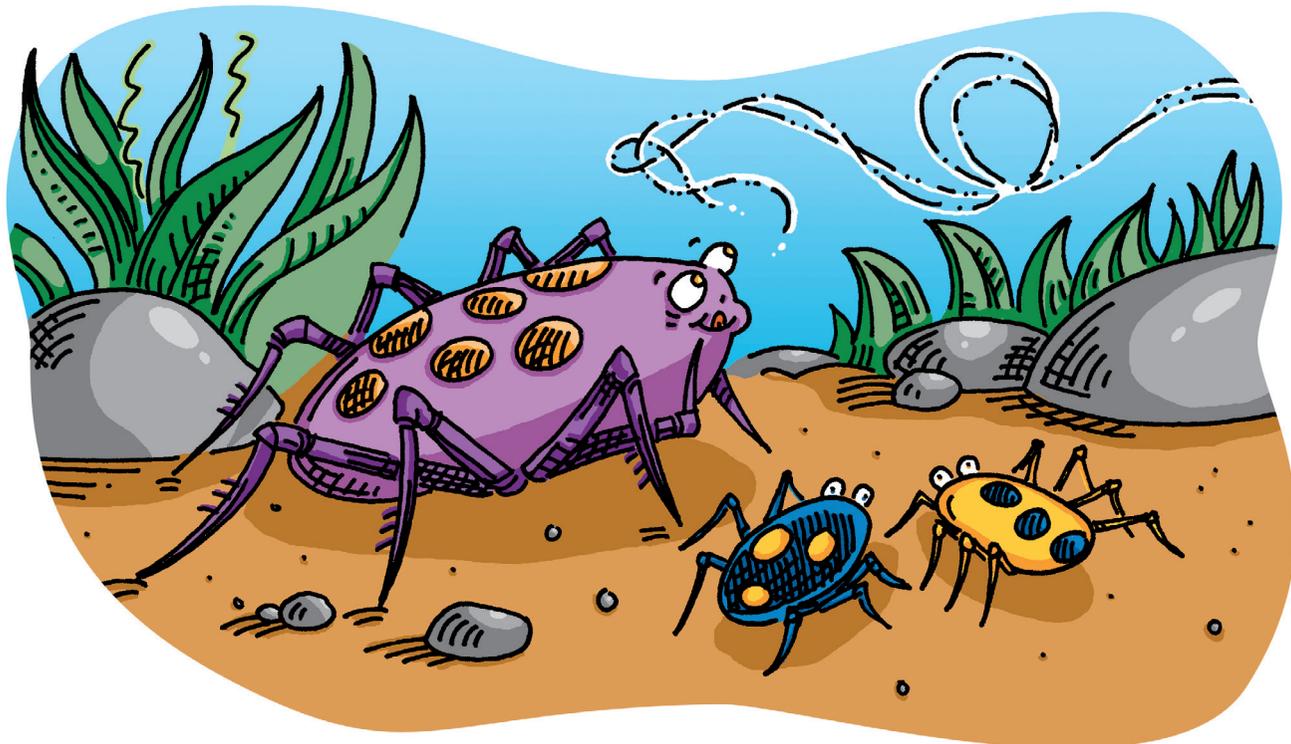
“When is the feast?” asked Anansi.

But the child was gone.

---

Who was with Anansi? *[His two children, Osa and Iba, were with him.]*

Why was the boy running to the village? *[There was going to be a big feast.]*



When the three spiders were alone, Anansi sniffed. He could smell chicken with peanuts. It was coming from the East Village. Anansi was delighted!

He said,

“I *would* like to go to the feast.

I *should* go, but I don’t know when it is.

I *could* go if . . .”

Anansi stopped.

---

Anansi sniffed. Pantomime “sniffed.”

What did he smell? [*He smelled chicken and peanuts.*]



All of a sudden, Anansi saw another child. He was running to the West Village.

“Why are you running?” asked Anansi.

“I am invited to a big feast!” yelled the child.

“When is the feast?” asked Anansi.

But the child was gone.

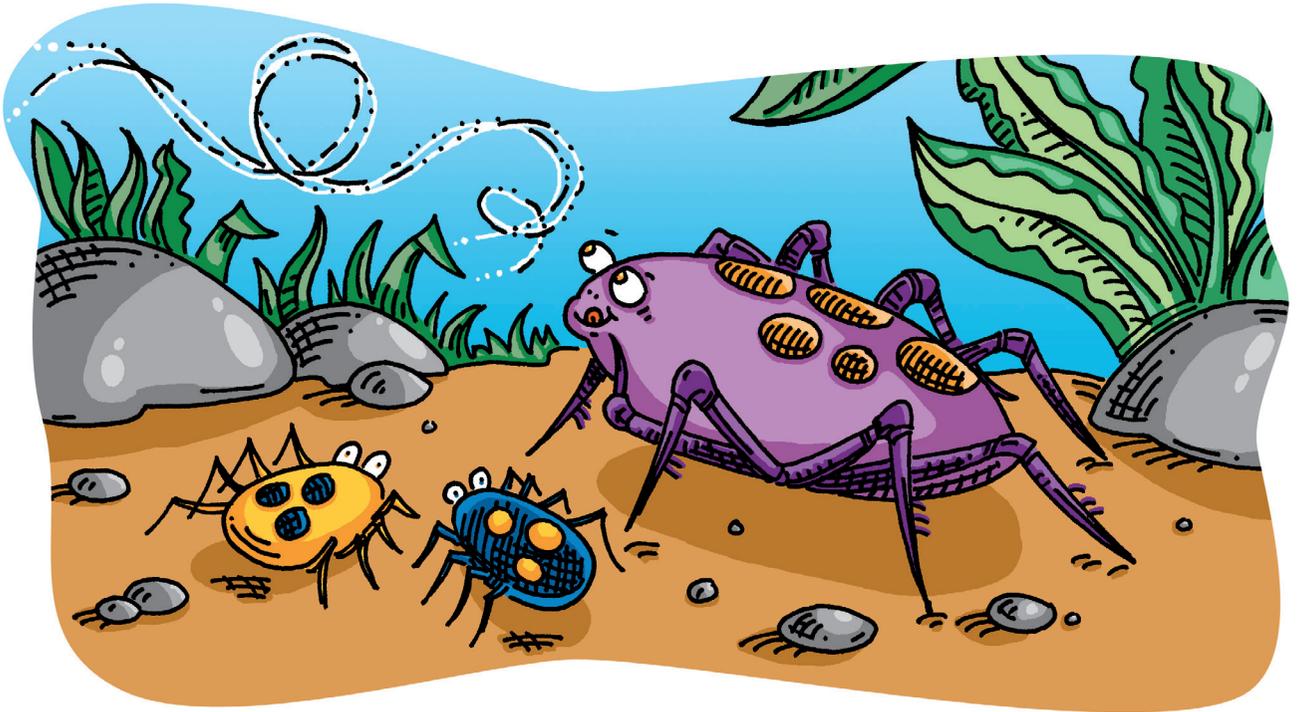


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Where was this child running? *[This child was running to the West Village.]*

Is that the same place the other child was running? *[no]*

Why was he running? *[There was another feast.]*



When the three spiders were alone, Anansi sniffed. He could smell hot yams and fish. It was coming from the West Village.

He said,

“I *would* like to go to the feast.

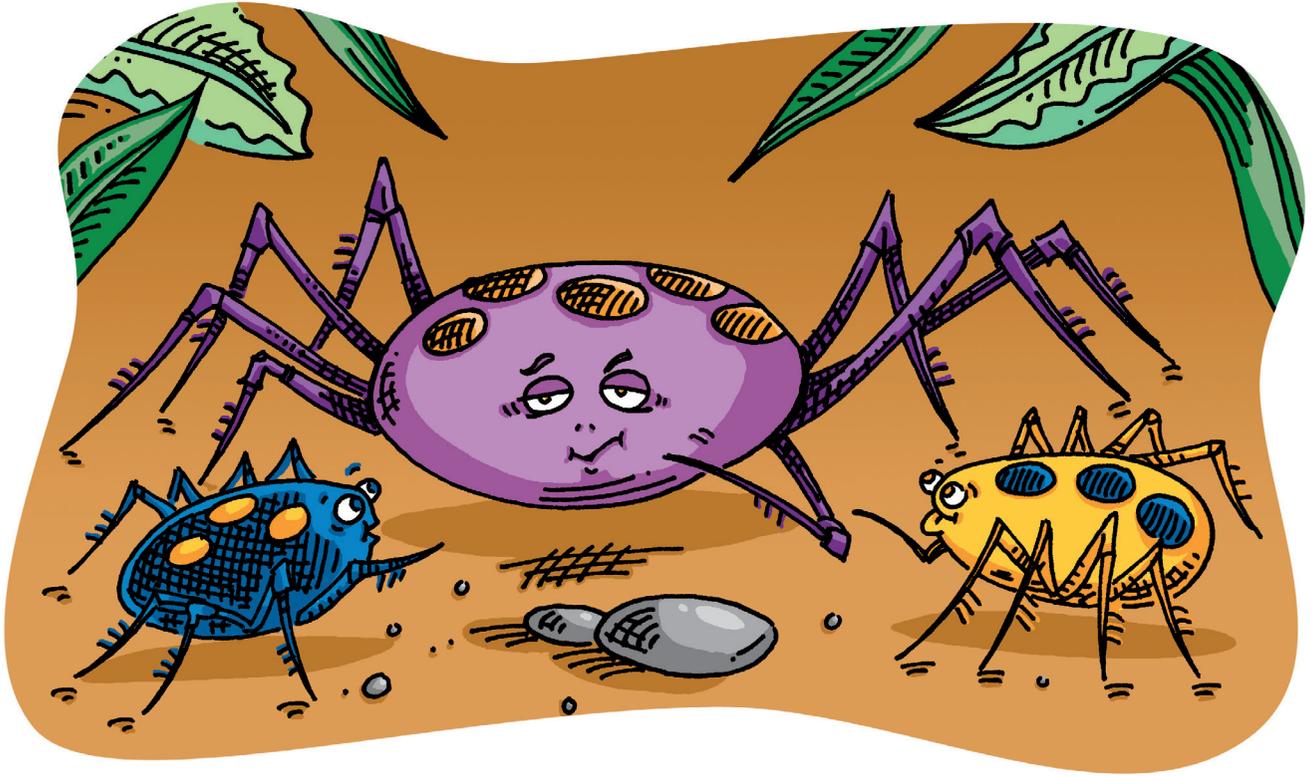
I *should* go, but I don’t know when it is.

I *could* go if . . .”

Anansi stopped.

---

Anansi sniffed. What did he smell? [*He smelled hot yams and fish.*]

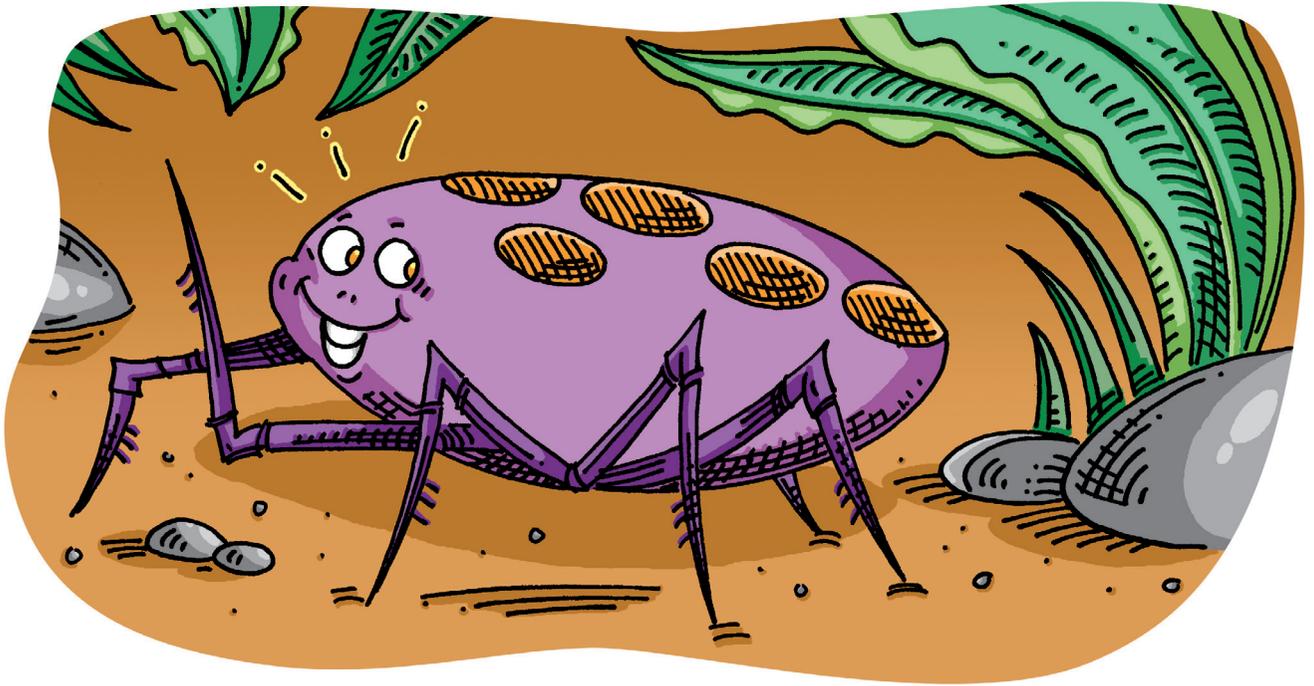


Anansi's children said, "You were not invited to these feasts. You don't know when the feasts begin!"

Anansi said to his children, "Be quiet. I could still go. Let me think."

---

Why can't Anansi go to the feasts? *[He wasn't invited. He doesn't know when they begin.]*



Anansi sat on the path to think. How could he find out the time each feast began? He might miss all the chicken, yams, and fish! Then he had a bright idea.

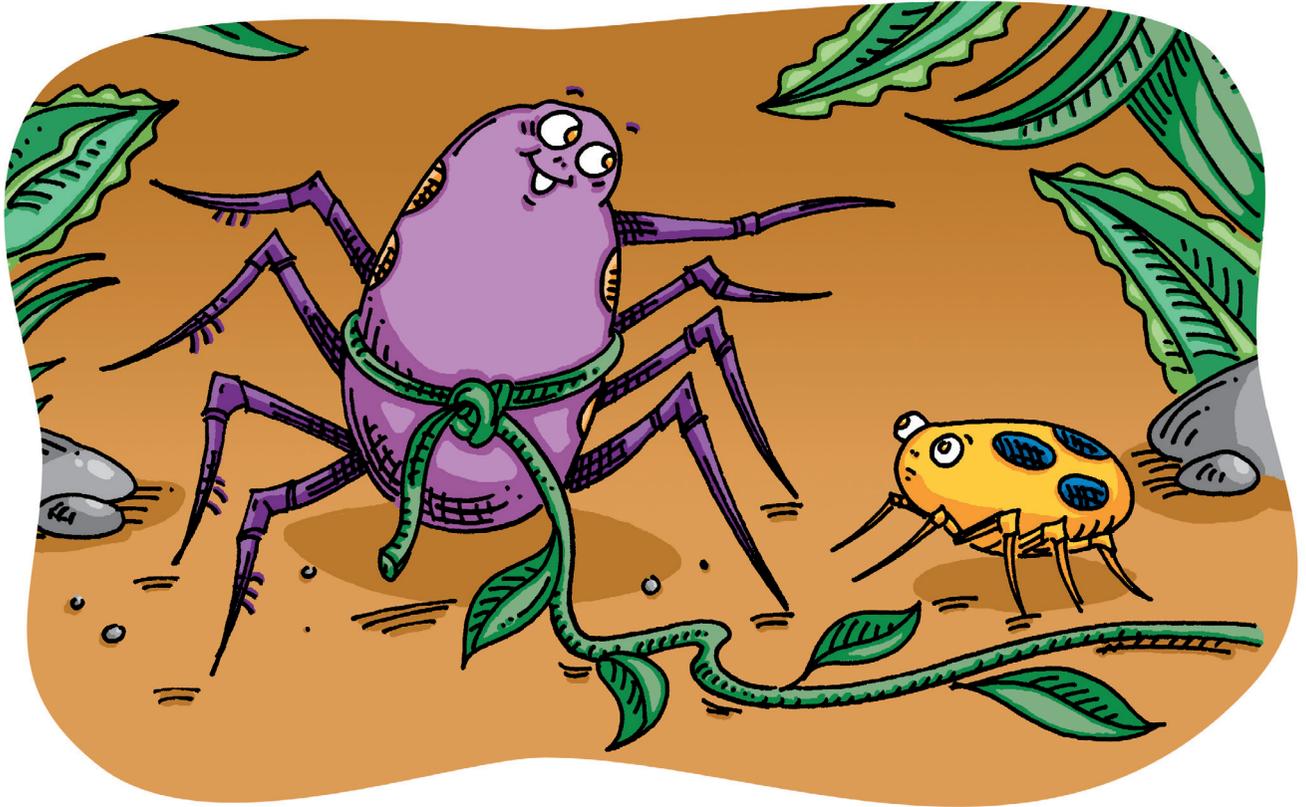
Anansi said, “I am in between the East Village and West Village. I could go to both feasts.”

“How?” asked his children.

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One feast is in the east and one feast is in the west. Anansi wants to go to both feasts.

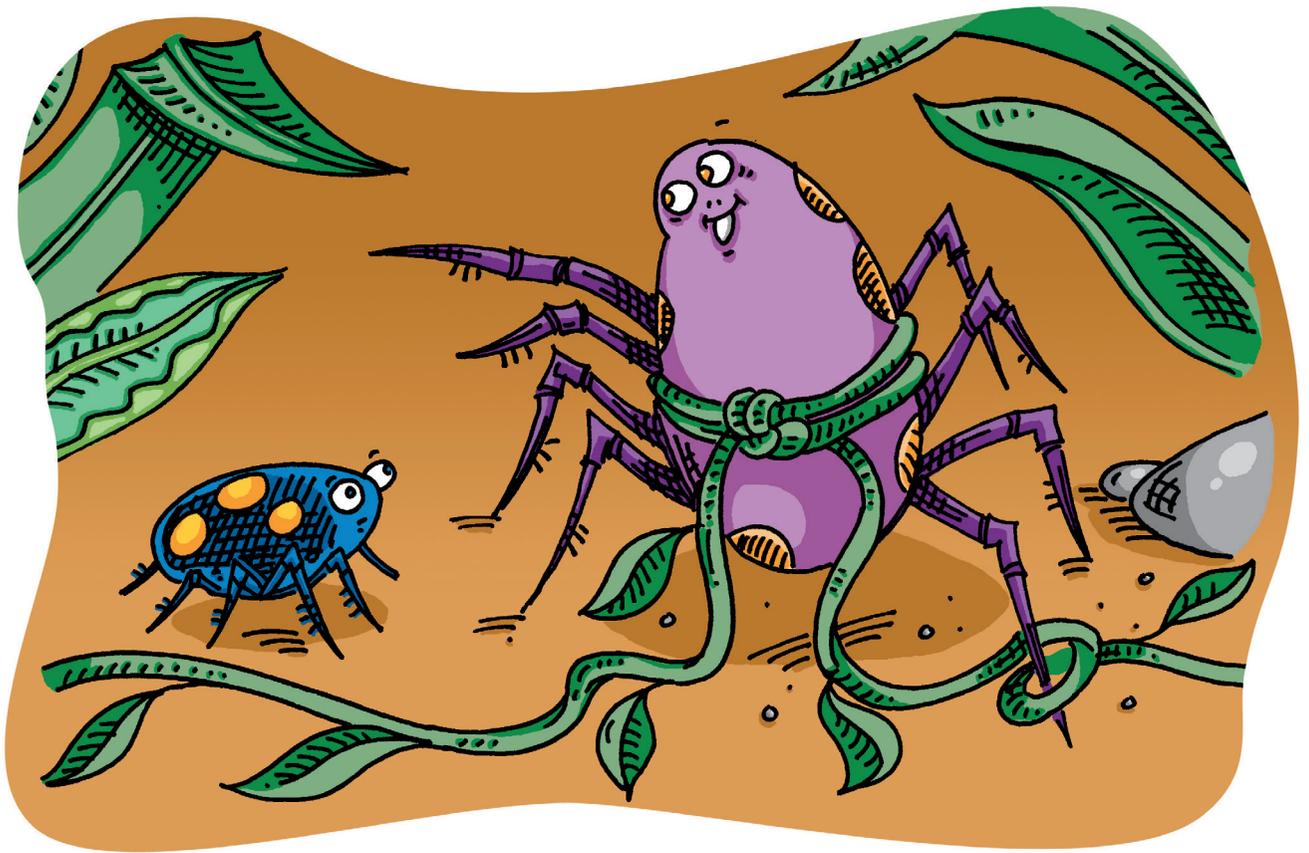
- ➔ **Make a Prediction:** How could Anansi go to both feasts?  
(T-P-S) Have the students support their predictions.



Anansi grabbed a vine and tied it tightly around his middle. He tossed one end of the vine to Osa and said, “Go to the East Village. When it is time to eat, yank the vine. Then I will come to the feast.”

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**What does Anansi do with the vine?** [*He ties it around his middle and gives one end to Osa.*] A “vine” is a long stem of a plant that is very strong. **Where will Osa go?** [*Osa will go to the East Village.*] **What is Osa supposed to do?** [*find out when it is time to eat and then yank the vine*] “Yank” means to pull very hard, like this. Pantomime the word “yank.” Show me how to yank something.



Anansi tied a second vine tightly around his waist. He tossed one end of the vine to Iba. Then he said, “Take this end of the vine. Go to the West Village. When it is time to eat, yank the vine. Then I will come to the feast.”

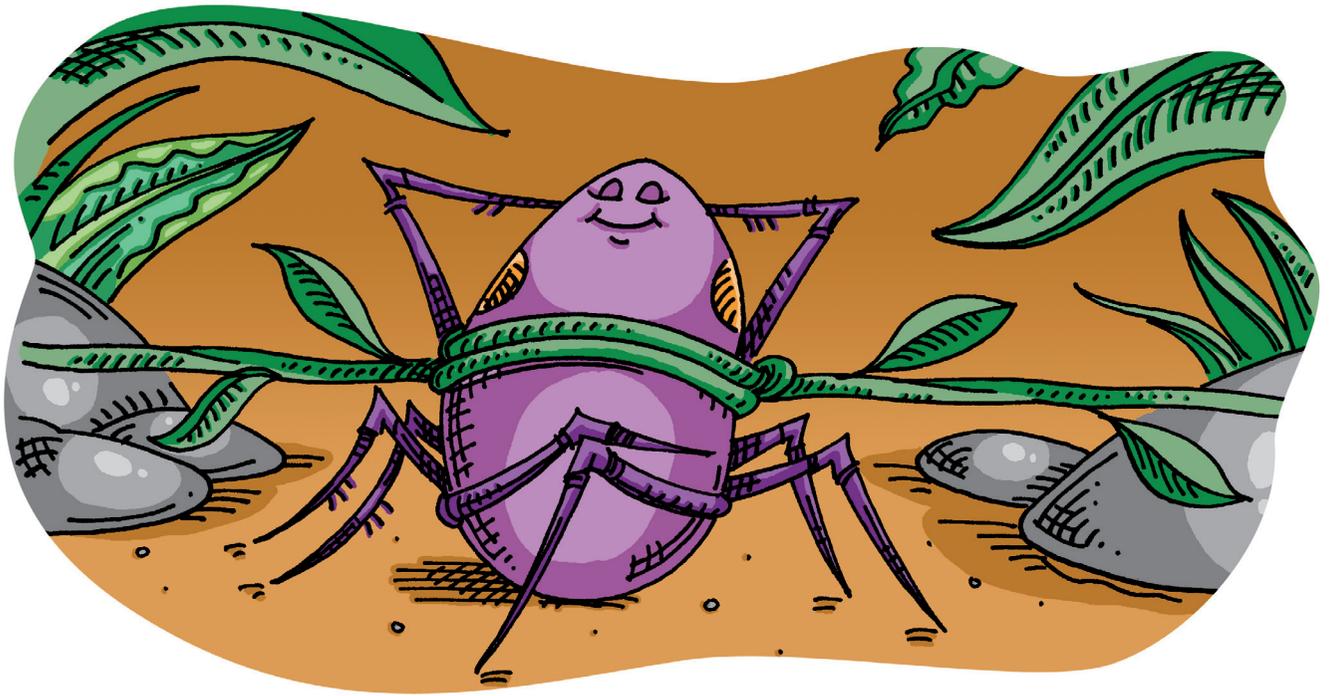


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**Anansi ties another vine around his waist. What does he do with the other end of the vine?** [*He gives it to Iba.*]

**Where will Iba go?** [*Iba will go to the West Village.*]

**What is Iba supposed to do?** [*find out when it is time to eat and then yank the vine*]



Osa ran with the end of the vine to the East Village.  
Iba ran with the end of the other vine to the West Village.  
Meanwhile, Anansi rested in the forest so he could eat  
a lot.

---

What did Osa and Iba do? *[They went to the different villages.]*

What did Anansi do? *[He rested and waited.]*



When daylight faded and night fell, both feasts began.  
Anansi's children yanked their vines at the same time!  
They yanked the two vines tighter and tighter.

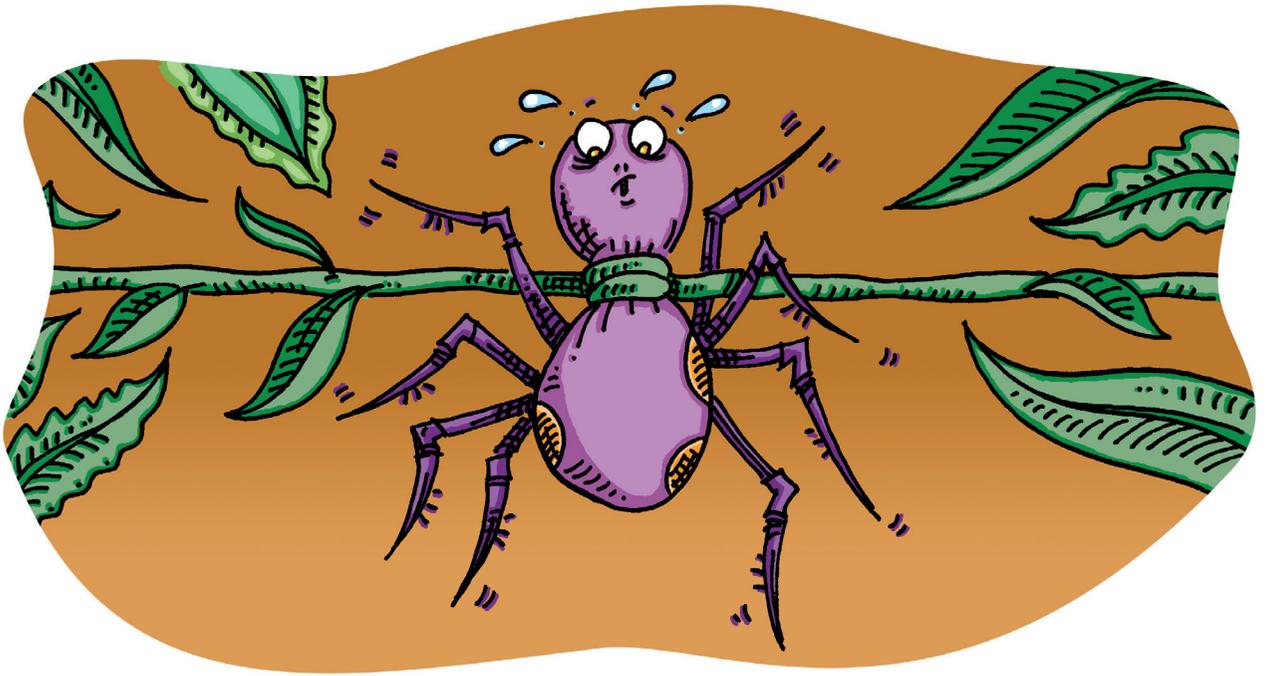
Osa yanked with all her might from the East Village.  
Iba yanked with all his might from the West Village.

---

What happened when night fell? *[Both of the feasts began.]*

What did Iba and Osa do? *[They both yanked their vines at the same time.]*

What do you think happened to Anansi? (T-P-S)



The vines pulled tighter and tighter. Anansi could not fight the vines.

“Stop! Stop!” he yelled with all his might. But his children were far away and could not hear him.

The vines pulled until Anansi’s waist was thin. His head was still fat. His body was still fat. But his waist in between was teeny and thin. And this is why, today, all spiders have a thin waist.

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What did Anansi yell? [*“Stop! Stop!”*]

What happened to Anansi? [*The vines pulled him until his waist was thin.*]

1

Model: **Tell what Anansi looked like in the first part of the story.**

*[Anansi had a fat body with no waist. / Anansi looked like a football.]*

Model: Write the answer on the blank line.

Which word means **happy**? *[delighted]*

A. delighted      B. disappeared      C. tight

1. **What tells Anansi that a big feast is going on?**

*[A child tells Anansi. / Anansi smells chicken with peanuts.]*

2. Write the answer on the blank line.

Which word means **a big dinner**? *[feast]*

A. west      B. east      C. feast

2

Model: **What is Anansi's problem?**

*[Anansi wants to go to both feasts. / Anansi does not know what time each feast begins. / Anansi was not invited to the feasts.]*

1. **How will Anansi's children tell him when the feasts begin?**

*[The children will yank the vines.]*

2. Write the answer on the blank line.

Anansi had a **bright** idea. To him, it was a *[smart]* idea.

A. smart      B. shining      C. light

3

Model: **Could this story really happen? Why or why not?**

*[No, spiders cannot talk. / Spiders do not eat chicken and peanuts.]*

1. **How does Anansi look at the end of the story?**

*[Anansi's head is fat, his body is fat, but he has a teeny waist.]*

2. Write the answer on the blank line.

When it is **not dark**, we have *[daylight]*.

A. night      B. daylight      C. tight

Reading Roots, Level 4  
**Anansi, the Spider**

“ight”  
“ould”



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READING PROGRAM

Reading Roots Shared Stories were developed under the direction of Robert E. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden, codirectors of the Success for All Foundation Family of Programs.

Success for All Foundation is a nonprofit education reform organization that develops and disseminates research-based reading and math programs for students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, elementary and middle schools. These programs were originally developed at Johns Hopkins University.

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