



# Why Spiders Have Eight Skinny Legs

An African folktale retold by Dr. Mike Lockett, the Normal Storyteller; edited by Linda Ludwig / ILLUSTRATED BY ARNOLD LEE / PAGE DESIGN BY MARIA CHEN

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What happens when you want too much

Many years ago there was a spider named Anansi. Anansi was very clever and also very greedy. There were times when Anansi's greed caused his **cleverness** to work against him.

Anansi's wife was a good cook, but Anansi was greedy. He loved going to his friends' houses to see what they were eating. He liked to taste the food that others in the village made.

One day, Anansi stopped by Rabbit's house. "There are **greens** cooking in your pot," said Anansi. "The greens aren't done," said Rabbit. "They need to cook longer. Would you like to stay and eat?"



"I would love to," said Anansi. "But I have things to do." He knew that if he stayed that Rabbit would give him work to do. Anansi was lazy. "I know what I will do," said Anansi. "I will **spin** a **web** and tie it to my leg. When the greens are done, pull on the web, and I'll come back as fast as I can."

## Usage Tip

*When the greens are done, pull on the web, and I'll come back as fast as I can.* (p. 18, line 5)

本句為複合句，合句為「由連接詞 and 連結兩個獨立子句所形成的主要子句」，而複句指「When 引導的從屬子句+主要子句」。因為複句和合句之間需要加逗號，而 and 連接兩個獨立子句時也需要加逗號，所以本句會出現兩個逗號。

- When you are finished eating, put your dishes in the sink, and I'll wash them later.

Your turn

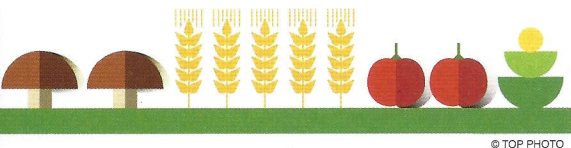
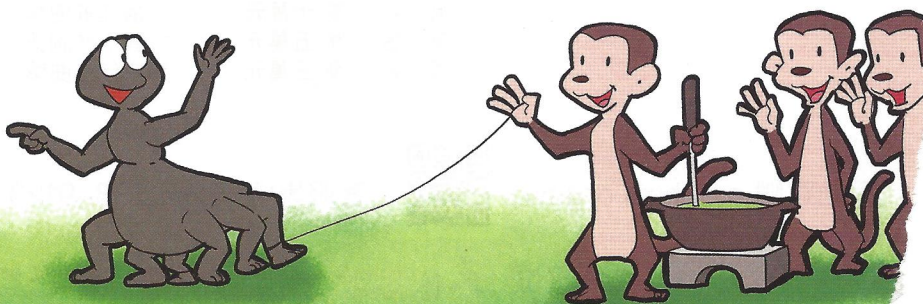
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## Talk About It

- What does the story teach about being greedy?  
- It teaches that ...
- Do you think that Anansi the spider is clever or not? Explain.  
- Yes, I do because ... / No, I don't because ...
- Have you or someone you know ever been greedy about something? Tell about what happened.  
- Yes. Once I/a friend ...



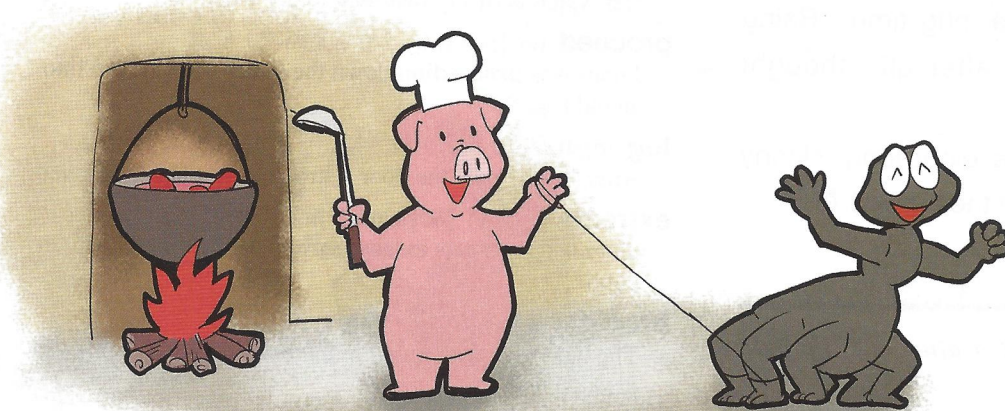
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So Anansi spun the web, tied it around his leg and continued down the road. As Anansi walked away, he smelled **mouthwatering** beans. “Come join us,” called the Monkeys. Anansi answered, “Your beans are **marvelous**. But I have things to do, so I will tie one end of a web to my leg. Pull it when the beans are done.”

“Now I smell sweet potatoes,” said Anansi. “Mmm!” He sniffed the air and followed the smell to Hog’s home. “Hello, Hog,” called Anansi. “You make the best sweet potatoes in the **district**.”

“Join me. They’ll be done soon,” called Hog. Anansi licked his lips and again suggested he tie a web to his leg. He handed Hog the other end.

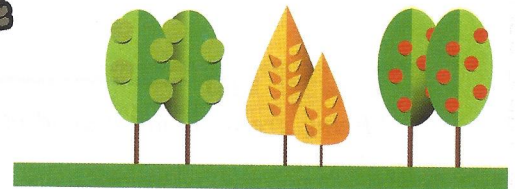


Before he reached home, he had eight webs **fastened** to his eight legs. Just then he felt a pull on one leg. “That is Rabbit’s house. I need to hurry to his house to eat before everybody else’s food is done.”

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Anansi was **proceeding** toward Rabbit’s house when he felt a pull from the Monkeys’ house. He stopped. “Greens or beans? Which should I eat first?” Then he felt a third pull and a fourth. Then came a fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth.

Anansi felt a **tug** at his leg. Anansi said, “That is the web string tied to Rabbit’s greens.” He felt another. And another. Anansi was pulled three ways at once. ▶



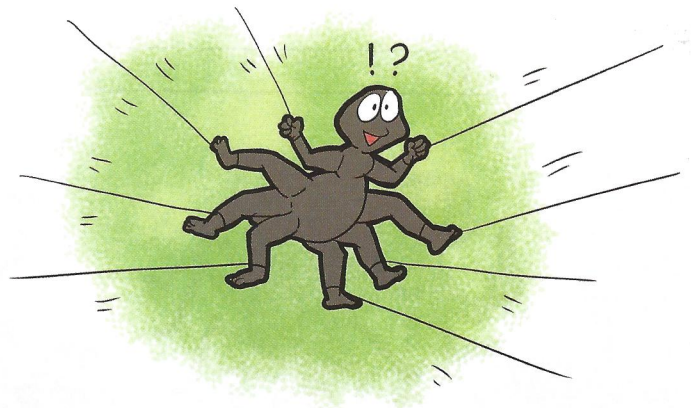
## Usage Tip

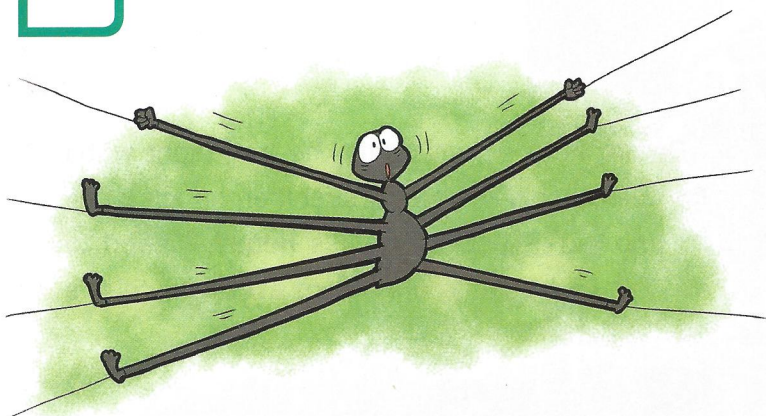
“Come join us,” called the Monkeys. (p. 19, line 3)

此處 come join us 完整的說法應是 come and join us，通常在口語中喚某人來或去做某事時，可以把 and 省略掉。

• Let’s go get coffee after class, OK?

Your turn





The webs were all **extremely** strong, and Anansi's friends all pulled at the same time. Anansi could not move. Everyone pulled hard on their friend's legs. Anansi's legs began to stretch. They grew longer and thinner. Anansi tried pulling back, but his legs got thinner still. Finally he jumped into the **brook**, and the webs came off his legs.

Anansi had sore legs for a long time. "Being greedy is not a good idea after all," thought Anansi.

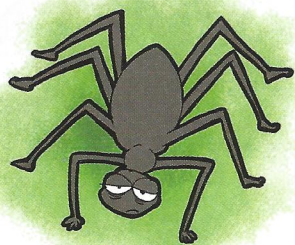
Today, all spiders still have eight long, skinny legs to remind them to control their greed. 🕷️

**Usage Tip**

*"Being greedy is not a good idea after all," thought Anansi. (p. 20, line 9)*

片語 after all 表「終究，畢竟或歸根究底」。  
I shouldn't have eaten that cake after all. I was already full, and now I'm really uncomfortable.

Your turn



**Word Bank**

**cleverness** (n) [ˈklevərnɪs] 聰明；伶俐；巧妙  
The students were all impressed by the teacher's **cleverness** in teaching science.

**greens** (n) [grɪnz] 綠葉蔬菜  
You need to eat plenty of **greens** so that you will grow up to be strong.

**spin** (v) [spm] 吐（絲），結（網）；紡（織）  
This is the factory where they **spin** cotton into thread.

**web** (n) [web] （蜘蛛）網  
We ran into many spider **webs** as we walked through the forest.

**mouthwatering** (adj) [ˈmaʊθ,wɔːtərɪŋ] 令人垂涎的  
There are so many **mouthwatering** desserts to choose from.

**marvelous** (adj) [ˈmɑːvələs] 好極的；絕妙的  
We had a **marvelous** trip and saw many interesting things.

**district** (n) [ˈdɪstrɪkt] 區，區域  
Which **district** of the city do you live in?

**fasten** (v) [ˈfæsn] 繫牢；扣緊  
Her watch is firmly **fastened** to her wrist.

**proceed** (v) [prəˈsiːd] （沿特定路線）前進  
James was **proceeding** down the street when he ran into an old friend.

**tug** (n) [tʌg] （用力）拉、扯  
After Barrie gave the door a strong **tug**, it finally opened.

**extremely** (adv) [ɪkˈstriːmli] 極其；非常  
Sharon always gets **extremely** nervous before singing in public.

**brook** (n) [brʊk] 小溪，小河  
The kids went swimming in the **brook** behind their parents' house.

**More Information**

**greed** (n) [grɪd] 貪婪

**sniff** (v) [snɪf] 嗅，聞

**hog** (n) [hɒg] 豬

**Word Bank Focus**

**clever** (adj) [ˈklevə] 聰明的；伶俐的  
Fanny is a very **clever** student and does very well in school.

**cleverly** (adv) [ˈklevəli] 聰明地；機靈地  
Marie handled a bad situation very **cleverly**, so everything turned out well.

