

## Unit 5/Week 1

Title: A Story A Story

Suggested Time: 4 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.3.1, RL.3.2, RL.3.3, RL.3.4; RF.3.4;  
W.3.2, W.3.4; SL.3.1, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.4

### Teacher Instructions

*Refer to the Introduction for further details.*

#### **Before Teaching**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers, about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

#### Big Ideas and Key Understandings

Smaller defenseless creatures can use their intelligence and cunning to outsmart others and succeed against great odds.

#### Synopsis

This African folk tale explains how many African tales came to be known as “Spider stories”. In this tale, Ananse, the Spider man, travels up to the sky to offer to buy Nyame, the Sky God’s stories. Nyame asks Ananse to bring him Osebo the leopard-of-the-terrible-teeth, Mmboro the hornets-who-sting-like-fire, and Mmoatia the fairy-whom-men-never-see. When Ananse agrees to the price Nyame asks how he can accomplish such a task. He believes that Ananse is too small and weak to accomplish such a task. Ananse uses his intelligence and cunning to trick all three creatures. He returns to Nyame with payment for his stories. Nyame calls his court together to sing the praises of Ananse and declares his stories “Spider stories”.

2. Read entire main selection text, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.

3. Re-read the main selection text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Vocabulary.

**During Teaching**

1. Students read the entire main selection text independently.
2. Teacher reads the main selection text aloud with students following along. (Depending on how complex the text is and the amount of support needed by students, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.)
3. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions and returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e.: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions

Text Dependent Questions	Answers
Reread paragraphs 1 and 2 on page 108. What are “spider stories”? What do they all have in common?	Spider stories are African tales that may or may not feature the character Kwaku Ananse. They tell how small, defenseless creatures can outwit others and succeed against great odds.
Why does Ananse, the Spider man, want to buy the Sky God’s stories? (Pg. 109)	At the time, there were no stories on Earth. Ananse brought them to Nyame, the Sky God. He kept them in a basket under his royal stool.
What was the price that Nyame, the Sky God wanted for his stories? Does Nyame, the Sky God, believe Ananse can pay his price? (Pg. 109)	Nyame asked Ananse to bring him Osebo the the-terrible-teeth, Mmboro the hornets-whom-men-never-see, and Mmoatia the fairy-whom-men-never-see. When Ananse thought that Ananse could bring him what he asked for, Nyame thought that Ananse could bring him what he asked for. In the story, Nyame laughs when Ananse tells him about the stories. Then when he says, “I shall gladly give you the stories.” Nyame laughs again. He asks him, “How can you, like you, so small, so small, so small pay my price?”
In the last paragraph on page 109, what does the word “chuckled” mean?	The world “chuckled” means laughed. “Two” refers to the sound of Nyame’s laugh. He said it in paragraph 10. Ananse laughed at Ananse for wanting to buy his stories.

<p>Reread page 110. How does Ananse respond to the Sky God’s laughter?</p>	<p>Ananse doesn’t get discouraged he simply goes on capturing the three creatures.</p>
<p>What does the word “binding” mean on page 110?</p>	<p>The word binding means to tie something up.</p>
<p>How was Ananse able to capture Osebo the leopard-of-the-terrible-teeth? Why did Osebo agree to play the game with Ananse? (Pg. 110)</p>	<p>Ananse was able to capture Osebo the leopard-of-the-terrible-teeth by tricking him. He knew that Osebo liked to play a game so he told him they were playing the binding game. Osebo figured he would let Ananse have a turn when it was his turn. Instead, Ananse’s court members hung him up in the tree until he collected the three creatures.</p>
<p>How was Ananse able to capture Mmboro, the hornets-who-sting-like-fire? (Pg. 111)</p>	<p>Ananse was able to capture Mmboro the hornets-who-sting-like-fire by tricking them into believing that they were playing a game. In order to avoid tattering their wings they flew into the tree believing it was safe. Once inside he sealed the entrance.</p>
<p>In paragraph 3 on page 113, the fairy says, “Gum baby, I’ll slap your <i>crying place</i> unless you answer me.” What is the fairy referring to when she says “crying place”?</p>	<p>The fairy is referring to her face. The first slap landed on her forehead. The second slap also landed on her forehead.</p>
<p>How was Ananse able to capture Mmoatia the fairy-whom-no-man-sees? What made the fairy so angry that she slapped the gum baby? (Pgs. 112-113)</p>	<p>Ananse was able to capture Mmoatia the fairy-whom-no-man-sees by hiding out of sight and using a little trick. He made a doll in the shape of a gum baby to fool her. He covered the doll in sticky latex gum then angered the fairy. The fairy slapped the doll and she became stuck to the sticky latex gum. The fairy was angry because the gum baby did not reply when she thanked her.</p>
<p>On page 115, how did Nyame receive Ananse’s payment?</p>	<p>Nyame called together his court and asked them to praise Ananse’s praises. He declared that from this day on forever his stories belonged to Ananse and his court members. “Spider Stories”.</p>

Vocabulary

	<b>KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING</b>	<b>WORDS WORTH KNOWING</b> General teaching suggestions are provided
<b>TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION</b> not enough contextual clues provided in the text	Page 108 - outwit Page 110 - creepers, merely Page 112 - latex Page 113 - stuck fast Page 114 - captives	Page 108 - descendants Page 111 - tatter Page 112 - pounded yams, flamboyant Page 115 - addressed, sing his praise, proud world
<b>STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING</b> sufficient context clues are provided in the text	Page 108 - spider stories Page 109 - chuckled Page 110 - binding Page 113 - crying place	Page 112 - gum baby

Culminating Task

- Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write

- *This story is a folktale. Folktales often lead the reader to understand a moral or a lesson. What lesson can the reader learn from this story? Use details from the story in your response.*

Answer: Ananse goes to Nyame, the Sky God, and asks to buy the stories. Nyame says Ananse must bring him Osebo the leopard-of-the-terrible-teeth, Mmboro the hornet-who-sting-like-fire, and Mmoatia the fairy-whom-men-never-see. Ananse faces a big challenge. Nyame does not think that he can pay the price because he is old and small. He does not take into account that Ananse is wise. Ananse returns to Earth and uses his skill and cunning to outsmart and capture all three. He then returns them to the Sky God. Nyame then declares these stories, Spider stories. Ananse returns to Earth and scatters them to all corners of the world. The three creatures that Ananse had to capture were dangerous and elusive and Nyame had underestimated him. This story shows that even small, weak creatures can overcome huge obstacles.

### Additional Tasks

- Choose another “spider story” to read aloud to your class. Analyze the story for elements of folktales. Focus on the cultural element related to “spider stories” as stated by the author on page 108. Have students compare the two tales.
- Have students perform a Readers Theater presentation with this story.

### Note to Teacher

- Folktales from around the world are very similar in that they come from the oral tradition. They present a problem and solution, which may lead the reader to understanding a moral lesson. There is also normally an element of magic in the story. According to this author, this African tale is a traditional “spider story”, which generally tell how small, defenseless men or animals outwit others in order to succeed. There are various examples of “spider stories” available in book form or online. Here is a limited list of possible resources:

- o [www.anansistories.com](http://www.anansistories.com)
- o "Anansi and the Lizard" by Pat Cummings
- o "The Adventures of Spider" by James Pinknev

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **“A Story, A Story”**

1. Reread paragraphs 1 and 2 on page 108. What are “spider stories”? What do they all have in common?
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3. What was the price that Nyame, the Sky God wanted for his stories? Does Nyame, the Sky God, believe Ananse can pay his price? (Pg. 109)
4. In the last paragraph on page 109, what does the word “chuckled” mean?
5. Reread page 110. How does Ananse respond to the Sky God’s laughter?

6. What does the word “binding” mean on page 110?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
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