

**An African Tale**  
*Written by Debbie Hogan's 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders from Oakwood Elementary*

Storyteller #1: *Oh, young children round my knee, Let me tell you how stories came to be.*

Storyteller #2: Long, long ago...longer than you can imagine, there were no stories on earth. Sky God, Nyame, kept them all in a magic story box way up in the heavens.

(OVERTURE)

Villagers: *We villagers are sad, we villagers weep.  
After working in the fields all day, we just have to go to sleep.  
No stories to tell, no stories to tell.*

V1: *I'd love to hear a story.*

V2: *A magical story*

V3: *A glorious story*

V4: *A fiery, scary story*

V5: *A sad or funny story (Ha, ha, ha....)*

V6: *A mysterious future story.*

V1: Oh look! Here comes Anancy!

V2: Maybe we should ask clever Anancy to get some stories for us.

V3: *Anancy, our spidery friend, would you be brave enough to ask Sky God for an ancient legend or two?*

Anancy: *Just one or two? I will get them all for you!*

All V: (Cheer)

V4: You are amazing and bold, Anancy!

All V: Thank you, thank you!

A: *Up to the thundering sky, I'll spin a web to the heavens so high  
To plead for Sky God's glorious stories about giants and leopards and fairies.*

Nyame: *Oh, what a lovely day! Bring the fans a little closer, and tell me another tale while I plan the weather.*

Attendants: *Oh, majesty! Oh majesty! You are so great! Let us cool you with our fans. Let us tell you lovely stories while you form the clouds above.*

N: Ah, this is the life! Now...Dance!

(DANCE)

A1: Oh, wondrous Sky God, an intruder is coming!

A2: It is Anancy, the weak old spider. What could he want from us?

N: Oh, Anancy! He's just tiny!

A1: Yes, but he's clever, clever, clever!

N: Why have you traveled way up here, old spider?

A: I want to buy your precious stories, Nyame. I beg you to share them with our village and young children.

N: *Well! Tee, hee! I don't see how one so small, so small could possibly pay enough for my glorious stories. Many great ones have tried and failed. You won't do much better!*

A: And why not? I'm not afraid! I'll pay whatever price you ask.

N: We shall see, Anancy. We shall see...

You must bring me

an alligator with no teeth...(Anancy repeats each demand)

A ferocious leopard...

A fairy that no man's seen...

A very long python...

A quiet monkey...

Hornets with fiery stings...

Do all that, poor Anancy, and the stories shall be yours. Ha!

A: I will not fail, mighty Nyame!

V: *Six creatures to capture in Anancy's web. It sounds like a lot to ask. But nothing is too much, my dear friends, for a story, a story.*

A: Here comes a greedy alligator. I must think of a way to trick him into losing his teeth!

Alligator: *Oh, that was a spectacular meal. I had 50 squibbly golden fish.*

*And 5 slimy, slimy, slimy green frogs. Now what else can I eat?*

*I'm still famished!*

*Through the tall grasses I'll crawl with my emerald spiky body.*

*To look for a delicious dessert!*

*A-ha! There's Anancy the Spider. I had a wonderful lunch...would you like to be my dessert?*

A: Oh, I'd love to, but I see something you'll like even better! (To audience) Here's my chance to get an alligator with no teeth! This mossy green rock looks just like a frog! (To alligator) Look here by the pond, great alligator! There's a nice juicy, slimy, delicious frog!

All: Oh boy! Let's see if I can catch it...Gotcha! (Crunch, Crunch, Crunch!)

(Sing like he had no teeth)*Oh no! My teeth! My shiny, jaggy teeth!*

*You tricked me, spider, what a trick!*

*My shiny, jaggy teeth!*

A: Poor alligator! Into my web and to Sky God you'll go. Did you see that, Nyame?

N: *Yes, Anancy, I saw what you did. Greed took the teeth of that alligator. You are wise in the ways of the world!*

Now, bring me the ferocious leopard Osebo.

Villagers: *Anancy is smart, Anancy is clever. Five more tricks to deliver. He'll do the rest, and then my friends, we'll have a story, a story.*

Osebo: *I'm such a ferocious leopard, creeping through the grass. I'm the mightiest in the whole jungle. I'm a curious leopard. I like to play games—curious games. I want something to eat, I must sup. Here comes Anancy...I'll eat him up!*

A: Greetings, mighty, fierce Osebo. Did you have a nice breakfast?

O: No, I did not eat breakfast. But no matter...it seems my lunch has just arrived.

A: Uh...first let's play a new game. Aren't you curious to learn it?

O: A new game? I love new games! Let's go! Tell me quick, how do you play? I'm so curious to know.

A: *The binding game is what we'll play. I'll bind you from nose to tail, then I will untie you and you can bind me up as well.*

O: *Oh, I like this game, it sounds like fun. And I can eat Anancy when I'm done.*

N1: Will Anancy live?

N2: Watch how clever Anancy spins his tricks!

Both: How tight he ties Osebo up!

A: Lie down Osebo!

*(Chant) Wind, bind, wrap around, foot by foot you see.  
Now please, dear Osebo, do not growl,  
But it's time to meet Nyame!*

O: I have been tricked. Oh no! So sad am I, please let me go!

A: Nyame, please look! I've caught Osebo for a book!

N: *Yes Anancy, I saw that. Curiosity has caught that cat. You are wise in the ways of the world.*

Now bring me Mmoatia, the fairy that no man has ever seen.

Villagers: *Anancy is smart, Anancy is clever. Four more tricks to deliver. He'll do the rest, and then my friends, we'll have a story, a story.*

A: Hmm...now how do I catch a magical fairy? I know! I'll make a Gum Baby doll out of sticky sap. She'll hold a bowl of golden yams to tempt the timid fairy. It's perfect!

Fairy: *I'm a very rare fairy with sparkly wings. I'm so elusive I've never been seen.*

A: Now I must blend in behind this tree to wait and see how angry Mmoatia will be if Gum Baby will not speak.

F: Hello, funny little one. I see you have some golden yam for me. Ah, they are scrumptious and tender. Thank you, Gum Baby.  
I said Thank you very much! Are you asleep? How rude! Talk to me this instant!

N1: What's making Mmoatia so angry?  
N2: She hates to be ignored.

F: You dare to ignore me? I'll slap your sappy face. (SLAP!)  
*Let go, let go! I'll push and pull like so. Oh, no! Oh, no! I'm stuck! I can't let go!*

A: Ah, Mmoatia, you are stuck. You will help me pay the price for Sky God's stories, what luck!  
Did you see that, Nyame?

N: *Yes, Anancy, you're clever, oh very! Fury fooled that silly fairy. You are wise in the ways of the world.*  
Now bring me Onini the python.

Villagers: *Anancy is smart, Anancy is clever. Just 3 more tricks to deliver. He'll do the rest, and then my friends, we'll have a story, a story.*

Python: *I love to squeeze and bite! Squeeze and bite with all my might. I slither through the trees all day and catch yummy treats by night.*

A: My, what a long, long, long log! I wonder if Onini the python could stretch as far as this. No...probably not.

P: Do I hear Anancy talking about me? I love being talked about! Hi, Anancy! Are you talking about me?

A: Onini, what a surprise! I didn't know you were there. I was just wondering if you were as long as this log, but you're probably not.

P: Oh, I'm even longer! The longest in the jungle. I'll slither over so you can measure.

A: *Let's tie your tail at this end, then see if you can stretch----stretch to the other end. Your length is almost found. Wind, wind, wind the jungle rope to help Onini stretch---stretch til' you're all stretched out. (Ha! I've got him bound!)*

P: Am I long enough, Anancy?

A: Oh, yes, Onini, just right for Nyame!

P: Nyame? Oh no! Please let me go!

A: Did you see that, Nyame?

N: *Yes, Anancy, there's no lyan'! Pride caught the tail of that puffed up python. You are wise in the ways of the world.*

Now bring me a quiet monkey.

Villagers: *Anancy is smart, Anancy is clever. Just 2 more tricks to deliver. He'll do the rest, and then my friends, we'll have a story, a story.*

Monkey: *I'm a cute, cute monkey. I look in the water each day to see my beautiful face and talk all over the place. I love to tell myself how cute I am. I wanna be queen of the jungle, and talk talk, talk all day. I'll tell my subjects to bow when I approach and say, "How beautiful you look in May!"*

A: Hello, marvelous monkey! You're very spunky. You should be a queen!

M: You're right, I should! Beauty this rare deserves the very best!

A: Indeed.

M: But how do I begin?

A: Well, there is a contest going on. To be queen, you must stuff 2 dozen Kola nuts into your mouth and still be able to talk.

M: Oh, that's easy! Here's my pretty mouth...start stuffing!

A: *Stuff, stuff, stuff the Kolas in. Squeeze with all your might. Count by 2's to 24. It's getting very tight!*

N1: *Look at grand Anancy go!*

N2: *That monkey's getting quiet, you know.*

M: (at the same time as Anancy) *M-m-m-m-m-m*

A: *Can you talk? Don't do it wrong? Can you whistle? Can you sing a song?*  
Here's your quiet monkey, Nyame.

N: *Oh, Anancy, that trick was funky! Narcissism nabbed that little monkey. You are wise in the ways of the world.*

Now bring me Mmboro, the hornets that sting like fire.

Villagers: *Anancy is clever, Anancy is smart. Soon Sky God will share his glory. Hurrah! Only one more trick to deliver, then a story, a story.*

A: Hello, Mmboro the hornets. Are you cramped in your tiny, tiny house?

Hornets: What? Our house is tiny? We never noticed before.

A: Have you heard the big rains will be pouring soon? Have you covered all those holes in your home?

H: We have holes in our home? Such a horrible thing!

A: Big winds are coming, too. Is your house secure or a little loose?

H: Oh dear! Our house must be loose. Will it fall off the tree? Oh, dear me!

N1&2: My my! Clever Anancy is making it rain!

A: Hurry, hurry hornets! It's beginning to rain! Come inside this warm cozy house. So spacious! With no holes at all. Come in, come in!

H: *Let's hurry in out of the rain. How lucky that Anancy came, zip! Zip! Now shut the door.*

A: Did you see that, Nyame?

N: *Yes, Anancy, you're a hero! Discontent caught Mmboro. You are wise in the ways of the world! My stories will be yours forever more!*

Attendants: *Honor and praise to Anancy! Honor and praise to Anancy! You have done 6 impossible tasks, more than kings would dare to ask. Praise to you!*

N: Two gifts I will present to you.

A1: The magic orange and yellow Kente cloth. Just put it 'round your neck and all the stories will rest in your mind and heart.

A2: Now a ruby treasure box. Once opened, stories will spread throughout the land.

A: Thank you, Nyame. I'll treasure my gifts.

Villagers: Hooray for Anancy! How bold and brave you are! Let's sit round the circle of fire and hear our first tale.

*We villagers are glad. We villagers are thrilled. After working in the fields all day, our hearts will now be filled. There are stories to tell! Glorious stories to tell!*

N1: *So, young children round my knee. That is the way our stories came to be. And happily, too, the creatures were set free. For they, too deserve a story, a story!*