



## **STORY: ANANSI SHARES WISDOM WITH THE WORLD**

Adapted and Retold by Dianne de Las Casas

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Anansi, our eight-legged friend, was smart. Anansi was clever. Anansi was even charming. But there was one thing Anansi did not have – wisdom. So Anansi decided that he would collect some wisdom for himself.

He found a large gourd, a vegetable much like a squash, and cut it in half. Scooping out the insides of the gourd, he hollowed it out. He set it in the sun and let it dry. When it was finished drying, it looked like a big bowl or a giant ice cream scooper. He said, “This is perfect! I shall collect wisdom and store it inside this gourd bowl.”

Anansi began his search for wisdom. He sang,

“I need some wisdom.  
Where can I get it?  
I need some wisdom now.”

He went to visit his friend, wise old owl. Owl lived in a tall tree. Anansi stood below the tree and called out, “Owl, oh owl!”

Owl answered, “Hoo! Hoo! Who is it?”

“It is I, your friend, Anansi.” Anansi held out his gourd and answered, “I am collecting wisdom. Because you are so wise, I thought perhaps you would have Do wisdom to share with me.”

Owl answered, “Of course I do, Anansi,” and he swooped down from his tree and sprinkled some wisdom in Anansi’s gourd.”

Anansi bowed and said, “Thank you, Owl.”

Owl answered, “My pleasure,” and flew back into his tall tree.

Anansi looked inside his gourd and saw Owl’s wisdom but it barely filled the bowl. Anansi needed more wisdom so once again, he began his search for wisdom.

“I need some wisdom.  
Where can I get it?”

I need some wisdom now.”

He went to visit his friend, Monkey. Monkey also lived in a tall tree filled with his favorite fruit. Can you guess what his favorite fruit is? That’s right! Bananas! Anansi stood below the tree and called out, “Monkey, oh Monkey!”

Monkey answered, “Ooo! Ooo! Eee! Eee! Who is it?”

“It is I, your friend, Anansi.” Anansi held out his gourd and answered, “I am collecting wisdom. Because you are wise, I thought perhaps you would have wisdom you to share with me.”

Monkey answered, “Of course I do, Anansi,” and he climbed halfway down his tree and tossed some wisdom in Anansi’s gourd.”

Anansi bowed and said, “Thank you, Monkey.”

Monkey answered, “Eee. Eee. Eee. No problem.”

Anansi looked inside his gourd and saw Owl and Monkey’s wisdom but it filled the bowl only halfway. Anansi needed more wisdom so he began searching. He sang,

“I need some wisdom.  
Where can I get it?  
I need some wisdom now.”

He visited his friend Lion, the king of the jungle. Lion lived in a den, a cave located in the side of a steep mountain. Anansi stood in front of the cave and called out, “Lion, oh Lion!”

Lion answered, “ROAR! Who is it?”

“It is I, your friend, Anansi.” Anansi held out his gourd and answered, “I am collecting wisdom, your majesty. Since you are the king and the wisest animal in the jungle, I thought perhaps you would have great wisdom to share. Do you have any wisdom you can share with me?”

Lion answered, “Of course I do, Anansi,” and came out of his cave, placed his paw on Anansi’s gourd and dropped some wisdom in the bowl.

Anansi bowed and said, “Thank you, your highness.”

Lion answered, “You are quite welcome, Anansi.”

Anansi looked inside his bowl and saw that it was now full. With his gourd full of wisdom, Anansi thought it would be smart to hide his wisdom so that no one could take it from him and he could use it whenever he wanted. It was then that he spotted a tall tree.

Anansi said, "I will hide my wisdom at the top of that tree." He tied his gourd to the front of his BIG belly and tried to climb up the tree. His little spidery legs could not reach the tree. Every time he tried to climb, the gourd would bump the tree and Anansi would fall down. Frustrated, he sat down.

Just then, his youngest son was passing by. He asked, "Papa, what are you doing?"

Anansi answered, "I am trying to climb up this tree so I can hide my gourd full of wisdom but I can't seem to make it up the tree."

His son answered, "Well, Papa, why don't you tie the gourd to your back instead? That way, you can climb the tree quite easily."

Anansi said, "Alright, son, now go about your business and leave me to mine. I don't need the advice of a child. I can handle this myself."

When his son left, what do you think Anansi did? That's right. Anansi did as his son suggested. He tied the gourd to his back and to his great delight, he was able to climb up the tree with no problem. Once Anansi reached with top of the tree, he looked at his gourd full of wisdom.

"Here I am with all this wisdom and still, my youngest son is wiser than I! Perhaps I don't need this wisdom after all." With that, Anansi took the gourd and threw the wisdom into the sky. The wind scooped up that wisdom and spread it around the world so that boys and girls like you could all grab a piece of that wisdom for themselves. You see, Anansi realized that true wisdom lies not in keeping it to oneself but in sharing it with others.

And that, my friends, is how Anansi shared wisdom with the world.

