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Adventures

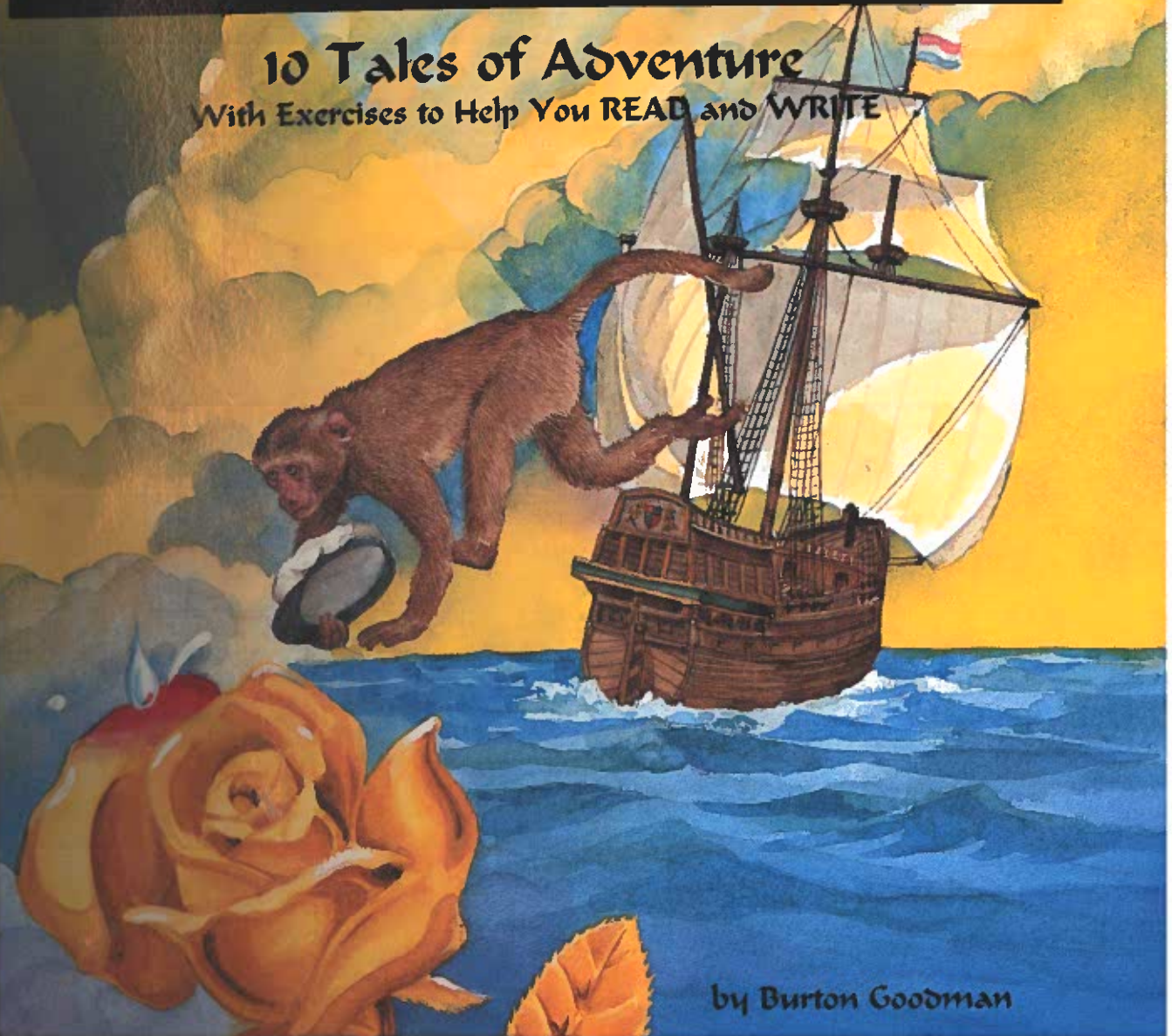
Burton Goodman

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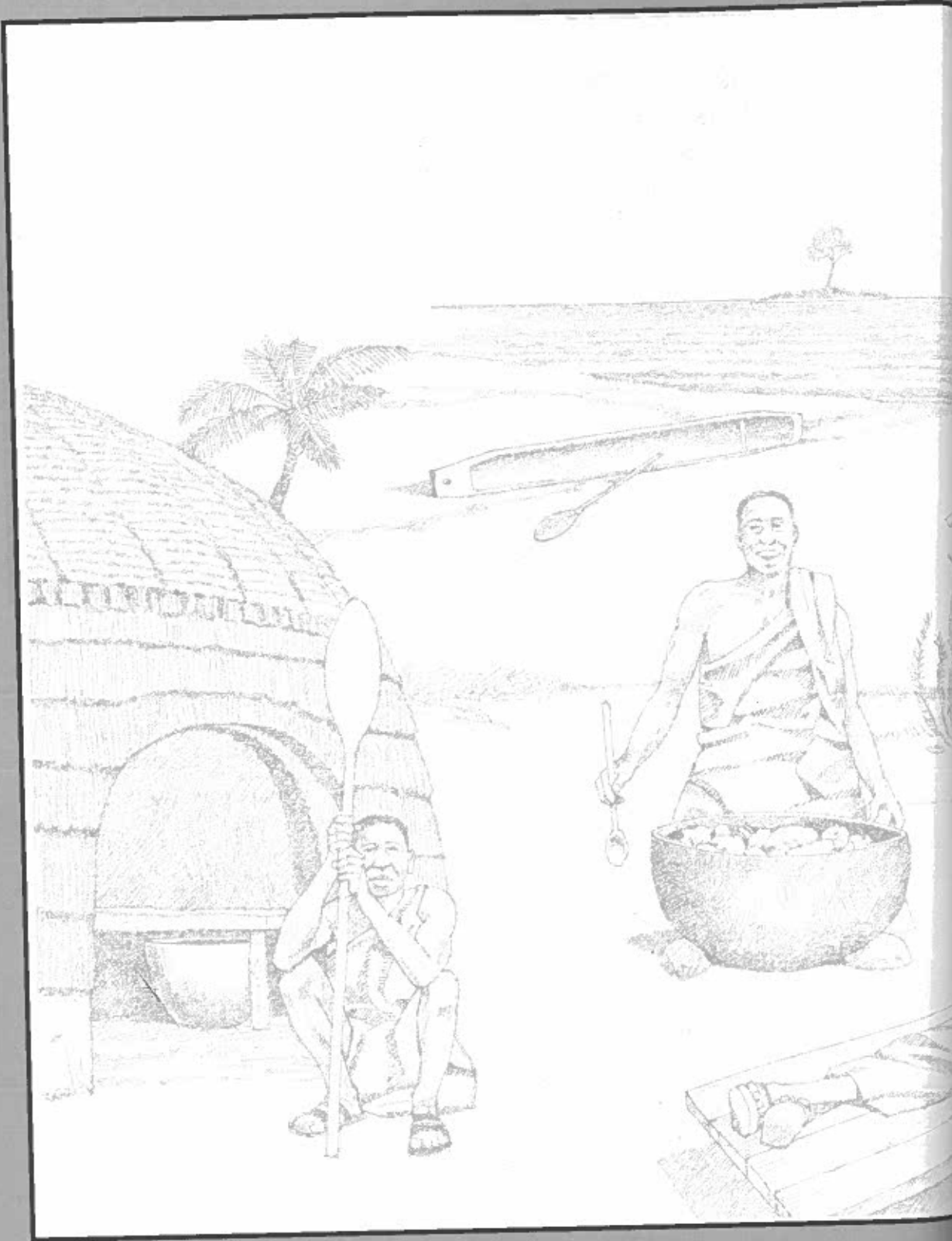
GOODMAN'S FIVE-STAR STORIES

# ADVENTURES

10 Tales of Adventure  
With Exercises to Help You READ and WRITE



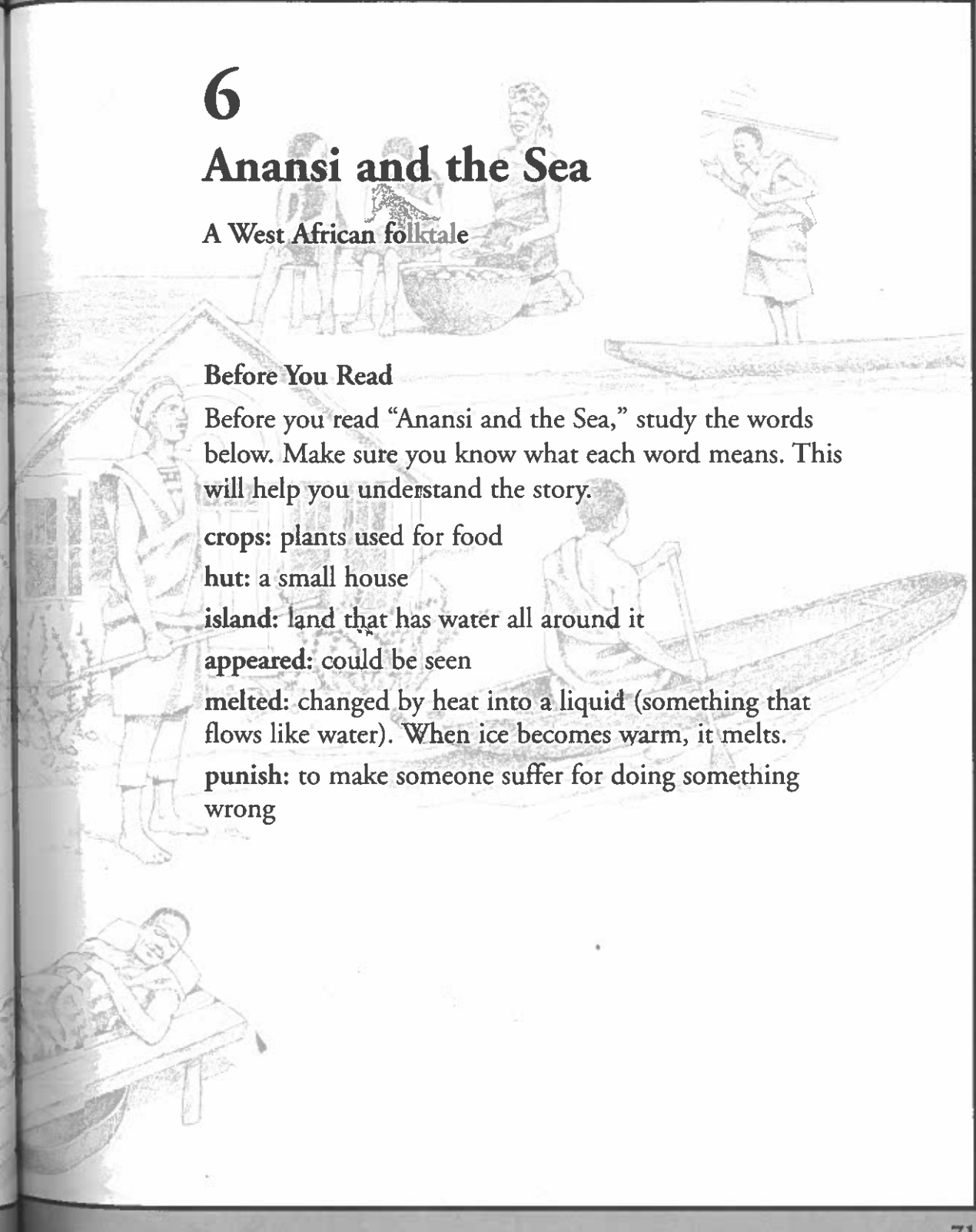
by Burton Goodman



# 6

## Anansi and the Sea

A West African folktale



### Before You Read

Before you read “Anansi and the Sea,” study the words below. Make sure you know what each word means. This will help you understand the story.

**crops:** plants used for food

**hut:** a small house

**island:** land that has water all around it

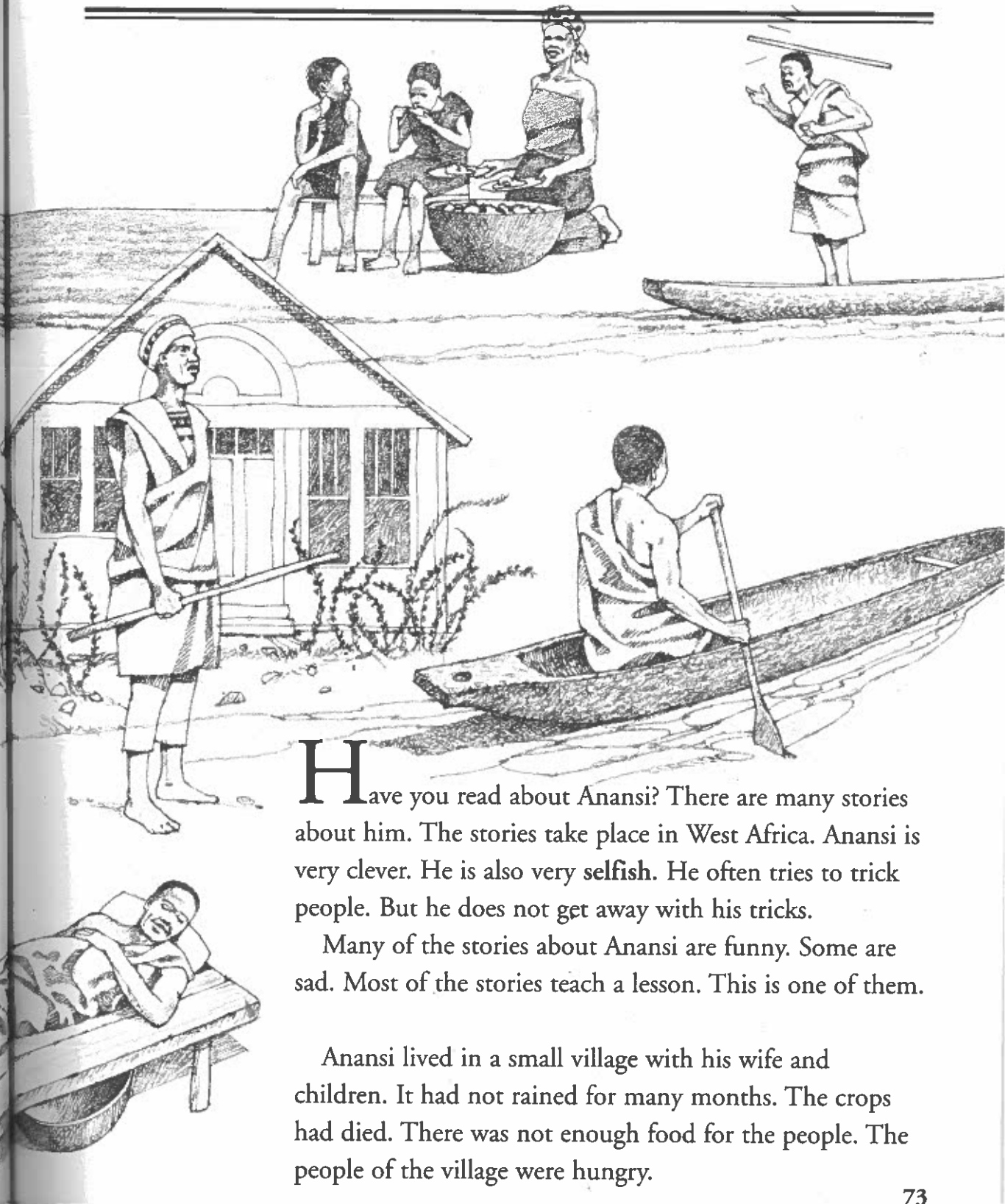
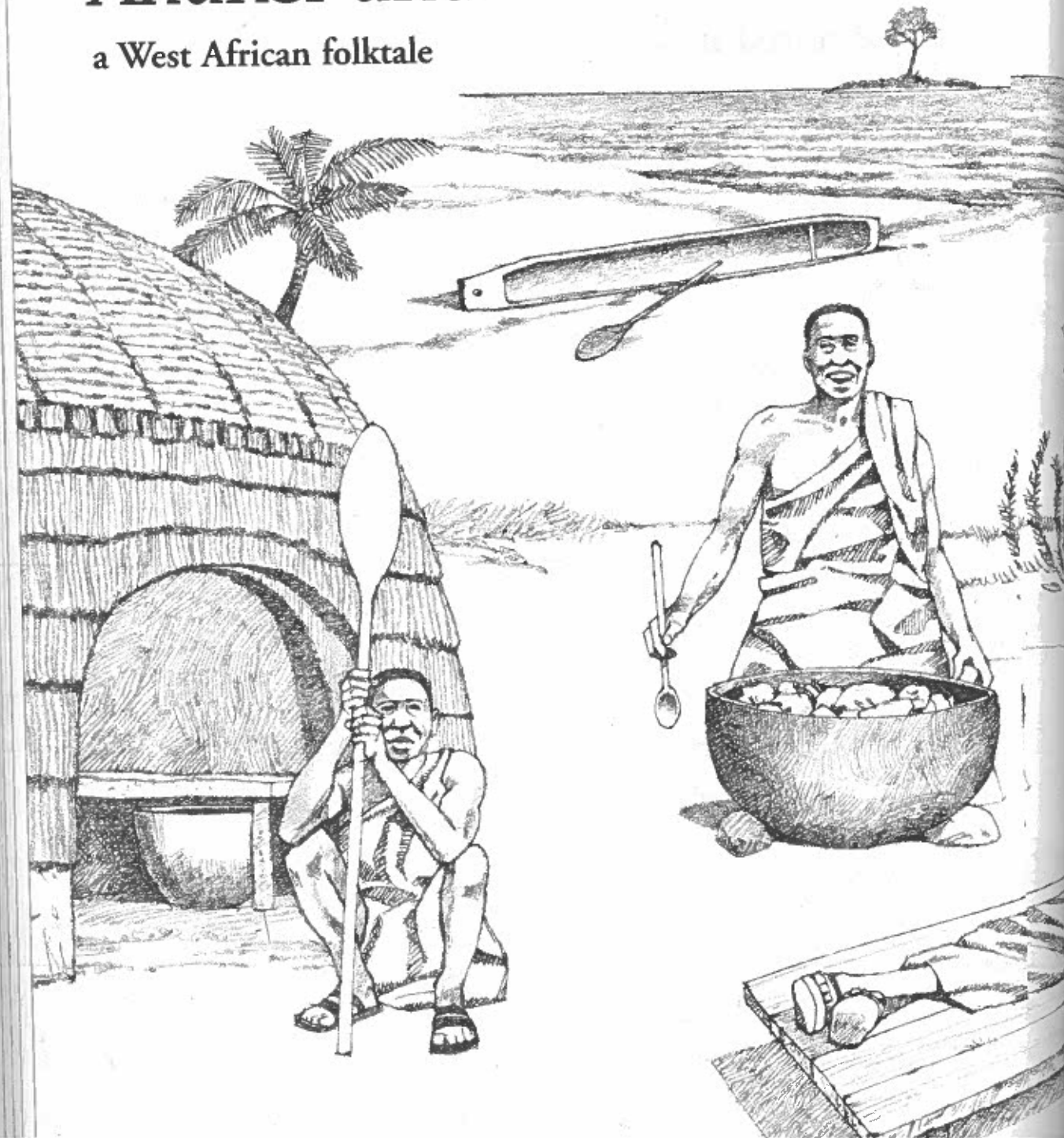
**appeared:** could be seen

**melted:** changed by heat into a liquid (something that flows like water). When ice becomes warm, it melts.

**punish:** to make someone suffer for doing something wrong

# Anansi and the Sea

a West African folktale



**H**ave you read about Anansi? There are many stories about him. The stories take place in West Africa. Anansi is very clever. He is also very selfish. He often tries to trick people. But he does not get away with his tricks.

Many of the stories about Anansi are funny. Some are sad. Most of the stories teach a lesson. This is one of them.

Anansi lived in a small village with his wife and children. It had not rained for many months. The crops had died. There was not enough food for the people. The people of the village were hungry.

One day Anansi was sitting outside his hut. He was looking out toward the sea. He was thinking, "I am very hungry. I wish I had something to eat. I have not had a good meal in a long time."

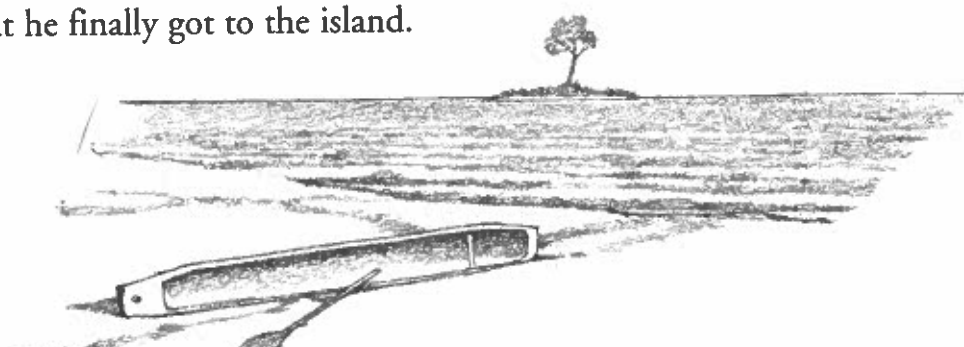
Suddenly, Anansi saw something in the middle of the sea. It was a tiny island. Anansi looked closer. He saw a tall tree growing on the island.

Anansi said to himself, "That island is far away. If only I could get there. I would climb that tree. I might find fruit on the tree."

Anansi walked down to the sea. He looked around. He saw an old boat lying on its side. The boat was small. It did not look very strong. But Anansi pulled the boat into the water. He got in the boat and began to row.

The waves were very strong. They pushed the boat back. Six times Anansi tried to get to the island. Six times the waves pushed him back. Anansi said, "I will try one more time."

This time the boat went over the waves. Anansi rowed as hard as he could. He rowed and rowed. It took a long time. But he finally got to the island.



Anansi tied the boat to the tree. He looked up at the tree. There was fruit at the top.

Anansi began to climb the tree. He got to the top. Then he picked a piece of fruit off the tree. He dropped the fruit down to the boat. But the fruit missed the boat. It fell into the water.

Anansi picked another piece of fruit. He looked down at the boat. He dropped the fruit. Again it missed the boat. The fruit fell into the sea.

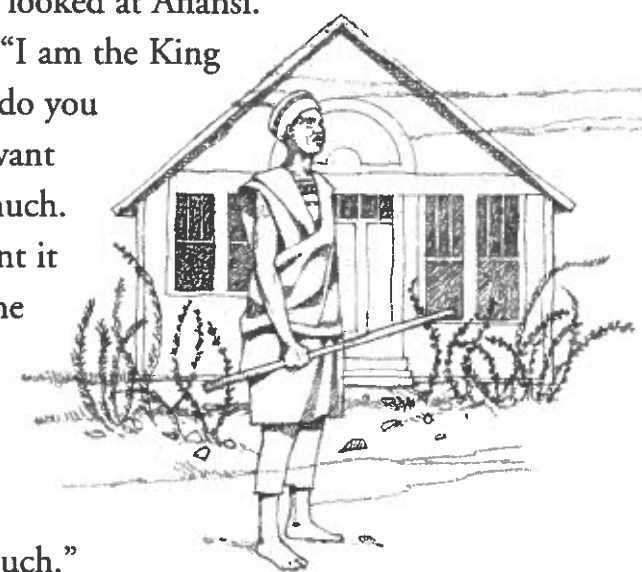
"*Aighhh!*" cried Anansi. He threw up his arms. Suddenly, Anansi was falling. *SPLASH!* He hit the water. He went down, down, down, down.

"I will drown!" Anansi thought to himself. He kept going down.

To his surprise, Anansi did not drown. He found himself standing at the bottom of the sea. He looked around. He saw a pretty little cottage. An old man came out of the cottage. The man looked at Anansi.

The man said, "I am the King of the Sea. What do you want? You must want something very much. Yes. You must want it very much to come down here to my cottage."

Anansi said, "I am hungry. I want food very much."





Anansi told his story to the King of the Sea. Anansi said, "It has not rained in my land. All the crops have died. Everyone is very hungry."

"I see," said the King of the Sea. "Your people have no food. That is sad. Very sad."

The King of the Sea went into his cottage. He came out with a large pot. He gave the pot to Anansi.

"Take this pot," said the King of the Sea. "It will make food for you and your family. You will never be hungry again."

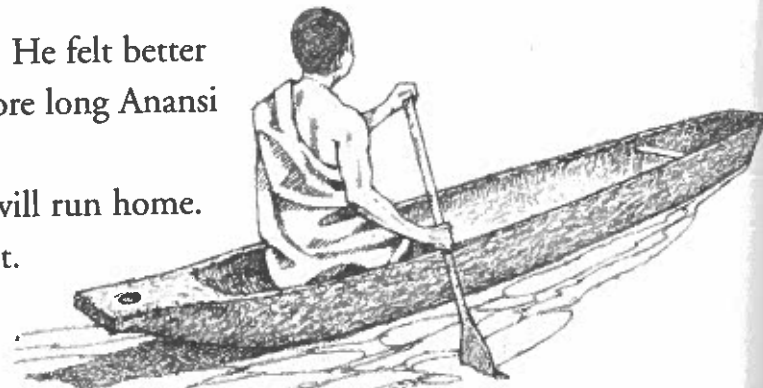
Anansi was very happy. He thanked the old man. He took the pot and left the bottom of the sea.

Anansi could not wait to try out the pot. He hurried back to the boat. He sat down. Then he said, "Pot. Pot. What you did for your master, do now for me."

At once all kinds of good food appeared. Anansi ate the food. It was a wonderful meal. It was the best meal that he ever had.

Then Anansi began to row. He felt better now. He rowed very fast. Before long Anansi reached land.

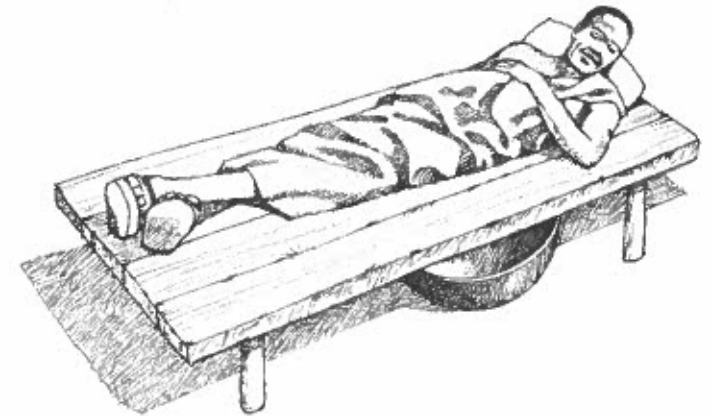
Anansi said to himself, "I will run home. I will show my family this pot. They will have a good meal."



They will enjoy it very much."

Anansi was almost home. Then he thought to himself, "My family may use up all the food the pot makes. Then there will be nothing left for me. I better not tell them about the pot. That way, I can have a good meal when I want one."

Anansi got to his house. There was no one home. He went to his room. He hid the pot. Then he lay down on his bed. He made believe he was hungry and tired.



Later his wife and children came home. "Where have you been?" asked Anansi's wife.

"I have been looking for food," Anansi said. "I could not find any."

"There is no food to be found," said Mrs. Anansi.

"That is so," said Anansi. "There is no food."

Anansi's wife and children were hungry. But Anansi did not think about them. All he cared about was the wonderful pot in his room.

When Anansi was hungry, he went to his room. There he had a good meal. Anansi's family got thinner and thinner. But Anansi got fatter and fatter.

"This is very strange," thought Mrs. Anansi. "My husband is getting fat. But we are growing thinner."

One afternoon Anansi was hungry. He went to his room and closed the door. He spoke to the pot. The pot filled with food. Anansi had a fine meal. Then he put away the pot.

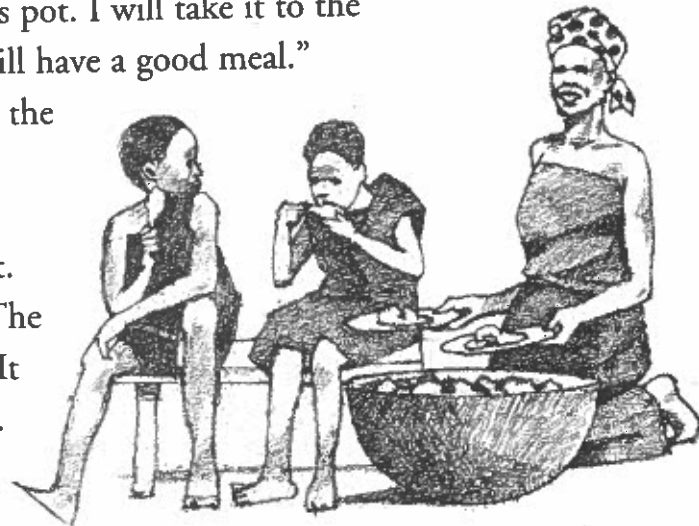
Anansi's son, Kweku, was standing outside the window. Kweku saw what happened.

Kweku waited until his father left the house. Then Kweku went to his father's room. He found the pot. He brought it to his mother. He told her what he had seen.

Mrs. Anansi called the other children. They spoke to the pot. The pot filled with food. And the hungry family had a wonderful meal.

When they finished eating, Mrs. Anansi said, "It was wrong for your father to hide this pot. I will take it to the village. Everyone in the village will have a good meal."

Mrs. Anansi took the pot into the village. She called the villagers together. The pot began to make food. People heard about the pot. More and more villagers came. The pot made more and more food. It got hotter and hotter and hotter. And then suddenly—it was gone! The pot had melted away!



What could be done? Anansi would be very angry.

Mrs. Anansi told her children, "Do not say a word about the pot."

Anansi came home later. He was hungry and wanted his supper. He went into his room. He went to the hiding place. He looked for the pot. But the pot was gone!

Anansi was very angry. Where was the pot? Someone must have found it! It must be someone in his family! He would find out who it was. He would punish that person! But first he had something to do.

Anansi said nothing. He waited until morning. Then he went down to the sea. He found the old boat. He pulled it into the water. He got into the boat and began to row.

This time the boat moved very swiftly. It went over the waves. It went straight to the little island.

Anansi wanted to see the King of the Sea. So Anansi did the same thing he did before. He tied the boat to the tree. He climbed to the top of the tree. He picked a piece of fruit. He dropped the fruit down to the boat. But this time the fruit did not miss! It went straight into the boat.

Anansi picked more pieces of fruit. He dropped them down. They went into the boat. Anansi was surprised.

He looked down at the water. Then Anansi jumped. *SPLASH!* He went down, down, down, down. Soon he was standing at the bottom of the sea. Anansi looked around. He saw the little cottage.

Anansi knocked on the door. "Who is there?" called the King of the Sea.

"It is me—Anansi."

The King of the Sea opened the door. "How can I help you?" he asked.

Anansi told the old man the whole story. Anansi finished by saying, "So I hid the pot. And now someone has taken it."

"I see," said the King of the Sea. He shook his head. Then he said, "I have something to give you."

This time he gave Anansi a very fine stick.

"Good-bye," said the King of the Sea.

Anansi hurried back to the boat. He could not wait to try his new gift.

"Stick, stick," Anansi said. "What you did for your master, do now for me."

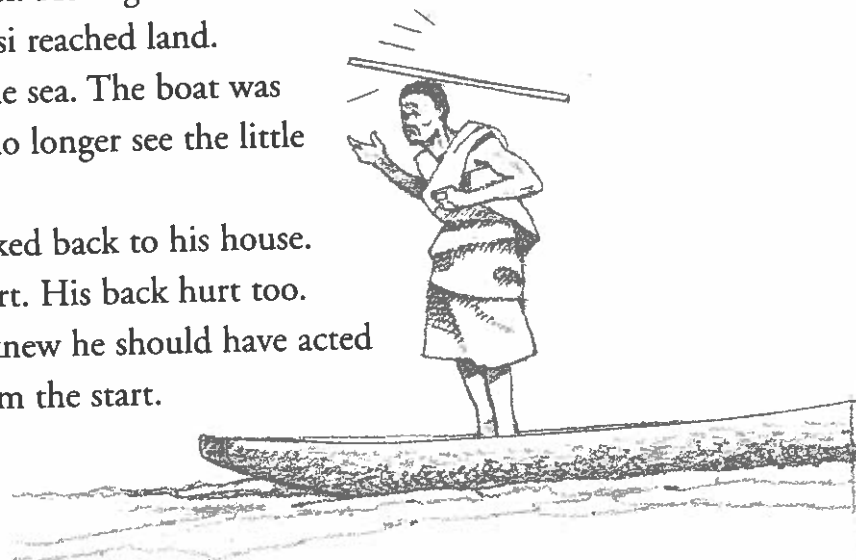
The stick began to beat Anansi. It would not stop. It beat him on his arms and legs. It beat his back.

Finally, Anansi stood up. He jumped out of the boat. He landed in the water. He began to swim.

After a while Anansi reached land.

He looked back at the sea. The boat was gone. And he could no longer see the little island.

Slowly Anansi walked back to his house. His arms and legs hurt. His back hurt too. Anansi was sad. He knew he should have acted more wisely right from the start.



## TELL ABOUT THE STORY.

Put an *x* in the box next to the right answer. Each sentence tells a *fact* about the story.

- The people in Anansi's village were  
 a. hungry.  
 b. happy.  
 c. young.
- Anansi climbed a tree to get  
 a. leaves.  
 b. fruit.  
 c. wood.
- Mrs. Anansi gave food to  
 a. Anansi and his friends.  
 b. the King of the Sea.  
 c. the people of the village.
- At the end of the story, the King of the Sea gave Anansi  
 a. money.  
 b. food.  
 c. a stick.

## ADD WORDS TO SENTENCES.

Complete the sentences below. Fill in each blank with one of the words in the box. Each word can be found in the story. There are five words and four blanks. This means that one word in the box will not be used.

Every day, rain \_\_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>

somewhere on the earth. It is true that \_\_\_\_\_<sub>2</sub> is important for

life. If there is too little rain, trees and plants die and there is not

\_\_\_\_\_<sub>3</sub> food. But too much rain can also \_\_\_\_\_<sub>4</sub> crops.

drown      enough  
rain  
hungry      falls

x 5 =   
NUMBER  
CORRECT

x 5 =

YOUR  
SCORE

x 5 =   
NUMBER  
CORRECT

x 5 =

YOUR  
SCORE

## LEARN NEW WORDS.

The vocabulary words are printed in **dark type** in the story. You may look back at the words before you answer these questions. Put an *x* in the box next to the right answer.

1. Anansi was selfish and kept the pot. Someone who is *selfish*  
 a. always helps others.  
 b. cares too little about others.  
 c. has many friends.
2. An old man lived in the cottage. The word *cottage* means  
 a. a small house.  
 b. a tall tree.  
 c. some large rocks.
3. Anansi hid the pot. The word *hid* means  
 a. lost.  
 b. told about.  
 c. put in a place that is hard to find.
4. The boat moved swiftly and soon reached land. The word *swiftly* means  
 a. quickly.  
 b. slowly.  
 c. loudly.

x 5 =   
NUMBER CORRECT      YOUR SCORE

## EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED.

Here is how to answer these questions. First think about what happened in the story. Then *figure out* (work out) the right answer. This is called *critical thinking*.

1. The King of the Sea probably gave the pot to Anansi because the old man  
 a. did not like the pot.  
 b. felt sorry for Anansi and the others.  
 c. did not need the pot.
2. Anansi wanted to make sure that  
 a. his wife had enough food.  
 b. everyone had enough food.  
 c. he had enough food.
3. Anansi's family was probably surprised that he  
 a. kept getting fatter.  
 b. looked for food.  
 c. could row so well.
4. The last line of the story shows that Anansi  
 a. was no longer hungry.  
 b. knew he did the wrong thing.  
 c. would never change.

x 5 =   
NUMBER CORRECT      YOUR SCORE

## SPOT STORY ELEMENTS.

Some story elements are **plot**, **character**, and **setting**. (See page 3.) Put an *x* in the box next to the right answer.

1. What happened last in the *plot*?  
 a. The stick began to beat Anansi.  
 b. Anansi saw a tree on the island.  
 c. The old man gave Anansi a pot.
2. The *main character* in the story is  
 a. the King of the Sea.  
 b. Mrs. Anansi.  
 c. Anansi.
3. Which sentence best describes (tells about) the *character* of Anansi?  
 a. He cared very much about his family.  
 b. He liked to help others.  
 c. He tried to trick others.
4. The story is *set* in  
 a. West Africa.  
 b. Florida.  
 c. New York.

x 5 =   
NUMBER CORRECT      YOUR SCORE

## THINK SOME MORE ABOUT THE STORY.

Your teacher might want you to write your answers.

- Why do you think the King of the Sea gave Anansi the stick? Do you think that was the right thing for the King of the Sea to do? Explain.
- Suppose that Anansi had told his family about the pot. How do you think the story would have ended?
- What lesson or lessons does the story teach?

Write your scores in the boxes below. Then write your score on pages 138 and 139.

TELL ABOUT THE STORY  
+  
 ADD WORDS TO SENTENCES  
+  
 LEARN NEW WORDS  
+  
 EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED  
+  
 SPOT STORY ELEMENTS  
=  
 TOTAL SCORE: Story 6