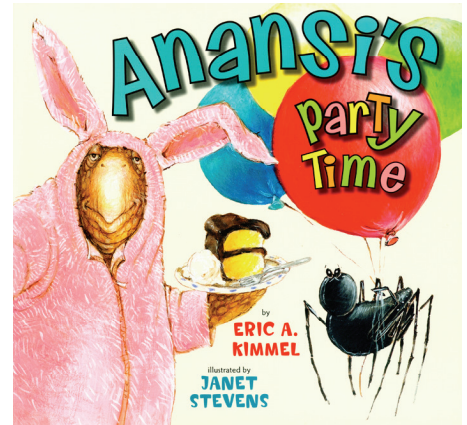


Ideas and Activities to Use with
Anansi's Party Time
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Ideas and Activities
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Themes: Anansi tales, parties, writing, spiders

Before Reading:

1. Discuss the background of the Anansi stories. (see handout)
2. Explain to students that many different cultures have trickster tales that began as oral tales. This is why we have variations, just like fairy tales. The Anansi (spider) tales come from West Africa. Some Native American tribes use different animals as tricksters in their tales such as coyote, crow, and raven.
3. Look at the cover of *Anansi's Party Time*. Who are the characters are? (Turtle and Anansi) Who is the party for? What do they think will happen at the party? Are they familiar with any of the other Anansi books by Kimmel and Stevens? If so, do those books give them any ideas?
4. List some of the things that might happen at the party. What kind of a party is it? (See if they can list other reasons for a party besides a birthday.) Return to the list after reading the book.

During Reading:

5. After reading the invitation, ask the students to tell what they know about how turtles move. Then show the invitation and the route from Turtle's house to Anansi's house and the party. What do they notice? Why?
6. After reading "Anansi slammed the door," ask "Why didn't Turtle know it was a costume party?"
7. After reading "...walk back to Anansi's house," ask if they think he is ready for the party now. Why or why not?
8. What does Anansi mean "bring a dish?" Why does Turtle need one? What do you think will happen?
9. When Turtle realizes he has been tricked, what do you think he will do?
10. What did you think of Turtle's trick? Do you think he planned to send them to the moon? Why or why not?

After Reading:

11. What will happen next? Have students pair up and share their ideas. Then form groups of four and share. Next have each group pick one of their ideas to share with the class.
12. Return to the list made before reading to see how their ideas compared to the story. Remind students that just because their ideas didn't match, that doesn't mean they are not clever and thoughtful. The author just had different ideas than they did. This is what is so much fun about

writing. Many people can write about the same thing and all the stories will have different ideas. The students may want to write a story about a party using some ideas from the list.

13. Point out some of the language in the story (words in color such as *sploosh* and *fwoom*). Explain that these are words that imitate sounds. These kinds of words have a fancy name: onomatopoeia. Share some other books that use onomatopoeia such as *BAM BAM BAM* by Merriam, *Rain Drop Splash* by Tresselt, *Roller Coaster* by Frazee, or *That's Good! That's Bad!* by Cuyler. Some comic strips, comic books, and graphic novels are also good sources. After hearing some examples, see if the students can create a list of sound words. This list can be posted and students can be encouraged to experiment with onomatopoeia.
14. Read *Dear Tyrannosaurus Rex*. Compare it to *Anansi's Party Time* using the **Comparison of Two Stories** page. Remind students to think about how the host treated the guest.
15. Read *Mañana Iguana* by Paul, *Stanley's Party* by Bailey, or one (or more) of the other party books listed on the **Related Books** page. Discuss the kinds of things that happened at these parties: games played, refreshments served, gifts, etc. Talk about parties the students have had.
16. Have students plan a party for Anansi that he will enjoy. They can do some of the following:
 - ! Design an invitation telling the time, place, and what kind of party it is.
 - ! Make a list of those invited to the party.
 - ! Plan a theme that is related to this book, Anansi, and/or his other books and tell how the guests should dress for this theme.
 - ! Choose food and drinks to be served that will fit the theme.
 - ! Plan entertainment, decorations, games, prizes, etc. that also fit the theme.
 - ! Use the **Party Planning Sheet** if they like.
17. Ask students to think of some presents they might give Anansi that he would like. Use the **Presents for Anansi** page for them to record their answers. They might talk with partners first or work together on the page. They should make a list of five to eight gifts Anansi might request for his or her birthday and explain why he would like these things.
18. Share the other Anansi books by Kimmel and Stevens. Use the **Five Story Comparison sheet** to compare all of them. If you don't read all of the tales, use just the columns that compare the ones you have read.
19. Where did the Anansi stories come from? Read aloud *Anansi Does the Impossible!* by Aardema. Compare this story with the information about the Anansi Tales used before reading.
20. Read aloud *Sophie's Dream* by Spinelli. The main character is a spider who is quite different from Anansi. Use the **Character Comparison Sheet** or a **Venn Diagram** to compare the Sophie and Anansi. This can be done as a class, in pairs, or individually. Use the **Dream Web** so that students can write words for special things on their own webs.
21. Read aloud one of the trickster tales listed on the **Related Books** page. It can be compared with *Anansi's Party Time* using the **Two Story Comparison Sheet**.
22. Share the **Trickster Tale Information sheet** with the class. Have them choose an animal for their trickster tale. It does not have to be one of the ones listed. Let students write a trickster tale. If they want, they can use the **Trickster Tale Planning Sheet** to help them plan. With younger

students, write a class story. Then if students want to write another tale on their own, they can do that during writing workshop time.

23. Use the **Readers Theater script** for *Anansi's Party Time* that was prepared by Melia Jasso of the Driftwood Reading Council. You might want to pair this with other scripts so several groups can practice and perform for each other. Paste this URL into your browser to download scripts: www.oregonread.org/RT. Previous Gallagher nominee *Mañana Iguana* is also about a party (see **Related Books** page). Other good choices are *The Perfect Pet* (another Gallagher nominee) and *Stella's Runaway Book* (related to *Library Lion*). Ones not related that would also be good choices are *Clara Caterpillar*, *Earthquack*, *Bat Loves the Night* (all former Gallagher nominees), *Click, Clack, MOO* and *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge*. Looking at the size will give you an idea of how long the script is.
Note: With younger students you may want to start with the scripts for choral reading or poems for two voices to get them used to reading aloud and performing (those listed without RT).
24. Read aloud *Diary of a Spider* by Cronin. Have students write a diary entry for Anansi after he has tricked Turtle or write a diary entry for Turtle after he has tricked Anansi. They should explain what happened and how they, as the character, feel about it.
25. Share *From Pictures to Words*, Janet's book on writing. This excellent book covers the whole process from getting an idea to having the book published. Janet's characters from previous books beg her to write a book about them. She claims she is just an illustrator and can't write a book, but with their urging and confidence in her ("You can if you try"), she decides to start. She picks three characters to help her, and together they create the story. She models how others can give you ideas, but the final decision belongs to the writer. (The 'author' is the **authority**.)
26. Sometimes students think that authors write something just once and get it published. They don't realize that these authors revise, revise, and revise some more. Seeing a draft of an author's work and comparing it with the final version is sometimes an eye-opener for students. Without the author there, it is hard to know why they changed something, but often we can surmise. Sometimes there are also editor's comments that give more information. For two pages of a draft of Eric's *Anansi and The Talking Melon* as well as his final version, paste this URL into your browser: www.oregonread.org/drafts. Download the both versions and let students work in pairs to compare them. Students can use the **Author Drafts** page to list the changes they find and why they think the author made these changes. There is also a note from Eric to his editor, Margery, who is pictured in Janet's book *From Pictures to Words*. Drafts of selections from other author's books are available in this folder.
27. Some students may want to learn about real spiders. *Spiders and Their Web Sites* is just one of the many good informational books available.
28. Just for fun, students can make a paper spider. It could be used for the illustration of an original Anansi story. See **Fold A Spider** directions.
29. Find out more about author Eric Kimmel (a former ORA president) by visiting his website: www.ericakimmel.com
30. Read the information about Janet Stevens (included). Find out more about author/illustrator Janet Stevens by visiting her website: www.janetstevens.com.

Anansi's Party Time Related Books

Anansi:

Anansi and the Magic Stick by Kimmel, ill Stevens
Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock by Kimmel, ill Stevens
Anansi and the Talking Melon by Kimmel, ill Stevens (draft)
Anansi and the Tug O' War by Bobby and Sherry Norfolk, ill Baird Hoffmire
Anansi Does the Impossible! by Verna Aardema, ill Lisa Desimini
Anansi Finds a Fool by Verna Aardema, ill Bryna Waldman
Anansi Goes Fishing by Kimmel, ill Stevens
Anansi the Spider by Gerald McDermott

Parties:

Birthday Presents by Cynthia Rylant, ill Sucie Stevenson
Dear Tyrannosaurus Rex by Lisa McClatchy, ill John Manders
Fiesta Fiasco by Ann Whitford Paul, ill Ethan Long
Mañana Iguana by Ann Whitford Paul, ill Ethan Long
Party Animals by Katie Davis
Stanley's Party by Linda Bailey, ill Bill Slavin

Spiders:

Charlotte's Web by E. B. White, ill Garth Williams
Diary of a Spider by Doreen Cronin, ill by Harry Bliss
Sophie's Masterpiece by Eileen Spinelli, ill by Jane Dyer
Spiders and Their Web Sites by Margery Facklam, ill Alan Male

Trickster Tales:

Coyote by Gerald McDermott
Jabuti by Gerald McDermott
Old Cricket by Lisa Wheeler, ill Ponder Goemmel
Papagayo by Gerald McDermott
Tops and Bottoms by Janet Stevens
Zomo, the Rabbit by Gerald McDermott

Onomatopoeia:

BAM BAM BAM by Eve Merriam, ill Dan Yaccarino
Rain Drop Splash by Alvin Tresselt, ill Leonard Weisgard
Roller Coaster by Marla Frazee
That's Good! That's Bad! by Margery Cuyler, ill David Catrow

Books by Eric A. Kimmel:

Cactus Soup
Charlie Drives the Stage
Easy Work
The Gingerbread Man
The Greatest of All
Hershel & the Hanukkah Goblins
The Runaway Tortilla
Three Samurai Cats (winner of the 2007
Gallagher award)
And MANY MORE!
www.ericakimmel.com

Books by Janet Stevens:

*From Pictures to Words: A Book About
Making a Book*
www.janetstevens.com

Books by Janet Stevens and her sister Susan Stevens Crummel:

And the Dish Ran Away with the Spoon
Cook-a-Doodle-Do
The Great Fuzz Frenzy
*Help Me, Mr. Mutt! Expert Answers for Dogs
with People Problems*