

# Anansi and the Big Pot



Anansi has a big plan.  
He **wishes** to get all  
the wisdom in the  
world and keep it in  
one pot. Then Anansi  
will be the most wise  
of all! The pot has a  
grass lid. Anansi grins  
at it the way a cat  
grins at a shut dish.



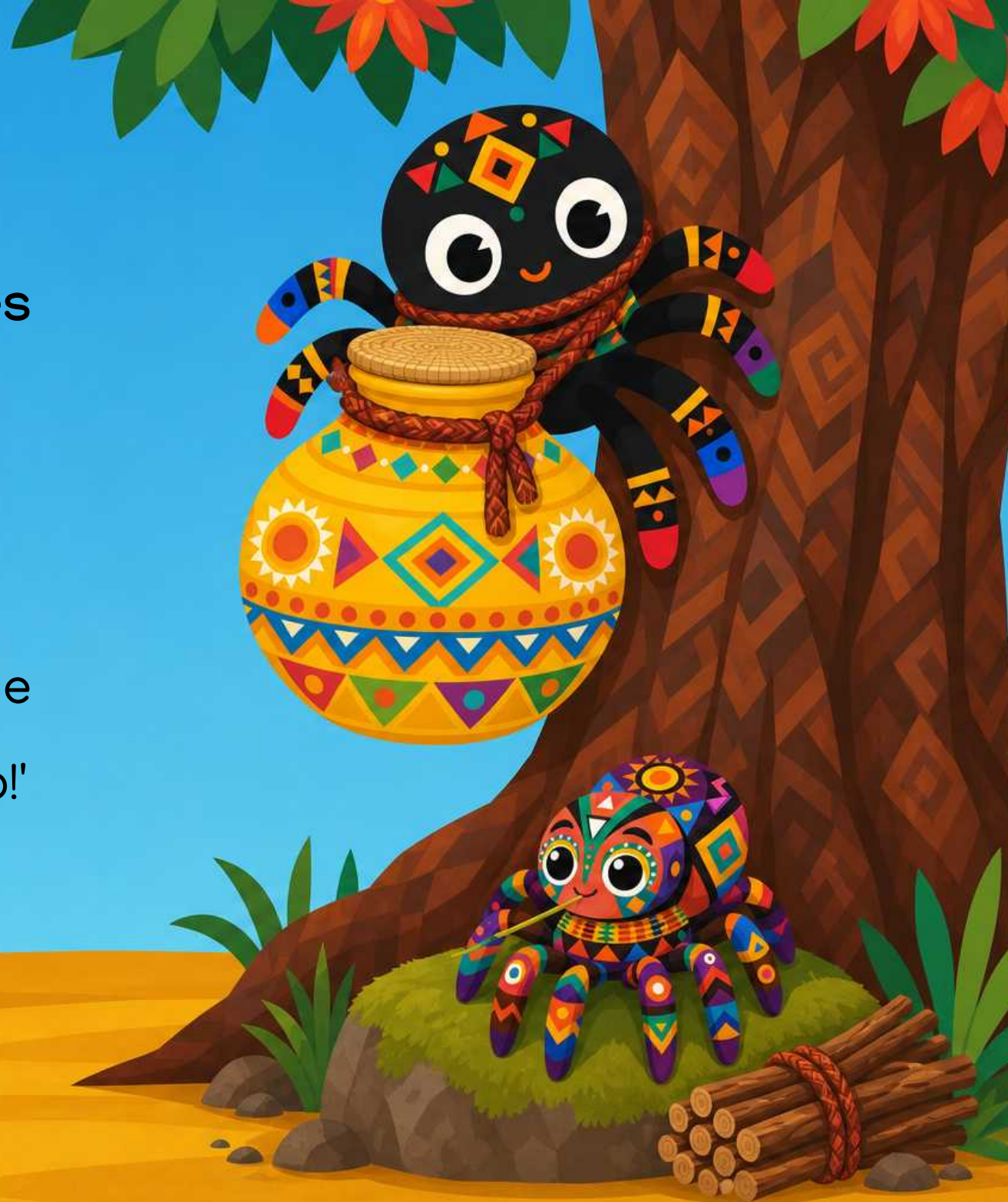


Anansi sets off. At each path he stops each one and asks for the best thing they know. Hornbill teaches him to wait. Crab teaches him to move sideways to get ahead. Anansi tips each bit into the jug and claps the lid on tight. By the time he reaches the tall tree, the jug feels full and very heavy.

'I will hide the pot up in the **branches**,' Anansi says,  
'where no one can reach it.' He ties the pot to his front  
with a rope and starts to climb. But the pot swings and  
bangs the trunk and sends him back down. He tries again.  
Slide. Again. Slide. The smooth trunk is no help at all.



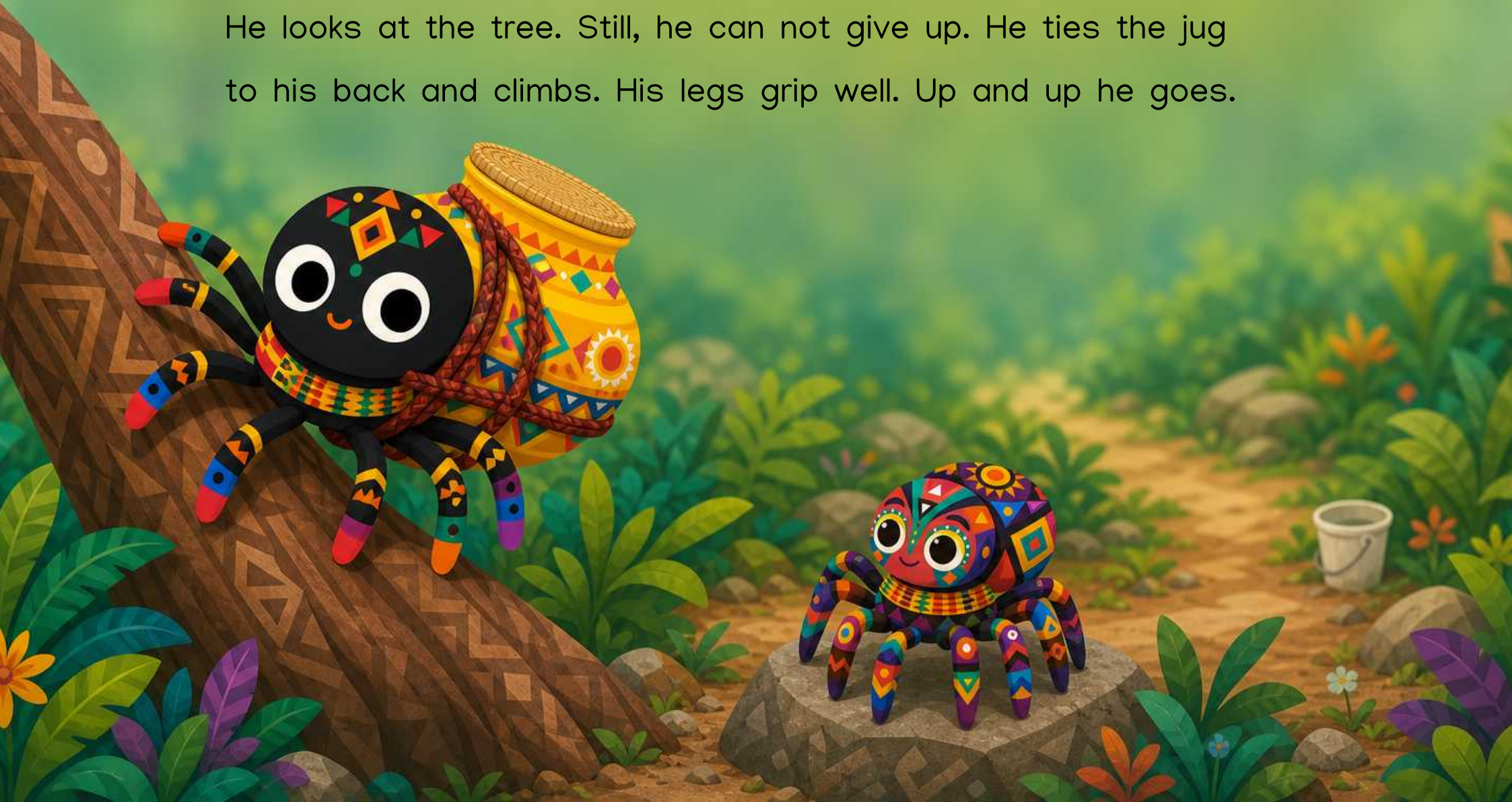
Down on a low rock sits  
Anansi's small son,  
Ntikuma. The boy watches  
the whole sliding mess  
and thinks. 'Father,' he  
calls up, 'why not tie the  
pot to the back? Then the  
legs can be free to climb!  
It is such a simple  
thought that Anansi  
freezes on the bark.





A hot blush **rushes** up  
Anansi from his first leg to  
his last. All day he gets  
wisdom from the world,  
and now his own small son  
gives him the best bit for  
free. The pot was to hold  
it all. But this thought  
came from outside the pot,  
and Ntikuma did not even  
go looking.

'If my small son has wisdom I do not,' Anansi says, 'then wisdom must be all over. With the man who **fishes** on the lake. With the old women who read the clouds.' He looks at the jug. He looks at the tree. Still, he can not give up. He ties the jug to his back and climbs. His legs grip well. Up and up he goes.



He is almost at the first high branch when the rope slips. The jug tilts. Anansi grabs for it and lets go of the trunk, and for one long moment he feels himself falling. The jug falls faster. It hits a root with a crack that scares the birds from the branches, and the lid spins off into the ferns below.





The wisdom bursts out of the pot and flies off on the wind. Some lands in the flowers by the stream. Some **splashes** into the stream. Some drifts into the ears of sleeping kids. Anansi lands in the ferns with a soft thud, not hurt, but the pot sits in two bits and the wisdom is gone.

Anansi sits in the ferns for a long time. Ntikuma sits by him and says nothing, for that is the most wise thing to do. The forest is quiet but for the river and the birds. Then a small bird **perches** on the broken pot and sings three bright notes. Anansi looks at his empty legs and feels strangely light.



'I got the hornbill's wisdom to wait,' Anansi says slowly, 'but I did not use it. I got the crab's wisdom to move sideways, but I climbed straight up past all the branches.' He counts on his legs and runs out of legs first. 'The wisdom was never in the pot,' Ntikuma says softly. 'It was in the using of it.' Anansi opens his mouth to argue, then shuts it again.





From that day on, wisdom  
lives in the wind and the  
water, in old songs and new  
tales, in old women and in  
small boys who watch from  
rocks. When someone gets too  
sure they have all the  
answers, a breeze tosses their  
plans, and a smile spreads.  
Anansi tells the tale on himself,  
for a spider who can grin at  
his own plans is hard to beat.

The old Sky-God looks down from the sky and is glad. Not for the fall, the Sky-God is too kind for that, but because the wisdom spread to each part of the forest, not stuck in one pot. Now and then, late in the day, a child **fixes** a problem that stumps every grown up, and the wise voice sounds like Ntikuma. No one holds all the wisdom, not even Anansi. And that is a very wise thing indeed.





# Anansi and the Big Pot

Anansi has a plan so big it makes all eight of his eyes shine: he'll gather every scrap of wisdom in the world and lock it inside one pot, so everyone must come to him for answers. But how do you carry something that heavy up a tall, smooth tree? And what happens when his own small son, watching quietly from a rock nearby, offers an idea that isn't in the pot at all? This Bookbot level practices 'es' plurals with words like 'teaches', 'watches', 'wishes', 'branches', and 'splashes'.

**Reading Skills:** <es>

branches, fishes, fixes, perches, reaches, rushes, splashes, teaches, tosses, watches, wishes

## Learn to read with confidence

The Bookbot app and its carefully designed decodable books help children practise the sounds and words they are learning, building strong phonics and reading skills one step at a time. In the app, children can listen to stories read aloud, follow highlighted words as they are spoken, and read independently when they are ready. Together, the decodable books and oral reading support help develop accuracy, fluency, confidence and a love of reading. Learn more at [www.bookbotkids.com](http://www.bookbotkids.com).

