



## Anansi and the Magic Stick

*Eric A. Kimmel , Janet Stevens*

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It's a fine bright day, and all the animals are working--all except Anansi, that is! He's sleeping, as usual. Warthog, Lion, and Zebra laugh so hard at his messy house that they wake him up. Anansi stomps off in a huff--right into an amazing secret! Hyena has a magic stick that follows his orders. If Anansi steals the stick, he'll never have to work again, and his home will be the neatest one in town. Is the magic stick his secret for success? Or the beginning of disasters he can't even imagine?

## Anansi and the Magic Stick Details

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Author : Eric A. Kimmel , Janet Stevens

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# From Reader Review Anansi and the Magic Stick for online ebook

## Jenny says

This version of Anansi followed the same, traditional pattern, but was retold with a different plot line. Anansi plays tricks on other animals around, but he discovers a magical stick that he wants to use. He tricks the hyena and other animals so that he can steal it and use its magical powers. This version adds a creative spin on this traditional tale, leaving a disastrous mess in the end. It would be fun to read with students, encouraging them to point out similarities and differences compared to other versions.

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## Chelsea Rusch says

Anansi and the Magic Stick is a tale about an ant (Anansi) who is very lazy. He has a messy house and lays around sleeping all day rather than tidying up. When he notices Hyena napping with a clean house, Anansi finds out his secret is a magic stick. Anansi steals the stick and uses it to clean up his house and water his garden. Unfortunately, Anansi falls asleep while the stick is watering the garden and the area becomes flooded. Hyena saves everyone from being swept away, and Anansi goes back to plotting new tricks. This picturebook, like many folk tales, can be used to teach a moral lesson. In this tale, Anansi is lazy and causes a lot of trouble. Instead of learning a lesson, however, he goes on as if nothing ever happened. This could be used to have a discussion with children about what the right choice would have been for Anansi. The illustrations are good and Stevens does a wonderful job of using framing to give the reader a feeling of time passing. When the great flood comes, the illustration is a full-bleed, making the reader see that the flood is so big that it extends beyond the pages of the book.

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## Sivyu says

Eric A. Kimmel. Anansi and the Magic Stick (2002). Anansi is a West African Trickster god who takes the form of the Spider. This is a retelling of the Liberian fable *The Magic Hoe*. Anansi is lazy and always looking for a shortcut. When he sees that Hyena has a magic stick that does his housework, Anansi steals it for himself so he never has to work again. He sets the stick off doing chores, but it doesn't always come out the way he wants. The illustrations are colorful and charming. They have modern elements that will let the reader connect an old fable to today, without losing the timelessness. The fun repetitive spells make this a good read aloud book. It would work for a unit on spiders, African gods, farming, or animals. Target audience: 4-9 years.

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## Corinne says

Trying to find a way to shirk his work, Anansi causes problems. Use of repetitious phrase to make the magic stick work. Not sure if this is an African tale or if the author just used African animals to tell his story. Great illustrations.

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## **Anthony says**

As ever, more Anansi fun!

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## **Antoinette Scully says**

All the animals say that Anansi is lazy because he never cleans his house and never takes care of his garden. Hyena sleeps all day too- but his house is clean! What is his secret? A Magic Stick! Anansi knows just what to do... // The moral of the story is that hard work yields the best outcome. I thought it was cute but not life-changing. Many people grow up with these stories but I never did. I liked it but I wouldn't rush out to add it to my home library.

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## **RLL220F16\_Sheila Williams says**

Here comes Anansi, and his laziness. Why work, just borrow something without permission, and see how it unfolds. Hopefully your tale ends differently than Anansi's.

This spin on the Anansi tales, demonstrates how important it is to ask for permission before taking someone else belongings. Since Anansi would probably never accomplish such a thing, at least he should listen carefully.

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## **Hannah says**

Though I love trickster tales and Anansi, I am doubting the authenticity of this story. Anansi is a character known as a trickster to outsmart his problems. Here, he is depicted as lazy and troublesome. I am left feeling disappointed with this book.

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## **Kerri says**

Lazy Anansi causing trouble. Pretty pictures as always and a fun little story.

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## **K.Harv says**

Do you believe a stick could have so much power? Anansi was not interested in working like his other friends he wanted to find another way to accomplish his task. He went to investigate how others were able to clean so well and borrowed a friend's stick. Taking the stick from his friend resulted in all types of cleaning mishaps occurring.

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## **Rll52013\_andrea says**

Well, I am not an Eric Kimmel fan when it comes to his Anansi books, definitely not. I especially don't care for the illustrations that go with his text and I would like to have a hint somewhere in the text or illustrations that this is an African folktale; there is none. Anansi should be introduced to the reader in a way that reflects some background and he should be shown to have more personality. The illustrator, Janet Stevens, puts modern day water-wings on her animals and uses a garden hose and folding lawn chair in the pictures-the entire thing is very confusing in its setting and characterization and, because of this, it's inauthentic as well. Kimmel is in no way an insider in Anansi's world and he has shown nothing to lead me to believe he has "done his homework." The illustrator includes herself and Kimmel in the double-page spread in the center of the book as some personal reference and the style she uses to depict everything is completely incongruent to the folktale. Anansi's trickster nature does not come through to the reader and the book is more confusing than it is educational in any way.

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## **Sarah Holland says**

Personal Response: This book West African tale had a lot of elements beloved by young readers-magic, talking animals, trickery, and a surprising ending. The illustrations were also very bright and colorful, grabbing my attention.

### Purposes

-read independently: Student's will be able to explore cause and effect through this fun story. The spider is too lazy to do chores, so he gets around them with a little magic, but it is not always for the best.

-read for curriculum: This book would be fun to expand to art class. Students could illustrate what they would do if they had a magic stick. Would they have it do chores, get them out of school, give them a special power, etc?

-key literary elements: I would likely explore theme with students. The main theme is to not find the easy way out of situations as it will often leave a bigger mess than just doing what you are supposed to do. We could tie this in to their artwork that I previously mentioned by having them examine how their magic wishes could be beneficial as well as harmful.

### Age Level

This book is appropriate for students in grades K-2. The theme is simple, plus the artwork project is great for students first exploring books from a more critical stance than they are used to. Art is a great way to "dip their toes" into evaluation and deeper understanding.

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## **Aliyah Inge-hanif says**

Anansi and the Magic Stick by Eric A. Kimmel and illustrations by Janet Stevens is a folklore book intended for the ages of five years old and above. The story is about lazy trickster spider. He steals a magic stick from a hyena and of course things get a little out of control.

I enjoyed the story and think it would be wonderful for children under the age it was intended for as well. I do not like the way the story ended. It would have been better if had a conclusion that children can really understand the messages that was being given. It does not make a correction to Anansi improper behavior of being lazy or stealing and at the end does not show in any way how he has or could have changed. While I did really love the illustrations I did not like that the author and illustrators made a random appearance in the illustrations of the book. This aspect seemed to be out of place and inconstant with the animal theme. I also do not like that this folklore does not give a clear reference as to what culture it was from. Because of all of these things I could not give the book a full five star review.

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### **Eva Leger says**

This was the same as the other Anansi books we've read. Julia and I both totally love *Janet Stevens'* illustrations and we both totally love *Eric A. Kimmel's* stories. We disagree on the narrator whose name I now forget. Julia likes all of the voices, especially Anansi the Spider's while I can't stand Anansi's voice. So far all of the Anansi books we've read have been audio books (with paperback prints for following along) so the next one will probably be only print so I can see which is preferable for us.

In this story lazy Anansi steals a magic stick from another animal and causes the mayhem he's known for. You'd think Anansi would have booted out of town long ago but the others are very forgiving. I'd have kicked his little spider butt personally.

The ending is the best part I think, when the owner of the magic stick comes to reclaim his property and turns what's "bad" into what's "good".

Anansi doesn't really seem to be a character everyone would love. I know from reviews here and elsewhere that a lot of parents aren't partial to tricky characters but I don't have a problem with this and I think the sort of book this is has a lot of teaching potential.

This is just as good as the other Anansi's we've read which are Anansi and the Talking Melon and Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock and maybe one other. I'll be ordering Anansi Goes Fishing soon to read myself with Julia, instead of listening to the audio.

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### **Connie says**

Reading this book, I was reminded intensely of Strega Nona.

Of course, this sort of story - a "Sorcerer's Apprentice" or "Why the Sea is Salt" sort of tale, where a magical device gets out of hand and won't stop, is common throughout the world. And now that I've told you THAT you probably have the whole story in your mind already.

This version is better than some versions of that story I've seen, but not as good as others (for example, Strega Nona itself). Nor is it as good as other Anansi stories by this author (or possibly others, I'm lacking those right now). If you get it cheap, go for it, but I wouldn't buy it just to have it, this book is not a must-have for every library.

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