

Anansi and Chameleon (story)

Part 1

Anansi is a very clever spider. He is always playing tricks on others. Sometimes it helps him to get what he wants, but sometimes it doesn't.

A long time ago, Anansi and **Chameleon** lived in the same village. Anansi was the richest. He owned the biggest farm.

One year, no rain fell on Anansi's fields. His crops started to die.

Chameleon had lots of rain on his fields. They were green and his crops were growing big and healthy.

"This is not good," said Anansi to himself. "I am the richest! My fields must be the best!"

So he went to Chameleon and offered to buy his fields. However, Chameleon did not want to sell. Anansi offered more and more money, but Chameleon was not interested.

Anansi was angry. "How dare Chameleon refuse to sell his fields to me," he thought. "I will show him who is boss!"

The next morning, he went to Chameleon's fields and started to pick Chameleon's crops. As you can imagine, Chameleon was furious. He grabbed a big stick and chased Anansi away.

Anansi was getting more and more angry. "I must think of a plan!" he shouted. And before long he had an idea.

Now, something you must know, is that when a chameleon walks, it leaves no tracks. This is important. You'll soon find out why.



The next day Anansi went to the chief of the village and told him that Chameleon had stolen his fields. "How can you prove this?" asked the chief.

Anansi took the chief to the fields. "Look how hard I have been working in my fields!" he cried.

And indeed, there were many footprints in the fields, all belonging to Anansi. There was no sign of Chameleon in his own fields. Because, remember, a chameleon leaves no tracks. But the chief forgot that. And he did not give Chameleon a chance to tell his side of the story.

So, there and then, the chief decided that the fields belonged to Anansi.

Imagine how Chameleon felt!

"Anansi has tricked me again!" he said angrily. "I have to get back at him."

Part 2

Chameleon had a plan. Now he was ready to put it into action. First, he started to dig a hole in the ground. It was a small hole.

He climbed into the hole and dug and dug until he had made a huge cave that went in many **directions** under the ground. But from outside the hole still looked small.

Next, Chameleon made a beautiful coat. He made it out of the thin branches of a **vine** plant. Then he covered it with flies. When sunlight falls on flies' wings, they shine in all sorts of lovely colours. Chameleon knew this. So he waited until the sun was at its brightest, and then, carrying this beautiful coat, he walked down to the fields to find Anansi.

"What a beautiful coat," thought Anansi, as Chameleon came towards him. "It would be a perfect gift for the chief, to keep him on my side!" Putting on his most friendly smile, he said, "Hello, my friend. I hope you are not upset with me anymore. By the way, I love your coat. Won't you sell it to me?"



"Well," said Chameleon, "I don't want to sell it to you. But there is something you can do for me. Then you can have the coat."

"What is that?" asked Anansi, feeling worried that Chameleon would ask for his fields back.

"See that little hole there? If you can fill it with food, I will give you my coat," said Chameleon.

"Oh, that's easy," **boasted** Anansi "I can do that easily."

"Good," answered Chameleon. "In that case you'd better begin."

Chameleon knew it would take Anansi much longer than he realised. He laughed to himself, watching Anansi work so hard to fill the huge cave.

Chameleon now had some food to help him through the difficult times.

Part 3

Finally, the coat was Anansi's. He grabbed the coat and quickly ran to the chief's house.

The chief could not believe his eyes. "Thank you! This is the most beautiful coat I have ever seen!" he cried.

The chief walked around in the village in his shiny coat. Everyone admired it. The colours were bright and beautiful when the sun shone on the flies.



But slowly, the vines that were under the flies started drying out. One day, there was a loud SNAP as the dead vines suddenly broke. The flies buzzed off in every direction. Oh no! There was no more coat! There stood the chief in the middle of the village, **naked**. The chief felt **ashamed** while the villagers laughed at him.

"Where is that Anansi?" the chief shouted. "How dare he trick me like this! He will be punished!"

This time, Chameleon got the chance to tell his side of the story.

Once the chief found out how Anansi had lied about the

fields, he said to him, "I order you to return Chameleon's fields. And you must also give him your best field."

And at that very moment it started to rain on Anansi's fields for the first time in months.

Imagine how Anansi felt about this!



Think about it

1. Tell the story in your own words. First say some sentences about Part 1, then some about Part 2 and then some about Part 3.
2. Who was your favourite character, Anansi or Chameleon? Why?
3. Do you think the chief was a wise or a foolish man? Why do you say so?