

An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library

by

Bontle Senne

published by Human & Rousseau, 2021



A reading guide for Gr 4-6 FAL

This study guide was written and compiled by **Carolyn Morton**.

It is meant as a resource for the teacher in the classroom to help learners comprehend, enjoy and interpret this novel. It has been written for use in Grade 4 to 6 for Home Language or First Additional Language learners and follows the guidelines set out in the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS).

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Section One: Introduction

Note: Throughout this study guide, you will find underlined words. These words have been defined in the study guide glossary. There is also a glossary for each chapter of *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library*.

The genre: Characteristics of a fantasy mystery

The word genre refers to what type of story a book is. *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library* is a **fantasy mystery**.

What is a fantasy?

According to Ashland University (n.d.), fantasy books are stories about “imaginative worlds” or “make-believe” – they are stories “about people and creatures that could not exist” (Children’s Literature Genres section). For instance, in *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library*, there are flying pigs and a talking spider.

What is a mystery?

A mystery is a story in which something strange or unusual or even bad happens – and the characters in the story need to find out the truth behind this event. For instance, in a crime mystery story, expensive jewels might be stolen, and the main character has to find out who stole them. In *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library*, there are a couple of mysteries:

- What is going on at the building site for the new library? Is it haunted?
- Who is responsible for trapping Anansi and why?

Background: Who is Anansi?

Anansi is a creature from West African folklore who has the body of a spider and the face of a man. Anansi is a trickster; a trickster “is a person who deceives or cheats people” (*Collins English Dictionary*, n.d.). Even though Anansi uses tricks to get his way, this doesn’t mean he is bad. For example, in the story, he works together with the children to stop two greedy men from being dishonest in their building project.

The stories of Anansi came from the Akan people in Ghana (Zobel Marshall, 2018, p. 1). Although some sources refer to him as a god, according to Zobel Marshall (2019), Anansi was not a god to the Asante people but a mediator. A mediator is a go-between who helps two people or two groups who are disagreeing to find an answer to their argument. In the Ghanaian folk stories about Anansi, the spider was sometimes a mediator in arguments between humans, and sometimes he was a go-between when there were disagreements between people and their god (i.e., the supernatural).

We see Anansi as a mediator in *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library* too. For example, Anansi’s actions help to end the conflict between people about the new library that is being built. The township residents are unhappy that a local building company hasn’t been chosen to build the

library; when Anansi makes the two greedy men admit how they have been dishonest, the building is taken over by the local company. In addition, Anansi acts as a go-between for humans and supernatural beings because he arranges that his friends, the ghosts, will come to the building site for the crooks.

The character of Anansi still has an impact on culture today. For instance, Zobel Marsha (2019) notes that according to a story in a 2003 comic book series, *The Amazing Spiderman*, by Straczynski and Romita, “it was one of Anansi’s children that bit Spiderman and gave him his superhero powers” (p. 20). In the children’s TV show *Miraculous: Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir*, a character called Anansi has spider-like powers.

Short biography: Bontle Senne



Bontle Senne grew up in Johannesburg and then studied at the University of Cape Town (UCT). She has brought out several Afro-fantasy stories, such as the *Shadow Chasers* series. At the moment, Senne’s home is in London, where she works as executive director for Virgin Media UK. She was on the 2014 shortlist for the Golden Baobab Prize. (NB Publishers, n.d., Authors: Bontle Senne section).

According to Senne’s website, she has had stories published at a variety of publishers: Cover2Cover Books, Best Books, African Bureau Stories and Human & Rousseau, which published *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library* (Senne, n.d., para. 4).

Because of Senne’s work as executive director, finding the time to write can be a challenge. In an interview with Pamela Power, Senne explained how she approaches writing:

For most of my books, it has been a process of a few weeks of research and then a detailed chapter by chapter outline to start. I typed up the book to slot into the chapter outlines, working mostly in the middle of the night in a random hotel room while on the road as a management consultant . . . For the last Shadow Chasers book, I wrote a large portion of that as a series of notes emailed to myself on my mobile phone – still in the middle of the night. I was exhausted and burnt out at work and couldn’t quite face having to open up my laptop onto a blank page and find some way to make stuff up so it was comforting to be able to trick my brain into thinking I was just writing very long text messages. (Power, n.d., Talk Us Through Your Writing Process section)

More recently, Senne has been using notebooks given out at conferences she attends and handwriting her stories in these. She has also started doing her writing early in the morning, which, she says, “is a big change for me” (Power, n.d., Talk Us Through Your Writing Process section).

The three stages of reading

Pre-reading

The first stage of reading is pre-reading, which happens before you actually read the book. According to the Department of Basic Education (2011, p. 10), pre-reading involves the following activities:

- *Activating prior knowledge*
- *Looking at the source, author, and publication date.*
- *Reading the first and last paragraphs of a section.*
- *Making predictions.*

You will be doing similar pre-reading activities in this study guide.

Reading

This is the actual reading part, where you read the story. Here are some important tips from the Department of Basic Education (2011, pp. 10-11), which have been paraphrased below:

- Give yourself time to make sure you understand what you are reading.
- Imagine the story as you are reading it.
- Think about whether the story is developing as you thought it would.
- Sometimes, you may not understand something. Try re-reading a difficult section, or ask for help if you need it. Even if you still don't understand everything, don't stop reading!!

Post-reading

There are different methods that you can use to reflect back on what you have read and what you have learned from your reading. The list below paraphrases suggestions from the Department of Basic Education (2011, p. 11):

- Draw a picture or graph, or summarise/outline key points about what you read.
- Make conclusions about what you read. Do you agree with the actions of the characters, for instance?
- Did you understand the story? Do you have any questions about what you read?
- Evaluate the story. Is it good? What do you like about it? Is there anything that you disagree with?

In this study guide, there are post-reading questions to help you reflect back on your reading.

Pre-reading activities

Before starting to read the actual story, it is helpful to have a look at the outside of the book:

The **title**, the **front cover** and the **back cover** can help us understand the story. The **copyright page** tells us more about the making of the book and who owns its content – who printed it, who holds the copyright to it and so on. Let’s have a look at the **title** first. The title is *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library*. This tells us this story is part of a series of stories about Anansi, the spider trickster. The title also tells us that this particular story about Anansi is also about a library that seems to be haunted by ghosts.

The **front cover** gives us important information.

	<p>Pre-reading questions</p> <p>Look at the picture of the front cover before answering the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who drew the pictures for this story? 2. Who wrote the story? 3. Based on the front cover, who are the main <u>characters</u> in this story? 4. How does the front cover help you to guess who Anansi might be? <p>Answers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The person who draws the pictures for a story book is called the illustrator. According to the book cover, the illustrator is Mogau Kekana. 2. The person who writes a book is called an author. The author of <i>An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library</i> is Bontle Senne. 3. The main <u>characters</u> are two girls – we will discover from the book that they are twin sisters called Siphe and Karabo. They are standing, which suggests that they are the most important characters. There are also two other characters between them – a boy and his dog. We will learn from the book that the boy is Bandile, the girls’ friend, and his dog, Zuko. 4. Anansi is a spider. The front cover hints at this because the illustrator has drawn a picture of a spider at the top, right over the word “Anansi”.
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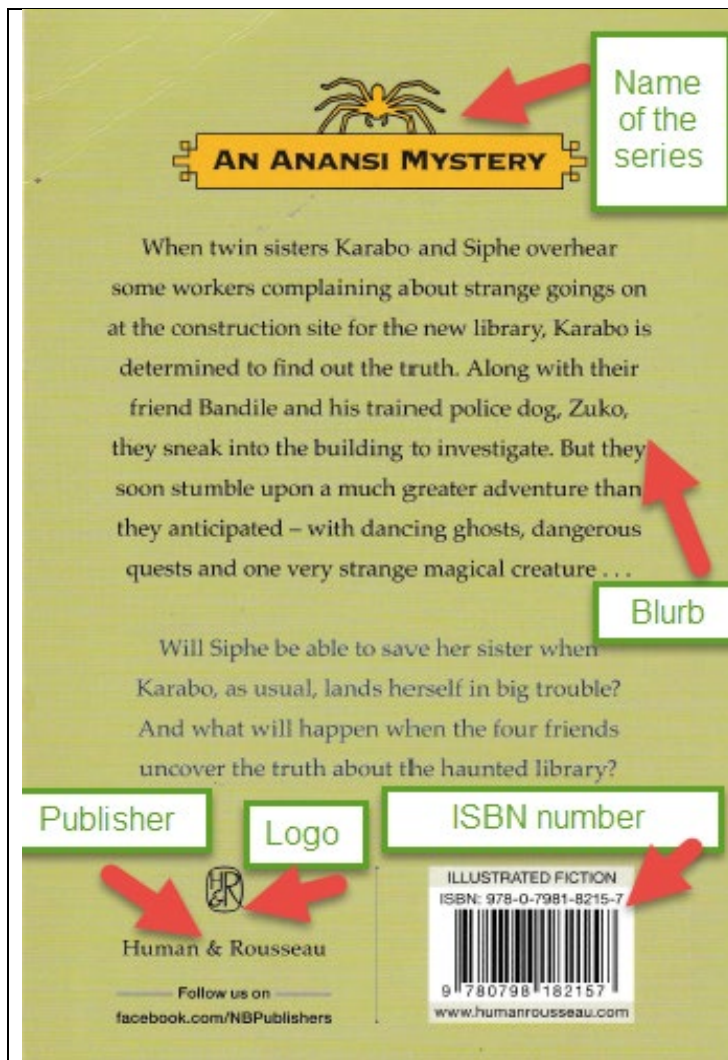
The **back cover** has one aim: to get people to read the book. It aims to grab the reader's attention and make him or her realise that this is a book well worth reading!

The back cover has several different parts to it:

There is a short summary of what the story is about called the **blurb**. Although this tells the reader the main idea of what the story is about, it doesn't give away too much information. There are also some questions that will only be answered by reading the book.

At the bottom of the back cover, the name of the publisher is given, as well as their logo and their Facebook page.

The ISBN number is given on the right-hand side at the bottom, along with the website of the book's publisher.



Pre-reading questions

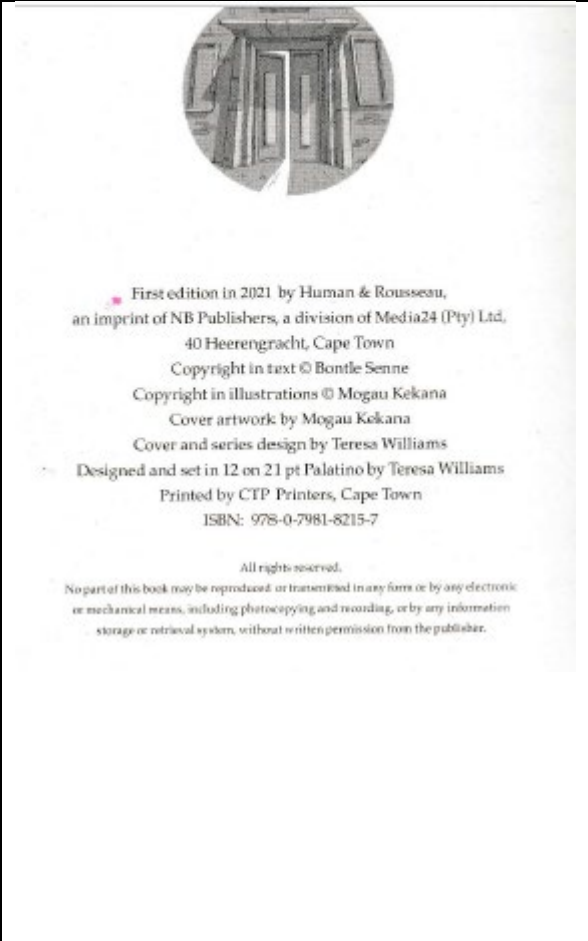
1. What is the name of the series of which this book is part?
2. In one sentence, what is this book about?
3. Why hasn't more information been given about the book?
4. Have a look at the questions in blue: Why do you think these questions have been asked?
5. What do you think the answers to these questions are?
6. Why has the name of the publisher been given? Why have they included their logo, Facebook page and website address?

Answers

1. This book is part of the *Anansi* mystery series.
2. Karabo, Siphe, Bandile and Zuko investigate the strange happenings at a library building site.
3. The author wants people to read the book to find out more.
4. These questions catch the reader's interest and make him or her want to read the book.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Student's own answer. 6. Giving the name and logo of the publisher and their Facebook page and website address is a way to encourage readers to buy more books by Human & Rousseau.
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The **copyright page** you will find on the last page of the book. You will see this sign on the last page: © This is the copyright symbol. It means the information in the book is the property of the writer, Bontle Senne, and you may not copy it. There is also a copyright sign next to the illustrator's name.

	<p>Pre-reading questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When was the book published? 2. What is the address of the publisher? 3. Who designed the cover? 4. Who did the art on the cover? 5. Who printed the book for Human & Rousseau publishers? 6. Underneath the name of the printers, there is the ISBN number. What is the ISBN number for? <p>Answers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The book was published in 2021. 2. The address of the publisher: 40 Heerengracht, Cape Town 3. Teresa Williams 4. Mogau Kekana 5. CTP Printers 6. All books written in South Africa have to be registered and given an ISBN number.
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Plot

The plot is the different events that happen in the book that together create the story. The different elements of the plot are the **background** (exposition), **rising action**, **conflict**, **climax**,

falling action/anticlimax.

Background: At the start of the story, we learn that Siphe and Karabo are twins who live with their grandmother, and the story takes place in a South African township. Their neighbour is their friend, Bandile, whose dog is Zuko, a retired police dog, and his dad is a policeman. A new library is being built but something strange is going on – the workmen say that it is haunted.

Conflict: Conflict means arguing/disagreement between people (external conflict) or within people (internal conflict).

In the story, there is conflict between Siphe and Karabo because their personalities are so different. Siphe is careful and follows the rules. She doesn't like danger. Karabo is adventurous and is determined to find out what is happening at the library even though her sister isn't happy about this.

There is conflict between the children and Anansi because Anansi takes Karabo. When Siphe finds Karabo, she doesn't want to open the cage because she is scared Anansi will escape. Later, the children discover that Anansi has been captured by two greedy crooks and that he is going to help them.

There is conflict between Anansi and the crooks because they have trapped him in a cage and he can't escape until the children come to the library.

There is also internal conflict. This means conflict *inside* a person. Siphe struggles between her love for her sister, Karabo, and her fear of the strange things that are happening at the library. For instance, Siphe has to overcome her fears of the ghosts and of the dangerous gap between the high rooftops in order to rescue her sister.

Rising action: In this part of the story, the conflict starts to develop. For example, the children see the ghosts for the first time, and Karabo disappears through the library door. Siphe has to cross the rooftops and catch onto a flying pig. She then has to get through the milk spilled by a giant baby.

Climax: The climax is the most exciting/dramatic part of the story. This happens when the children and Anansi are back in the library and the crooks return. Anansi makes the crooks dance without stopping, and these criminals are arrested when Bandile's father arrives.

Falling action: This refers to the part of the book where the author ties up the story. In *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library*, this section of the story takes place after the children are safe and then when they later go to the opening party at the library.

An interesting twist, though, in the story is that at the end, the children learn of a new adventure and the promise of new conflict to come! The author does this to show that there will be another book in the *Anansi* series and to encourage children to read the next story.

Characters

The characters are the people in the story. The important characters are the main characters. There are also minor characters, who play a less important part in the story.

Main characters

Siphe: Siphe is the “sensible” sister of Karabo, and she doesn’t like doing anything dangerous or breaking rules.

Karabo: Karabo is Siphe’s twin. She irritates Siphe, but her sister would do anything for her. Karabo is adventurous and impulsive. She and Siphe live with their grandmother.

Bandile: Bandile is the girls’ neighbour and friend. His father is a policeman.

Zuko: Zuko is Bandile’s dog and a retired police dog.

Anansi: Anansi has the body of a spider, human fingers on the ends of his legs and the face of a man.

The main character is called the **protagonist**. In *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library*, the protagonist is Siphe.

The main character’s opponent or rival is called the **antagonist** (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, n.d.). Just as this story is all about tricks, so too, the author plays a trick on us regarding the antagonist. At first, it *seems* to be Anansi who is the antagonist because he has taken Karabo away from her sister. When Siphe finds her sister and Anansi, though, we discover that the real antagonists are actually two crooks.

Minor characters

There are also a few less important characters in the story:

Malume TC: An old man who always shouts at the twins

Bandile’s father: a policeman

Gogo – the twins’ grandmother

The crooks: These are the two men who were tricking the government to get more money

Palesa and Vu: A man and woman that the children overhear talking at the end of the story

Narrator

The narrator is the person telling the story. The narrator in this story isn't part of the story or one of the characters in the story, so we call this a third person narrator.

Themes

The theme is the message behind a story. There are several main themes in this book.

1. The importance of having fun – Anansi is a trickster, so he likes to have fun and be silly. The whole story reflects this as it is full of fun and “silliness”, like the flying pigs and the dancing ghosts.
2. The harm done by corruption – corruption is dishonesty, especially in business and politics. In this story, two greedy men trap Anansi and use the dancing ghosts to make the building go on for longer so that they can get more money. This does harm to the township community because they have to wait longer for the library to open. It does harm to the workers, who are terrified of the ghosts. It does harm to Anansi because he is trapped, and it does harm to the government, who have to pay the corrupt men extra money.
3. How love can overcome fear – Siphe is frightening of going to the library site and doesn't want to. When her sister is taken away by Anansi, she realises that her love for her sister is stronger than her fear and she finds out how brave she really is.
4. The value of friendship – Bandile is a loyal friend. He runs after Karabo outside the library. When Siphe disappears through the door of the library and out onto the roof, Bandile doesn't give up. Instead, he finds another way to get to the girls because he cares about them. He is also a good friend to Zuko and is very angry and worried when Anansi makes him disappear. Zuko is also a good friend to Bandile because he goes home and calls Bandile's father, who comes to arrest the crooks.

Idioms

Idioms are expressions or sayings. There are a couple of important idioms that play a role in the story:

1. Pigs might fly/when pigs fly

The expression “pigs might fly” or “when pigs fly” means that something will only happen when pigs can fly. In other words, something is never going to happen because pigs will never be able to fly. In this book, there are flying pigs. The author has used the flying pigs to show that sometimes things that we think are impossible can actually happen.

2. It's no use crying over spilled milk

The idiom “it's no use crying over spilled milk” means that it doesn't help to cry or be upset about things that have already happened. In the book, Siphe has to remind herself, when everything is

going wrong, to focus on what she can still do rather than focusing on the things that have gone wrong.

Section 2: Chapters - pre-reading, summaries, glossaries, questions and post-reading

Chapter 1

Pre-reading

Before looking at the summary or reading the chapter, read just the first paragraph of Chapter 1. Who do you think is screaming? What do you think is the cause of the screaming? Keep in mind what you read on the back cover of the book as well as the title of the story.

Summary

Karabo and Siphe hear screaming on their way home from school. The screaming is coming from a dozen construction workers, running down the pavement. Malume TC, a grumpy old man who is also standing outside, has to get out of the workers' way. Siphe and Karabo move behind a parked car to get out of the men's way. Some of the men are shouting, and some are crying. One of the men gets left behind, and Malume TC wants to know what is going on. The construction worker says that there are strange things happening at the site of the new library being built on Albertina Street. There are strange noises – it sounds as though children are whispering or laughing, but there is no one there. Purple and red lights shine in locked rooms, but the rooms are empty. The workers' tools move on their own or disappear, and doors slam for no reason. When Karabo hears this, she starts feeling worried. Malume says there are problems with the library project. The problems began when the mayor got his way and gave the contract for building the library to a big company instead of a local company that the people wanted. Some people suspect that the construction company paid the mayor to get the contract. The worker says that the project is cursed and the library is haunted.

Glossary

Annoying – irritating

Construction – building

Contract – an agreement between two people or two businesses. Here, the big construction company signed the contract, agreeing to do the work of building the library

Cursed – haunted and unsafe because there are spirits/ghosts living there

Cursed – swore

Doubling over – bending right over

Employer – someone who pays you to do work

Gogo – grandmother

Hard hat – a special type of strong hat made out of plastic to protect construction workers' heads

Haunted – if a place has ghosts in it, it is "haunted"

Investigate – try to find out what is happening

Local company – a company that is based nearby the library/in the same town as the library

Narrowed his eyes – half closed his eyes

On site – at the place where the library is being built

Overalls – Overalls are work clothes made up of long pants and a top, joined together.
Pavement – the sidewalk, the paved walkway alongside the road
Ridiculous – silly
Scooped up – picked up
Shaken – frightened
Spirits – ghosts or non-living beings
Stabbing one finger in the air – pointing/poking his finger upwards
Trampled – run over
Trembling – shaking
Unsteady voice – shaking voice
Wena – you

Questions

1. Who are Karabo and Siphe?
2. Name the old man who always shouted at Karabo and Siphe.
3. Describe the setting at the start of the story (where the story takes place).
4. The workmen are frightened. How do you know that? Write a list of the things that they do that shows they are scared.
5. What caused the workmen to be afraid?
6. Compare Karabo and Siphe's behaviour in this chapter. What does this show us about the two girls' characters?
7. Karabo doesn't want to go home – she wants to listen to what the workman says. What do you think the outcome will be? What will she and Siphe decide to do?
8. The mayor wants the big company to get the work.

They said the problems started when the contract was given to the big construction company that the mayor wanted, instead of going to the local company that the people wanted. They were asking questions about how the big company got the contract and some people said they thought the bosses had paid to get that contract. (p. 7)

What does this suggest about the mayor?

9. Do you think it is acceptable for the mayor to give the work to the big construction company?
10. Was it right or wrong for Siphe and Karabo to eavesdrop on (listen to) Malume and the workman?

Chapter 2

Pre-reading

Read the first three paragraphs of Chapter 2. What do you think will happen when the girls get home? What will Siphe, who is careful and sensible, think about the ghost stories? What will Karabo think? How will she react to the story?

Summary

Karabo and Siphe go home quickly. They don't joke and tell stories like they usually do. Near home, they see Bandile, their neighbour, waiting for them with his dog, Zuko. Zuko runs to the girls and jumps up at Karabo to say hello. Siphe tells Bandile about the story the workman told of the haunted library site. Bandile's dad told him that strange things were happening there too. Bandile says the police don't have enough proof to try to find out what is happening there. Karabo convinces the others that they should go and see what is going on. Siphe isn't very keen as she is scared that it could be dangerous. Bandile says Zuko will protect them and that they can just look around the outside. Karabo says they will go early and be home by breakfast time. Siphe thinks going to the haunted library is a terrible idea, but she agrees to go.

Glossary

Baba - Dad

Betraying – giving away/revealing

Bolted – rushed

Broadened – widened

Conclusion – Here, “conclusion” means a decision

Defeat – if you are defeated, you give up and admit that someone else has won

Definitely – certainly/for sure

Drew close – came near to

Evidence - proof

I'm in – This means “I am joining you”/“I am taking part”

Keep your eyes open – be alert/be observant/notice what is going on

Lost – “I'm lost” here means “I don't understand”

Protect – look after

Responsible – sensible/someone who acts sensibly and wisely

Retired – someone who has retired has stopped working because of their age

Shrugged – to shrug means to lift both your shoulders up, and then down again, at the same time

Squealed - squeaked

Taxi rank – where passengers go to catch a taxi/where all the taxis are parked

Thumping – hitting/banging

Unconvinced – someone who is “unconvinced” is doubtful/not sure that he or she agrees

Uptight – stressed/tense

Questions

1. Describe where Malume TC always sits.
2. Have a look at the quote below:

They walked the rest of the way faster than usual and without the jokes and stories that would usually make the walk home Karabo's favourite part of the day. (pp. 9, 11)

Explain why you think the sisters walked faster than usual and without joking or telling stories.

3. Who do the sisters see as they get close to their house?
4. Describe how Zuko reacts when he sees the twins.
5. Read the following passage:

When Zuko heard them approaching, he bolted towards them and jumped up to greet Karabo. Karabo laughed and patted his head before Zuko turned to Siphe. He sat down in front of her to wait patiently for her to say hello.

"Hey Zuko, good boy," Siphe said, bending over to pat Zuko on his brown and black side.

"He knows he's not allowed to jump on people," Bandile said when he reached them. "You have to stop letting him jump on you, Karabo."

"But he's so cute! How am I going to say no to that cute face?" Karabo said, kneeling beside Zuko to give him a scratch behind the ear. (p. 11)

What does this tell us about the difference between Siphe and Karabo?

6. Bandile notices that Siphe is looking "even more uptight than usual" (p. 12). Why do you think Siphe is so uptight? Include a quote to support your answer.
7. List the reasons that Karabo says they should investigate the ghost stories about the library.
8. Compare Siphe and Bandile's reactions when Karabo wants to investigate what is happening at the library.
9. Karabo thinks the investigation will be easy. She says, "We can go really early so that no one will even know we're gone. We can be home in time for breakfast without any problems" (p. 15). Do you think it is likely they won't have any problems? Why? Why not?
10. Siphe thinks investigating is a "terrible idea" (p. 15). Do you agree or not? Why or why not?

Chapter 3

Pre-reading

Read the first paragraph of this chapter. Siphe is dreaming. When she wakes up, she will be going to the library, which is supposed to be haunted. Do you think that some of the things she discovers at the library will be almost as strange as her dreams, if the library is haunted? What do you think they will find there?

Summary

Karabo wakes her sister up just before 5 am. Bandile and Zuko are waiting for them on the pavement. They walk in silence to the library. The library has a tall metal fence around it, and its front gate is locked. Karabo wants to get in and goes to look for a way to get inside. Bandile says he will go with Karabo. Siphe has tears in her eyes. She is upset that she is part of the investigation and is scared her sister is going to get into trouble. Siphe hears Bandile scream from the other side of the fence.

Glossary

Dragged into her wild ideas – forced to take part in her crazy ideas

Examine – study/look at

Hissed – spoke in an angry or frustrated whisper

Naked – without any covering. In this sentence, it means the bricks had no paint on them

Peek – peer. Here, “peek” means “shine”

Plenty – lots

Plot – a piece of land

Rays of the sun – light beams from the sun

Ripping – pulling

Scrunch up – Siphe scrunched up her face. This means she made a face/pulled a face to show she didn't want to go inside

Side by side – next to each other

Sis – sister

Snaked – curved

Snapped open – opened quickly

Squinted . . . at her watch – looked at her watch with her eyes partly closed so she could see better

Structure – the building

Struggled – battled/found it difficult

Suggestion – idea

Testing shake – Karabo wanted to test/check how tightly the gate was locked by shaking it

Unfinished – not finished/not completed. The library is still being built

Walking on their tiptoes – walking on their toes

Wiggle – move a little bit

Questions

1. Complete the sentence below with the correct characters' names:
_____ was asleep when _____ woke her up. _____ and _____ were waiting outside.
2. Describe how Karabo woke her sister up.
3. Why do you think Karabo woke her sister up like this?
 - A. She had something important to tell Siphe.
 - B. She was impatient to leave.
 - C. She was angry with her sister.
4. Have a look at page 17 – 18. What do the girls do that is the same, and how do they act differently?
5. What is the advantage and disadvantage of their getting up so early? Fill in a table like the one below.

Advantage	Disadvantage

6. How does Karabo feel about going to the building site? How do you know?
7. How do Karabo and Siphe react when they discover the locked gate? What does this show us about their characters/personalities?
8. When Karabo goes to look for a way to get into the building site, Bandile says, "At least one of us should go with her" and he follows her. What does this reveal (show us) about Bandile?
9. Bandile goes with Karabo, but Siphe stays behind, folding her arms. What are her reasons for doing this, do you think?
10. Do you think Siphe made a good choice, or do you think she should have followed her sister? Give a reason for your answer.

Post-reading: Chapters 1 – 3

Draw a map of the township where Siphe, Karabo and Bandile live. Draw their houses, the house of Malume TC and the library. Label their homes and the library.

Work together with a partner, and write out 10 questions on the story so far. Get together with another group of two, and ask each other the questions. The group with the highest number of correct answers is the winner! If you tie, each group has to think

of another question to ask until someone gets an answer wrong. The first group to make a mistake loses.

Chapter 4

Pre-reading

Look at the last paragraph of Chapter 3. It ends with Bandile screaming. This is called a cliff-hanger – a thrilling ending. Chapters often end in an exciting way like this to make the reader keep reading. Why does the end of Chapter 3 make you want to read further? What do you think caused Bandile to scream?

Summary

When Zuko hears Bandile screaming, he runs to find him. Siphe follows him. They hear Bandile and Karabo scream. Zuko and Siphe enter the library site through a hole in the bottom of the fence. The back door of the library is open, and music is coming from it. Siphe runs through the door and crashes into Bandile's back. There are strange creatures dancing on the ceiling – their skins and clothes are grey. Some of the creatures come down and reach towards them. Karabo has a metal pipe and uses it to fight off any of the creatures that come close. Zuko is barking and trying to bite the creatures, but they just laugh and keep having fun. Siphe realises that the creatures are spirits; some of them have human arms and legs but no hands or feet – instead, they have dog paws. Some have elephant trunks, and others have wings. Siphe tells Bandile that they have to leave. Bandile begins to answer when he sees a purple and green light shining from a doorway across the room.

Glossary

Backing her up – supporting her

Brought to life – become real

Building materials – these are the things used for making a building. For instance, bricks and concrete are examples of building materials

Command – order

Couldn't blame them – Siphe "couldn't blame" the workers for running away. "Couldn't blame" means that she can't criticize them for running off/she understands why the workers ran away.

Died in her mouth – the words Siphe was going to say "died in her mouth" – in other words, she never got to actually say them

Dozens – many. One dozen of something is 12. Two dozen is 24

Figure – the creatures/spirits on the ceiling

Frozen – unable to move

Lazy – not hard-working

Nagging – asking someone to do something again and again

Property – the land and buildings on it that belong to someone

Pumped – here, "pumped" means "ran"

Shell – a room that is a "shell" is empty. There is nothing in the room.

Shivered – shook (we shiver/shake when we are frightened)

Swooped – swept down/flew down

Vanished – disappeared

Ward off – Karabo used the pipe to “ward off” (fight off/protect herself from) the ghosts

Questions

1. Why are Zuko and Siphe running around the fence of the library site?
2. Why does Siphe realise that they won't be able to hide their adventures from her grandmother?
3. Summarise what the ghosts look like that the children see. You can use bulleted points instead of full sentences here.
4. How did Siphe know that the figures were spirits? For your answer, quote from the book (p. 28).
5. The song that is playing is “about the feeling of dancing on the ceiling” (p. 26). Google the words “feeling of dancing on the ceiling”. Who sang this song? Why do you think the writer chose this song to write about?
6. Compare how Siphe, Bandile and Karabo respond to the spirits.
7. Zuko barks and tries to bite the spirits. How do the spirits react? What does this show us about the personality of the spirits?
8. Have a look at the extract below. What does this tell us about how the workers were feeling?

There were workers' tools and building materials lying around, as though the workers had dropped everything and fled. (p. 28)

9. Siphe tells Bandile that they have to get out:

“Bandile,” she said quietly, “we have to get out of here. You have to come with me.” (p. 28)

Do you agree with Siphe that this is a good idea? Why or why not?

10. Does Siphe mention leaving with Karabo? Why do you think Siphe only spoke to Bandile about leaving?

Chapter 5

Pre-reading

The first words of Chapter 5 are *“Do you see that?” Bandile asked* (p. 31). What did Bandile see? What do you think caused such a strange light? Do you think it is something (or someone) dangerous or a friend? Two paragraphs later, Karabo starts walking towards the light. What do you think will happen to her in this chapter? How will the others respond?

Summary

Karabo walks towards the doorway which is shining with a purple and green light. Siphe tells Karabo not to go near the doorway. Karabo says she wants to find out what makes the doorway glow. Karabo, Siphe and Zuko follow Karabo, but she disappears through the door with Zuko. The door closes. Siphe hits the door and calls Karabo. Instead, a squeaky man’s voice replies, *“Welcome, little one! Are you ready?”* (p. 32). The voice sounds like it is coming from inside the door. A man’s face on a screen appears on the door. He has black eyes and pale, blue teeth and grey skin. He asks if Siphe loves her sister and will do anything to get her back. The man says that Siphe has one hour to catch him and find her sister. He says that Siphe will have to decide what to give up to get Karabo back. The door is unlocked, and Siphe goes through it, leaving Bandile behind.

Glossary

Battle – fight

Broke into a run – started running

Disgusting – horrible, awful, revolting

Drag – pull

Glow – shine

Responsible – sensible/someone who acts sensibly and wisely

Separating him from his friends – keeping him away/apart from his friends

Slammed – hit

Squeaky voice – a high-pitched voice

Questions

1. Fill in the missing words: Karabo walked towards the doorway which shone _____ and _____.
2. Describe the face in the door.
3. When Siphe hears the strange man’s voice, what effect does it have on her? Why?
4. Summarise the message of the man in the door.

5. How are the man in the door and the spirits similar? Quote from page 33.
6. What does this similarity suggest about the man in the door?
7. How do you feel about Siphe going through the door to rescue her sister? What would you have done if you were Siphe, and why?
8. Think about the green light in the doorway. The colour green symbolises (represents) growth – for example, think of the green colour of new leaves in spring. The colour green can also symbolise how people’s characters develop and grow. Siphe goes through the green doorway. In what ways do you think she has grown/will grow?

Chapter 6

Pre-reading

Have a look at the end of Chapter 5, where Siphe disappears into the darkness. What waits for her on the other side of the door, do you think? Do you think Karabo will be there?

Summary

Siphe goes through the door and comes out on a flat rooftop. Karabo calls her. She is on another rooftop opposite Siphe. Siphe runs to the edge of the roof, but Karabo is pulled away through a door. The space between the two roofs is too wide for Siphe to jump across, and the roofs are very high above the ground. Siphe tries to get back through the door she came through, but she can’t. She shouts and cries. Siphe looks up and sees flying pigs. Siphe jumps off the roof and tries to grab a pig. She misses the pig, but she lands on another pig. The pig takes her to the other roof, and Siphe slides off. Siphe pulls open the metal door that Karabo went through.

Glossary

Acting – pretending

Barrel rolls – rolling around in a full circle

Did a flip – jumped. Siphe’s stomach felt like it jumped

Distracted – got Siphe’s attention

Frustration – feeling angry when you can’t do something you want to do

Genuinely grateful – really thankful

Gripped – held firmly onto

Grunting – the noise a pig makes

Hesitation – uncertainty. Siphe doesn’t feel too sure about what she is doing

Irritation – annoyance. The pig is annoyed with Siphe for landing on it

Lowered her face into her hands – put her face in her hands

Miserable – unhappy

Opposite – on the other side

Rooftop – the top/surface of the roof

Scrunched up in fear – her face crumpled up because she was scared

Smug grin – a pleased grin. “Smug” means “feeling pleased with yourself”
Snapped – moved quickly
Sobbing – crying
Steer it – direct it/make the pig go in the direction she wanted
Sting – burn. Siphe is starting to cry, and the tears in her eyes make them burn.
Streamed – poured
Stumbled – fell
Swooshing – rustling/moving their wings with a rustling sound, a bit like paper rustling
Terror – fear
Tilted – turned to one side
Weirdest – strangest
Wildly – desperately

Questions

1. Where does the doorway lead to? Describe the setting where Siphe finds herself.
2. Explain why Siphe can't go to Karabo.
3. Siphe thinks that the cars look “like toys from up here” (p. 36). When we compare two things using the words “like” or “as”, this is called a simile. How effective is the simile here?
4. How does Siphe act at first when she can't get to Karabo? How does she act differently when she sees the pigs?
5. Siphe tries to grab onto a white pig with tiny silver wings. Because the pigs are floating where there are usually clouds and because the pig is white, it looks a bit like a cloud. There is an expression in English – “every cloud has a silver lining”. Here, it is the cloud-like pig who has a silver lining (silver wings). Look up the meaning of this expression and write it down.
6. Re-read your answer to number 4. Think about the meaning of “every cloud has a silver lining”, and then answer the following question: What message might the writer be sending the reader if the pig looks like a white cloud with a silver lining? [Hint: Are things really as bad as they seem for Siphe?]
7. Siphe has always been very cautious (careful) and responsible. Have a look at the extract below:

Siphe decided to just do it and not spend too much time thinking about whether it was a good idea or not. (pp. 38 – 39)

How do Siphe's actions show that she is changing?

8. What do you think caused Siphe to start changing?
9. We use the English expression “pigs might fly” when we mean that something is impossible. In this chapter, the pigs are actually flying. What message do you think the writer is sending to readers by using flying pigs?

Chapter 7

Pre-reading

The last chapter had flying pigs, which in real life are impossible. What other impossible situations may Siphe come across in the next chapter? What adventures would you make her experience if you were writing the story?

Summary

Siphe finds herself in a huge kitchen. Everything in the kitchen is much bigger than usual. There is a huge baby sitting in a white puddle on the floor. There is a door on the other side of the kitchen, but Siphe can't get to it because the baby and puddle are in the way. The baby is screaming and throwing its arms up and down. The baby's huge tears are making holes in the floor. Siphe goes closer to the puddle and realises it is actually milk. The baby is crying because it spilled its milk. Siphe tries to get the baby to stop crying. She plays with the baby and makes faces, and the baby starts to laugh. Siphe walks into the milk, but it is so deep that she slips under the surface. She thinks she is drowning but then realises that she doesn't need to breathe – her body is fine even though she is not getting any air. She swims up to the surface and finds that she is on a beach. There are banana trees and palm trees. Siphe sees her sister and a huge spider trapped in a cage. The spider has a human face.

Glossary

“Looks like you made it! – “You managed to get here!”

Appliances – machines that you use in your home, e.g., toasters, microwaves, whisks, kettles and so on

Attention – Siphe had the baby's attention. This means the baby was looking at her and interested in what she was doing

Clump of tall palm trees – a group of palm trees growing close together

Dents – little holes

Fanned – waved backwards and forwards, like a fan

Gestures – signs that you make with your hands. For instance, a thumbs-up would be an example of a gesture

Giant – huge/very big

Grove of banana trees – a group of banana trees growing together

Ignore – not take notice of something/not let something bother you

Impossibility – the story refers to how “the impossibility of that idea kicked Siphe into action” (p. 48). This means that it isn't normally possible to be okay if you don't breathe air – but Siphe was

okay. Because she was okay, even though it didn't seem possible, she started taking action and swimming up to the surface.

Infants – babies

Kitchen counter – a kitchen table or surface where you put plates and cut vegetables and fruit.

Noticed – saw

Ocean – sea

Overwhelming –when something is overwhelming, it is too much to cope with. Here, baby's crying is overwhelming; this means that Siphe cannot cope with the crying because it is so loud

Palms – the soft inside part of your hands

Panicking – worrying that something bad is going to happen and feeling very stressed about it/not thinking clearly because you are so worried about something

Realisation – realising something/understanding something

Ridiculous – silly

Sandwiched – squeezed in between

Soccer pitch – soccer field

Surface – the top part of a liquid

Thighs – the top part of your leg, above your knee

Thrashing its arms up and down– throwing its arms up and down wildly

Wailing – crying

Weird – strange

Questions

1. Give one word to describe the kitchen.
2. Fill in the missing words (found on page 43) to support your answer in No. 1: The furniture and appliances were _____ than they should be. The fridge was as _____ as her house.
3. How does Siphe feel about the screaming baby? Use S.E.E. to give your answer. What is S.E.E?

S = statement. Make a statement giving your answer to the question.

E = Example. Quote a section from the book that supports your answer.

E = Explain. Explain how the quote supports your answer.

Example: Let's say that I was discussing how the baby feels in this chapter.

S (Statement): The baby is unhappy.

E (Example): For instance, the baby "was thrashing its arms up and down and screaming".

E (Explain): This quote shows how the baby is feeling because when a baby is miserable, it cries and shouts and waves its arms.

4. What is the reason that the baby is crying?

- A. The baby wants a dummy.
- B. The baby wants to play.
- C. The baby has spilled its milk.

5. Quote from page 44 to support your answer.
6. An idiom is an expression or a saying.
Explain the meaning of the idiom “It’s no use crying over spilled milk”. In this chapter, the baby is crying over its spilled milk, reminding people of this expression. What message do you think the writer is sending the reader?
7. Siphe suddenly realises something when she is trapped in the milk:

She shouldn’t be tired. She could just choose to swim to the surface. (p. 48)

In these two sentences, what does Siphe learn about difficult situations if she realises “she could . . . choose to swim to the surface” (p. 48)?

8. Read the extract below:

“Ah! Looks like you made it!” said the voice from the screen that had sent her on this adventure. (p. 49)

Who was the creature with the “voice from the screen”?

9. Read the last two sentences of the chapter. How did you respond to them? In other words, what emotion(s) did you feel when you read them? Did you feel scared, like Siphe, or a different emotion? Why did you feel this way?
10. The end of a chapter usually ends in a way that makes the reader want to read more. How effective is the end of this chapter in achieving this?

Post-reading: Chapters 4 – 7

Summarise the main peculiar things that the children have experienced in the library so far.

Imagine that you are the police investigating the happenings at the library. Draw up a poster of the strange things that can be seen and heard at the library. The aim of the poster is to ask the public if anyone has more information on these things and to offer a reward to anyone who is able to help the police to solve the mystery.

Chapter 8

Pre-reading

Chapter 7 ends with another cliff-hanger when Siphe sees the spider with the face of a man. Have a look at the name of the series on the front cover and then consider these questions: Who do you think the spider is? What do you think happened to him – why is he in a cage? How did Karabo end up in the cage?

Summary

The spider knows Siphe's name and asks her to stop screaming because he is old. Siphe hears barking and sees Zuko running out of the banana forest. Bandile crawls from the palm tree forest and calls his dog. Zuko runs to Bandile, who gives his dog a big hug. Siphe doesn't open the cage because she is scared the spider will get out too. Siphe pats Zuko. Bandile squeezes her hand. The spider orders them to sit, and their legs collapse underneath them. The spider says that his name is Anansi. He asks again if they are ready to do anything to rescue Karabo. Bandile and Siphe nod. Anansi does a little dance, and Karabo sees that there are three human fingers on the end of his spider legs. Anansi is happy because he has been trapped and needs their help to escape. Anansi says, "*Baanu so a emmia*", which means "When two carry, it does not hurt". In other words, Anansi needs their help to escape and to get revenge on the men who trapped him. Two greedy men used a spell on the internet to get Anansi to come to them. They said they wanted to have a dance party but needed more friends to come. Anansi felt sorry for the men and called over his spirit friends. The men told Anansi to get cake from the cage, and then they locked him in. They then forced Anansi to keep the party going so that people will think the library is haunted and the project will go on for longer so they can make more money from the government. Anansi says he can only get out with a trick. He will have to trick the children if he wants to get out. He says he will ask them a riddle. If they get it wrong, they will all be trapped forever. They hear cars arriving, and Anansi says it is the greedy men arriving back at the library. Anansi says they have to get back to the library quickly.

Glossary

"Baanu so a emmia" – This means "when two carry, it does not hurt"

Annoy – irritate

Approaching – coming closer

Buckled – collapsed

Challenges – difficulties

Cheat – to trick someone or to be dishonest

Contractors – those who agreed to build the building

Crooks – criminals/dishonest people

Drags on – continues. If something drags on, it continues but very slowly

Forced me – made me

Fuzzy – furry

Greedy – Someone who is greedy wants lots of money

Grown-up - adult

9. Anansi says he needs to trick *the children* in order to escape from the *men who tricked him*. Do you think that this is acceptable? Give a reason for your answer.
10. Do you sympathise with Anansi? Imagine for a moment that you are Anansi. Would you also have trapped Karabo and made her sister and friend come and rescue her, or would you have found another way to escape? What would you have done if you were Anansi?

Chapter 9

Pre-reading

Read the first paragraph of Chapter 9. Who has arrived at the library? What did they do to Anansi? What do you think will they do if they find the children? What plans might Anansi and children have to defeat them?

Summary

The children and Anansi hear a car arriving outside the library. Anansi asks them a riddle: "I am never inside or outside, but I am in every house. You can go through me or pass by me, but never be on top of me. Who am I?" (pp. 59 – 60). Bandile realises that the answer is "a door"! He is about to answer when Zuko barks. Anansi says that Zuko answered, "a bone", which is the wrong answer. Anansi snaps his fingers, and they end up back in the library. Bandile and Siphe are now also in the cage. Karabo hugs them. Siphe starts crying. Karabo says she is sorry for coming to the library site. Anansi is now wearing a blue top and shorts and an orange headscarf. He sends Zuko home to fetch Bandile's father. The bad men are talking. One man wants to keep Anansi on the building project for longer to get more money. The other man wants to move the spider to another project. One man is tall with grey hair, and he is dressed like the workers. The other man is short with thick arms and a smart white shirt and shiny black shoes. A spotlight appears and Anansi stands in a bright circle of light. He starts dancing. The spirits are also dancing and are wearing brightly coloured clothes. Anansi makes both the men dance in fancy black suits. The men are terrified. Anansi tells them the police are coming. If the men don't tell them the truth, they will have to dance forever. Anansi is punishing the men for trapping him. Anansi says he has to deal with the children now and snaps his fingers.

Glossary

Accept – agree
Applause – clapping
Awesome – amazing
Boldly – bravely
Bra - brother/friend
Cheats - criminals/dishonest people
Confess – admit that you have done something wrong
Confused – not sure what is happening
Crop tops – small tops that don't cover the stomach
Emotion - feeling

Erupted – burst. Bandile’s face erupted into a big smile – this means he suddenly smiled (because he knew the answer)

Favour – if you need a favour, you need someone else to help you/to do something for you

Flared up – rose up/started. Bandile’s anger had flared up (started) quickly

For starters – to start with/to begin/firstly

In the blink of an eye – very quickly/immediately

Jumbled-up words – mixed-up words that don’t make any sense

Lightly – gently

Muttered – said quietly to herself

Projects – jobs

Protested – objected/complained

Shocked – startled

Solution – answer

Sported – wore

Spotlight – a round light that shines on just one or two people

Subsided – stopped/dropped down

Swivel – turn/move

Trapped – caught

Questions

1. Who gets the right answer to Anansi’s riddle? What is the answer?
2. What is Anansi’s reason for saying they gave the wrong answer to the riddle?
3. Explain why Bandile gets angry when Zuko disappears.
4. Read the extract below. What were the intentions of the two men when they trapped Anansi?

These must be the men who trapped Anansi – there was no doubt about that now. They had heard their plans to keep using Anansi in their money-hungry scheme clearly. (p. 64)

5. Compare the two men. How are they the same, and how are they different? Write out the similarities and differences in a table like this:

Similarities	Differences

6. Summarise how different characters’ clothing changes in this chapter. Use a bulleted list like this:

- Anansi –

- Spirits –
- Two men -

7. What dance are Anansi and the ghosts doing?

- A. The waltz
- B. The macarena
- C. The jive.

8. Quote an extract to support your answer in No. 7. Explain the quotation.

9. Discuss Anansi's motives in (reasons for) making the men dance. Are his motives acceptable? Give a reason for your answer.

10. Read the extract below:

"And now it is time to deal with you three," Anansi said, raising two of his spider legs to snap his fingers. "I'm sorry, my friends." Sophe closed her eyes as she heard Anansi snap his fingers and Karabo gasp." (p. 70)

Based on Anansi's words, what do you think happens next?

Post-reading: Chapters 8 – 9

Draw a picture of Anansi with his eight legs in the centre of your page. At the end of each leg, describe a part of Anansi's body or character, according to the book.

What do you think of Anansi? Does he have good qualities? Does he have bad qualities? What are these good and/or bad qualities?

Chapter 10

Pre-reading

Have a look at the first three paragraphs of Chapter 10. How do you think the children feel about being free? Did you expect this to happen? Is this typical behaviour of Anansi, remembering that he is a trickster?

Summary

Sophe opens her eyes and sees that the trap is gone. Anansi smiles and says that he lied about their being trapped forever. He played a trick on them. Anansi shakes their hands. He gives them his number and says they can call him if they need him. Bandile says that they don't have phones.

The paper doesn't have numbers on it. Instead, it says, "*Woforo dua pa a na yepia wo.*" This means, "When you climb a good tree, I will give you a push." Anansi says that if the three children read these words out loud together, he will come and find them and help them. The police, led by Bandile's father and Zuko, come in. Anansi and the ghosts disappear. One of the crooks starts crying and asks the police to arrest him and the other man. He just wants to stop dancing and get away from the library. He says they will give back the money. The men only stop dancing when they were handcuffed. Bandile's father hugs him and asks him what happened. Karabo says that they will tell him, but no one will believe them.

Glossary

Charging – rushing

Cheat – be dishonest/trick someone

Confirming – supporting/agreeing with an idea

Confusion – not understanding what is happening

Crook – criminal/bad or dishonest person

Definitely – certainly

Extended – stretched out

Force – strength

Handcuffs – metal bracelets that are joined together and that lock onto a criminal's hands so that he or she can't escape

No offence but – I don't want to be rude but . . .

Owe (someone) a favour – if you owe someone a favour, then it means you need to do something nice for them to say thank to the person for helping you

Proverbs – sayings which give good advice

Riddles – trick questions/puzzles

Sirens – a loud noise made by a police car that tells people that the police are coming.

Stopped dead – stopped suddenly

Stunned – shocked

Translation – explaining what the words in another language mean

Tricky – difficult

Questions

1. The children are "stunned" because the cage is _____(p. 71).
2. Why does Karabo say they are so surprised to be free?
3. Summarise what happens when Bandile's father comes. Use bulleted points.
4. Anansi says that a trick has to be repaid with a trick and a cheat with a cheat. Do you think it is acceptable that Anansi tricked the children?
5. Explain the following expression in your own words:

"When you climb a good tree, I will give you a push." (p. 73)

-
6. Compare the attitudes of the crooks now to how they were when they arrived at the library.
 7. Have a look at the following sentence:

By now, their suits were soaked with . . . sweat. (p. 74)

How effective is this sentence in creating a vivid picture in the reader's mind and why?

8. By the time the men are arrested, they are exhausted and desperate. Do you think Anansi was justified in treating them like this?

Chapter 11

Pre-reading

In Chapter 10, Anansi promises that he will help the children in the future if they need him. Keeping in mind that this book is part of a series, what might happen in this final chapter?

Summary

A few months after the crooks are arrested, Siphe and Karabo go to a party to celebrate the opening of the new library. After the crooks were arrested, the local building company were given the job to finish the project. No one believe the men's story of the magic spider, and the children didn't tell anyone. Karabo and Siphe go to look for Bandile. As they are walking, people say hello to them or shake their hands because they are proud that the children helped to beat the crooks. When the girls find Bandile, he is behind a very tall, wide bookshelf. He is listening to a woman who is talking about a haunted house. No one will buy or rent it because strange things are happening in it. Karabo says that they have to find out what is happening. They run off with Zuko to go and see what is happening at the house.

Glossary

After everything you put . . . me through – after everything you made me suffer

Ancient – very old

Check it out – investigate/find out the truth

Complain – criticize something

Confessed – if someone confesses to a crime, the person says he or she did the crime

Construction – building

Contract - an agreement between two people or two businesses. The local construction company signed the agreement, so they finished the work of building the library

Corrupt – dishonest

Crooks – criminals/dishonest people
Dancing uncontrollably – the men couldn't control/stop their dancing
Elders – old people
Exit – the exit is where you go out of a building
Exposed – revealed/found out
Fainter – quieter
Get to the bottom of – find out the truth about
Grand opening party – a party to celebrate the opening of a building
Huge headache – a big problem
Interfering – here, "interfering" means causing trouble
Investigate – try to find out the truth
Sneaking out – going out of a building/leaving home without telling anyone
Snuck out – crept out/sneaked out
Without permission (from Gogo) – without Gogo saying it was okay
Wrapped around – surrounded/went around

Questions

1. Where does this final chapter take place?
2. How are Malume TC and Gogo similar?
3. Why didn't Bandile and the twins explain to anyone about Anansi?
 - A. They had promised Anansi not to say anything.
 - B. They knew they wouldn't be believed.
 - C. They were scared people would laugh at them.
4. Describe the library/library site. What changes have taken place since the twins were last there?
5. The children tried to explain to everyone that they hadn't done anything, even though everyone believes they are heroes (p. 79). What does the children's behaviour show about their characters?
6. Karabo and Siphe find Bandile hiding behind a bookshelf (p. 79). When he sees them, he puts his finger on his lips to tell them to keep quiet. Why does he do this?
7. Palesa and Vu are the two people discussing a house where strange things are happening. Compare their attitudes about the house.
8. Vu jokingly says that Palesa should ask Siphe, Karabo and Bandile to help her with the haunted house while the children are listening. What do you think the children will discover when they investigate? Use S.E.E. (Question 3 in Chapter 7) to answer the

question.

9. At the end of the book, Siphe says “I’m going in first this time!” What does this show about how Siphe has changed?
10. What did you enjoy most about this book? Was there anything you would have done differently?

Post-reading: Chapters 10 - 11

Create an invitation to the opening of the library. Include the following information:

- What the event is
- Why the party is being held
- Where the party is being held
- When the party is – the day, the date and the time.

Reflect on the ending of the book. Was it what you expected to happen? Did anything unexpected happen at the end? Why was it unexpected?

Section 3: Enrichment exercises

Fun activity 1: Comparing fantasy stories

Fantasy stories often have a dream-like quality as the stories shift from one unusual event to another. In this sense, *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll (1865) share some similarities.

Chapter 7 of *An Anansi Mystery: The Haunted Library* has a giant baby in it who is crying over its spilled milk. Siphe falls into the milk and is scared that she will drown in it. In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Alice ends up swimming in a pool of her own tears. Both girls are scared that they might drown. You can listen to a reading of the chapter in which Alice swims in her own tears here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTL07EHb5_0. The section on the tears can be found 5 minutes 49 seconds into the video. Compare the stories of Alice and Siphe.

- What makes these two stories interesting and entertaining?
- What are the “unreal” elements in both stories?
- How do both girls get out of the water/milk?
- Recap: What is the meaning of Siphe’s fall into the milk? Have a look at the questions and answers in Chapter 7 if you need to as a reminder.

Fun activity 2: Wordsearch

Find the words from the book in the wordsearch below. There are 12 words in total, and they are given at the bottom of the wordsearch. The words can go in any direction, including sideways, backwards, up and down.

A	N	A	N	S	I	L	P	B	V	J	S	T	S	O	H	G
E	L	G	O	I	U	G	Z	O	G	D	S	G	U	C	Y	R
A	R	O	A	P	A	N	A	J	N	T	I	P	B	L	I	B
O	M	E	U	H	O	D	C	B	I	S	P	V	O	K	U	Z
N	R	E	S	E	G	H	O	R	Y	S	O	P	S	D	B	M
T	S	G	H	T	P	L	I	J	Y	M	A	G	I	C	U	J
Y	S	H	L	S	T	P	A	L	Q	O	R	G	V	L	T	Y
R	J	E	A	X	S	E	Z	Y	R	A	H	P	Q	G	D	R
A	R	A	B	U	D	G	Z	U	K	A	R	A	B	O	C	E
R	D	S	N	W	N	O	P	J	O	S	I	P	N	G	W	T
B	W	T	X	C	D	T	T	C	Q	R	C	V	Q	O	N	S
I	X	D	V	R	D	J	E	H	D	V	O	D	S	Y	M	Y
L	R	Z	U	C	B	A	N	D	I	L	E	U	C	H	H	M

Anansi Siphe Karabo Spirits Gogo Library	Bandile Zuko Haunted Ghosts Magic Mystery
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Fun activity 2: Wordsearch answers

A	N	A	N	S	I	L	P	B	V	J	S	T	S	O	H	G
E	L	G	O	I	U	G	Z	O	G	D	S	G	U	C	Y	R
A	R	O	A	P	A	N	A	J	N	T	I	P	B	L	I	B
O	M	E	U	H	O	D	C	B	I	S	P	V	O	K	U	Z
N	R	E	S	E	G	H	O	R	Y	S	O	P	S	D	B	M
T	S	G	H	T	P	L	I	J	Y	M	A	G	I	C	U	J
Y	S	H	L	S	T	P	A	L	Q	O	R	G	V	L	T	Y
R	J	E	A	X	S	E	Z	Y	R	A	H	P	Q	G	D	R
A	R	A	B	U	D	G	Z	U	K	A	R	A	B	O	C	E
R	D	S	N	W	N	O	P	J	O	S	I	P	N	G	W	T
B	W	T	X	C	D	T	T	C	Q	R	C	V	Q	O	N	S
I	X	D	V	R	D	J	E	H	D	V	O	D	S	Y	M	Y
L	R	Z	U	C	B	A	N	D	I	L	E	U	C	H	H	M

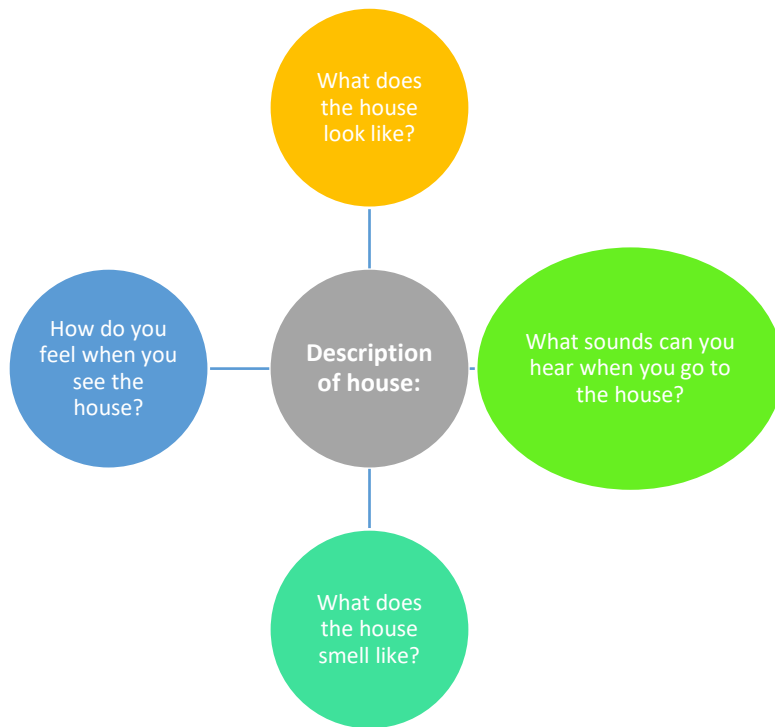
Anansi Siphe Karabo Spirits Gogo Library	Bandile Zuko Haunted Ghosts Magic Mystery
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Fun activity 3: Creative writing exercise

You have heard that there is a very old house in your neighbourhood, and everyone keeps away from it because lights come on and go off at night even though it has been abandoned for years. Some people swear that they have seen the shadows of people dancing on the walls. You and your friends decide to go and investigate.

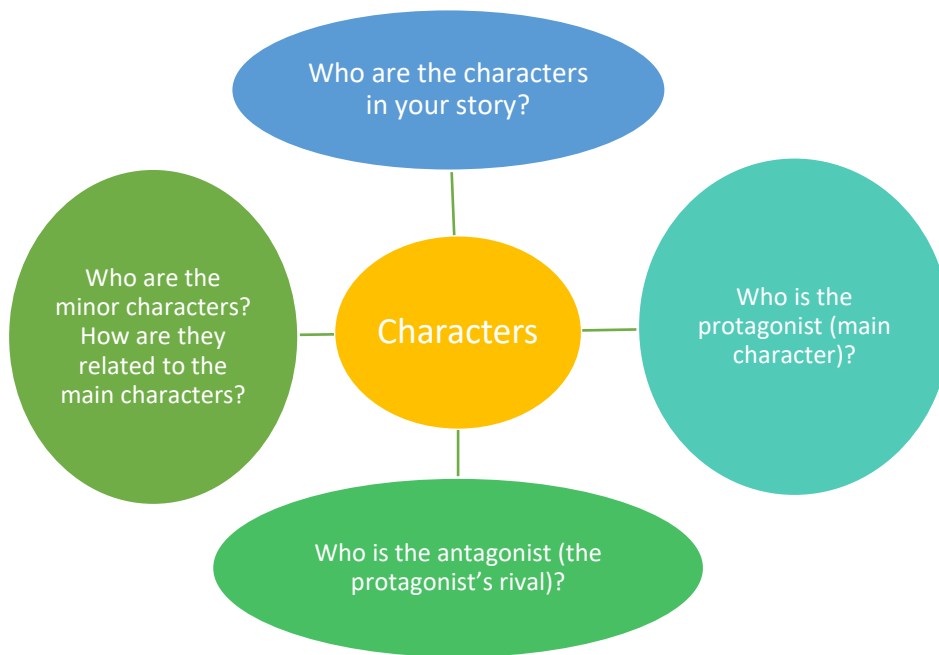
Pre-writing

First, brainstorm ideas. Ask yourself questions about the house.



Characters:

Next, think about your characters.



Plot

Remember to think about the story line as well.

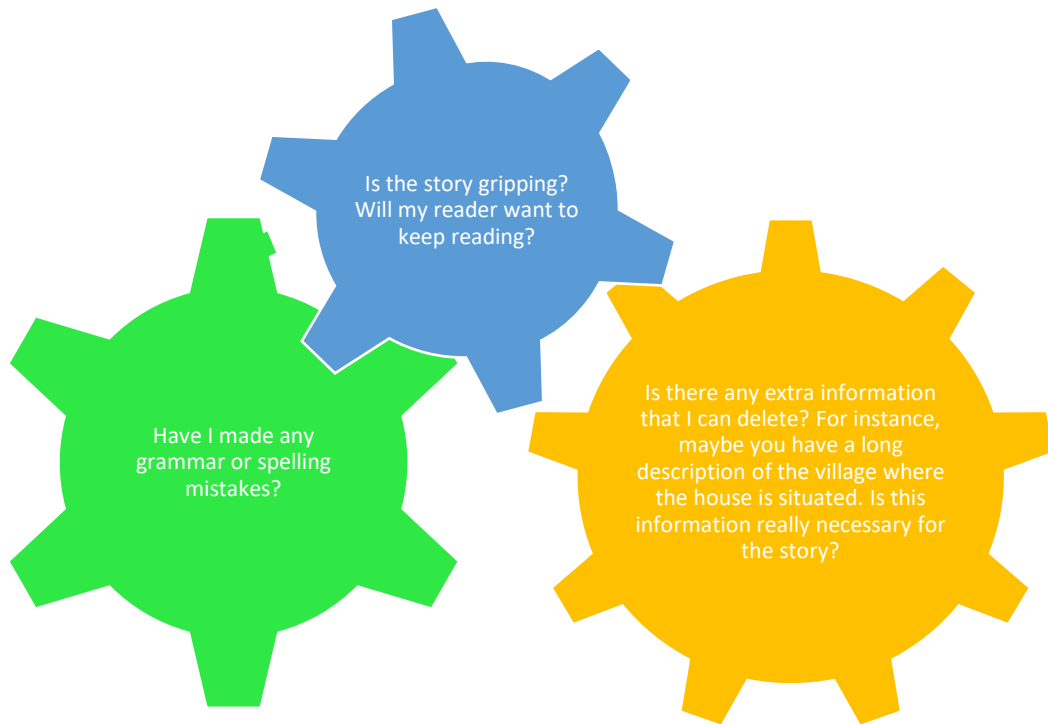
- What happens in your story?
- When does it take place?
- What do the main character and his or her friends discover in the house?
- How does this discovery cause conflict? For instance, do some of the friends want to leave the haunted house? Do they start arguing with each other? Is there conflict between the friends and something/someone in the house?
- What is the climax of the story – the most exciting part?
- What happens after the climax to finish off the story?

Writing a first draft

Writing a story is not something that we usually just do once and then are finished with. The most challenging part of writing is getting our ideas down on paper, so first, using your ideas from your pre-writing exercise, write your story. This is called your first draft. If it is going well - great! Keep going! And if you think it is going badly? Keep going! Keep writing – you can always change it later.

Writing the next draft

Once you have finished your draft, you might want to take a short break from your writing and do something completely different. Then, when you are ready, go back to your draft with a pencil or pen, and start making all the changes you want to make. What sort of changes might these be? Ask yourself these questions:



As an example of how to cut down and rework your writing, have a look at the extract below:

*John said, "Hi, Bill. How are you?"
 Bill smiled at John. "I'm fine, thanks. I have had a good day."
 John said, "Guess what? They say that house over there is haunted. I feel so scared."*

Pretty boring, right? I can tighten it up by cutting out anything extra and focusing on the exciting stuff that is about my story – a haunted house.

*~~John said, "Hi, Bill. How are you?"~~
~~Bill smiled at John. "I'm fine, thanks. I have had a good day."~~
 John said, "~~Guess what?~~ They say that house over there is haunted. I feel so scared."*

I can also tighten my writing by *showing* the readers what happens by the way my characters act and speak, rather than *telling* them. Let's rework my above example again:

*John **clutched at Bill's jacket, his fingers trembling**, "~~Guess what?~~ They say that house over there is haunted. ~~I feel so scared.~~"*

Now, I don't need to *tell* the reader that John feels scared. I have *shown* the reader by describing how his fingers are shaking and by how he grabs Bill's jacket.

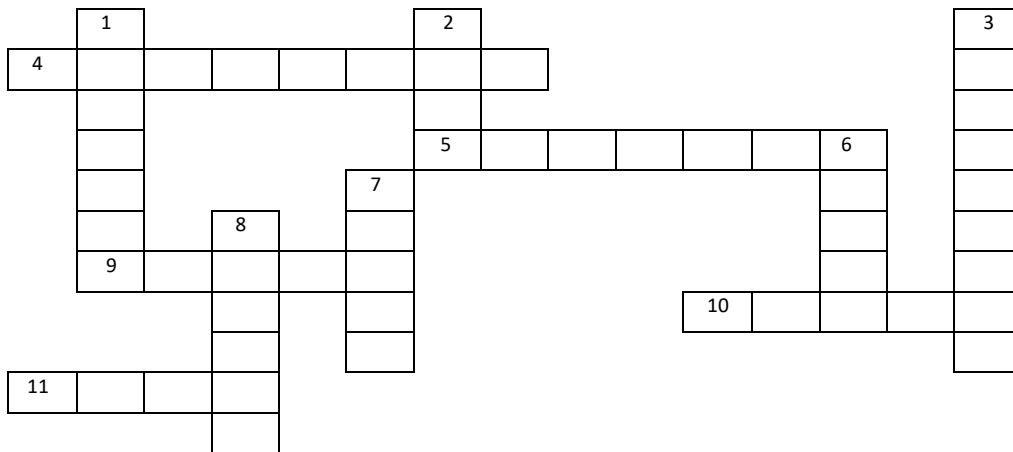
Writing the final draft

How many drafts you write is up to you. Once you are happy with your story, check through it once more.

- Is it interesting?
- Is it full of conflict?
- Does it have a climax?
- How does it end?
- Have you checked it carefully for mistakes?

Once you are ready, write out or print out your final draft. *Voilà*, you are a writer!

Fun activity 4: Crossword



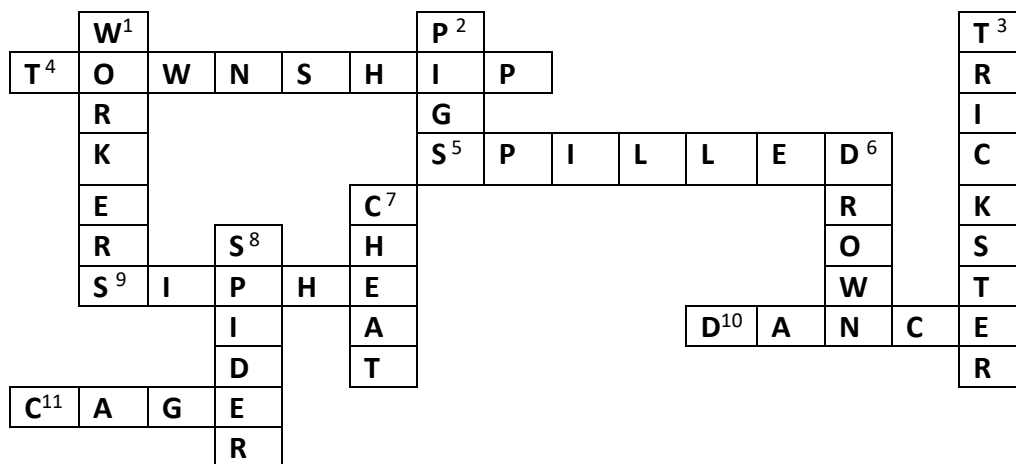
Down

1. The _____ ran away from the haunted library.
2. On the rooftop, Siphe saw flying ____.
3. Someone who tricks others is called this.
6. When Siphe fell into the milk, she thought she was going to _____.
7. A trick for a trick and a _____ for a cheat.
8. Anansi has the body of a _____.

Across

4. The story takes place in a South African _____.
5. The giant baby is crying over _____ milk.
9. Karabo's sister is _____.
10. Ghosts don't want to haunt people. They love to have fun, party and _____.
11. Anansi is trapped in a _____.

Fun activity 4: Crossword answers



Down

- The _____ ran away from the haunted library.
- On the rooftop, Siphe saw flying ____.
- Someone who tricks others is called this.
- When Siphe fell into the milk, she thought she was going to _____.
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Across

- The story takes place in a South African _____.
- The giant baby is crying over _____ milk.
- Karabo's sister is _____.
- Ghosts don't want to haunt people. They love to have fun, party and _____.
- Anansi is trapped in a _____.

Section 4: Suggested answers

Chapter 1

1. Karabo and Siphe are twin sisters.
2. The old man's name is Malume TC.
3. The story takes place in the street of a township.
4. There are several things that the workmen do that show that they are scared:
 - They scream, shout and cry.
 - They run away from the building site.
 - The workman who is left behind takes deep breaths to calm himself.
 - The workman who is left behind has trembling hands, and his voice is shaking.
5. They say the building site is haunted. There are strange noises, which sound like children whispering or laughing. There are purple and red lights coming from locked rooms, which are empty. The workmen's tools move on their own or disappear, and doors slam for no reason.
6. Siphe pulls Karabo to safety behind a parked car. She tries to pull Karabo away so that they can go home and start their homework. This shows us that Siphe worries about **safety** and is cautious/**careful**. On the other hand, Karabo puts her finger on her lips to tell Siphe to be quiet because she wants to listen to the men. This shows that she likes **excitement** and is more **adventurous** than Siphe.

Siphe rolls her eyes at the story of the strange noises, but Karabo smiles excitedly at the story. This shows that Siphe **questions the things** she hears more than Karabo.
7. Student's own answer, e.g., The twins will get involved in the mystery of the library.
8. Some people said that the big company's bosses had paid extra money (to the mayor) to get the job. This suggests that the mayor is dishonest.
9. If the mayor was paid to give the job to the big company, then it was wrong of him. If the people are wrong, and he wasn't paid, then whether it was acceptable depends on the mayor's reasons for choosing this company.
10. Student's own answer, e.g., It was wrong because you shouldn't listen to other people's conversations *OR* this was a public conversation, outside in the street, so it wasn't a private conversation, and so it was fine for the girls to listen to it.

Chapter 2

1. Malume TC always sits on a broken plastic chair resting against his lemon tree.
2. The sisters were thinking of the story of the haunted library site, so they didn't feel like joking or telling stories. They might have walked faster because they felt nervous and wanted to get home, where they felt safe, away from where they had heard the stories about the library. There could also be other reasons why they walked faster. For instance, they might have wanted to find Bandile as soon as possible so they could tell him about what they had heard.
3. The sisters see Bandile and Zuko.
4. Zuko dashes towards the girls and jumps up to say hello to Karabo.
5. Siphe is the one who does what she is supposed to do and who follows rules. The rule is that Zuko is not allowed to jump on people, so Siphe doesn't encourage Zuko to leap up. On the other hand, Karabo lets Zuko jump up at her, and she laughs and pats his head. This shows that Karabo doesn't worry as much about following the rules.
6. Siphe is worried and confused about the story of the haunted library. We know this because she says, "We just heard a very strange story, Bandile. I'm still trying to work out whether to believe it or not."
7. Karabo gives the following reasons for investigating the ghost stories:
 - The builders won't be working because it is the weekend and because they are frightened.
 - The police can't investigate because there is no sign that a crime has happened.
 - Bandile's father has told him to notice what is happening in their area and to tell him about it.
8. Bandile is keen to investigate. He says, "I'm in and so is Zuko" (p. 15). Siphe doesn't want to investigate. She thinks it is a bad idea.
9. Student's own answer, e.g., the children don't know what to expect at the library, so they cannot be sure it will be easy to investigate. It could be difficult and take a lot of time. If there really are ghosts, the children should expect problems.
10. Student's own answer, e.g., Yes, it is a bad idea because it sounds dangerous *OR* I do not agree because it sounds like a really fun adventure.

Chapter 3

1. Siphe; Karabo; Bandile; Zuko
2. Karabo grabbed Siphe's arms and shook her sister. She kept hissing, "Wake up!"
3. B
4. Both girls went to bed in their clothes, and both were too nervous to put on their light in case they woke their grandmother up. A difference is that Karabo is very excited and couldn't sleep. Siphe is not really excited about investigating the building site and didn't want to wake up.

5. Advantages and disadvantages

Advantage	Disadvantage
Their grandmother wouldn't be awake until 7 am. This would give them time to get to the library and back home again.	It is still dark. Siphe has to squint to see the time on her watch. The girls have to put on their socks and jackets in the dark.

6. Karabo is excited. We know this because she couldn't sleep (p. 18) and she was bouncing "up and down on her toes with excitement" (p. 17).
7. Karabo shakes the gate to try to get in. Then she starts walking along the fence to try to find a way to get into the construction site. Siphe says there is no way to get in and that they should go home. Karabo's reaction shows us that Karabo is **adventurous** and **determined** and **doesn't give up** easily. Siphe's reaction shows that she is more **careful** and **nervous** and maybe more **responsible** too as she doesn't want to get into any danger.
8. Bandile's actions show that he is caring and a good friend. He wants to look after his friend. He is also brave because they have been told the library site is haunted. He could also be someone who likes adventure, and he wants to find out what is happening at the library.
9. Student's own answer. For instance, Siphe may be folding her arms to show that she doesn't want to go after Karabo and she is upset at her sister's behaviour.
10. Student's own answer, e.g., Yes, Siphe made a good choice because the locked gate shows the children are not allowed onto the building site. She is being responsible and following the rules. There could also be danger inside the library *OR* No, Siphe made a bad choice. She should go with her sister to make sure she is safe. Protecting your sister is more important than following the rules.

Chapter 4

1. They hear Bandile screaming.
2. Siphe gets very dusty crawling through the fence. They won't be able to wash their clothes to hide what they have been doing because Gogo will want to know why they are doing washing.
3. Description of the ghosts: summary
 - Grey clothes
 - Grey skin
 - Not fully human
 - Some have dog paws
 - Some have elephant trunks
 - Some have wings
4. "They must be spirits because they weren't fully human, she realised" (p. 28). The figures are partly animal, partly human.
5. This is a song by Lionel Richie from the 1980s. In his music video, Lionel Richie sang this song about going to a party and dancing on the ceiling. The writer chose this song because the spirits are also having a party and dancing on the ceiling.
6. Siphe is unsure whether the spirits are good or bad – "A few of the figures swooped down and reached out to them. Siphe couldn't tell if it was to get them to join in the dancing or to catch them or to hurt them" (p. 26).

Bandile is very frightened – his eyes and mouth are both wide open because he is so scared.

Karabo acts more aggressively. She hits out at the spirits with a big metal pipe.

7. The figures just laugh. They don't seem angry at all but are having fun. This shows us that maybe the spirits are friendly.
8. The workers must have been very scared to have thrown down their tools and run away.
9. Student's own answer, e.g., Yes, it was a good idea to leave because even if the spirits were friendly, something very weird was happening at the library *OR* No, it wasn't a good idea to leave. If they leave, they will never find out what is happening at the library. The spirits don't seem dangerous at all.

10. No. Student's own answer, e.g., maybe Siphe only spoke to Bandile because she thought he would be easier to persuade, and then they could persuade Karabo to come too. It doesn't look like Siphe would have left without her sister, even though she is scared, because she went inside the building when she heard screaming and went to find her sister and Bandile.

Chapter 5

1. Purple; green
2. The man's eyes are black. His teeth are pale blue. His skin is deep grey.
3. Siphe's head becomes sore because she can't understand how his voice can come from *inside* the door.
4. He wants to know if Siphe loves her sister and will do anything to get her back. He says that Siphe has an hour to find him and Karabo. If Siphe finds them, she will have to give something up to take Karabo home.
5. "Just like the spirits dancing on the ceiling, this man didn't look like any human Siphe had ever seen" (p. 33).
6. This similarity suggests that the man in the door might also be a spirit or some sort of supernatural (not human) being.
7. Student's own answer, e.g., I think she was very brave. I hope I would also have been brave enough to rescue my sister because it is the right thing to do, but I'm not sure because I am scared of ghosts and spirits.
8. Siphe was very scared to go near the library. She has grown because she has already become braver because of her love for her sister, and she has gone through the green and purple door. She will probably also grow more in the story as she discovers that her love for her sister means taking more risks and not being so careful.

Chapter 6

1. The doorway leads to a flat rooftop. It is very high above the ground. The door Siphe came through is now made of metal. Karabo is standing on another rooftop.
2. The space between Siphe's rooftop and Karabo's rooftop is too wide to get across. It is also very high above the ground, so it would be very dangerous if Siphe fell.
3. The simile is effective because it emphasizes how high up Siphe is. The cars are compared to toys because both toy cars and the cars Siphe sees look very small. Real cars only look

tiny when they are far away, so Siphe must be on a really tall building.

4. At first, Siphe feels desperate and hopeless. She whispers, “No, no, no . . .” (p. 37) and hammers on the metal door, crying and calling for help. She falls onto her knees and puts her face in her hands. She can’t stop crying. When Siphe sees the flying pigs, she realises she can use them to get to the other rooftop. She wipes away her tears, takes a deep breath and jumps off the building to try to catch hold of a pig.
5. The expression “every cloud has a silver lining” means that there is always hope/always something positive even in terrible situations.
6. In this scene, Siphe is in a terrible situation because she has lost her sister. The pig that looks like a cloud with a silver lining gives her hope that there might be a way to find her sister.
7. Instead of being careful and responsible, Siphe decides just to jump without worrying about if she should do it. Siphe’s actions show that she is changing – she is taking more chances and risks.
8. Siphe changes and becomes less careful/more adventurous/takes more risks because she loves her sister, who is in danger.
9. Student’s own answer, e.g., maybe the writer is saying that you can do things that seem impossible to help someone you love. In Siphe’s case, she can learn to do things that were impossible for her before – she can break rules and face her fears and be brave because her love for Karabo is stronger than her fear.

Chapter 7

1. Enormous/huge etc.
2. Ten times bigger; tall
3. Siphe feels overwhelmed/feels she cannot cope with the noise (**Statement**). When she heard the baby crying, “Siphe covered her ears with her hands” (p. 43) (**Example**). We cover our ears when something is too loud for us to cope with (**Explain**).
4. C
5. “The baby was crying over spilled milk” (p. 44).
6. The expression means it doesn’t help to be upset about things that have already happened.

Perhaps the writer is saying that it won't help Siphe to be upset about what has already happened – Karabo has been captured. Instead, Siphe needs to focus on doing everything she can to rescue Karabo.

7. Siphe realises that she can **choose** how she responds to difficult experiences. When Siphe falls into the milk and tries to swim and starts sinking, she gets upset. The idiom is a reminder that it doesn't help to be upset about things you can't change. When Siphe stops feeling upset about being trapped in the milk and realises she can choose to swim to the surface, she is able to get out of the sea of milk and look for Karabo.
8. This is the giant spider with a human face. He is the same creature who spoke to Siphe from inside the library door. We know this because the writer says that his voice is "the voice from the screen" (p. 49).
9. Student's own answer.
10. It is very effective. The writer includes shocking information about the spider: It has a human face. The writer also shows that Siphe is terrified because she screams. Both the strange spider and Siphe's terror will make the reader want to read the next chapter to find out who the spider is, why it looks so strange and how Siphe reacts to it.

Chapter 8

1. This is Anansi. He was the creature who spoke inside the door to Siphe.
2. Man; spider; three human fingers.
3. Comparison

Ghosts in <i>The Haunted Library</i>	Ghosts in most stories
Ghosts are wonderful friends.	Ghosts are dangerous.
Ghosts just want to have fun and dance and party.	Ghosts scare people/haunt people.

4. Anansi doesn't answer Bandile immediately when he asks what *baanu so a emmia* means but instead starts talking about the language of Twi. Siphe is annoyed because she just wants to know what the words mean.
5. The words mean "When two carry, it does not hurt". This means that when people help each other, any situation becomes much easier. In this story, it is Siphe, Karabo, and Bandile who need to help Anansi, who cannot escape without them.
6. Anansi was summoned by two greedy men, who used a spell on the internet to call him. They said they had called him to have a dance party but they didn't have lots of friends.

Anansi felt sorry for them and called some of his ghost friends, but then the men trapped Anansi in a cage by telling him there was cake in the cage. Now the men are forcing him to carry on with the party so that people think that the library is haunted.

7. The men want to make more money from the project **[Statement]**. According to Bandile, “They decided that, if they could scare away the builders, it would make the project go on for longer, because they would have to stop work and find more builders. The longer the project drags on, the more money they can make from the government” **[Example]** (p. 57). In other words, they are trying to trick the government into paying them for longer so that they become rich **[Explain]**.
8. Anansi means that because he was caught with a trick, he needs to use a trick of his own to escape.
9. Student’s own answer, e.g., It is not fair, but Anansi is a trickster, so any plans he makes will always involve tricking others.
10. Student’s own answer.

Chapter 9

1. Bandile gets the right answer – a door.
2. Zuko barks, and Anansi says that Zuko is giving the answer as “bone”.
3. Anansi told Zuko to fetch Bandile’s father, who is a policeman, and then he made Zuko disappear. Bandile is angry because he is worried about his dog and because he says Anansi should have sent him. This shows he is a good friend.
4. Their intentions were to make money from the government dishonestly by trapping Anansi and using his ghostly friends to scare the workers so the project took longer.
5. Your table will probably look something like this:

Similarities	Differences
They are both greedy.	Clothing: One man wears overalls and black boots (same clothes as some of the workers). The other man is dressed like a businessman with black leather shoes and a fancy white shirt.
They are both dishonest.	Height: One man is tall. The other man is short with very strong arms.
	How they want to use Anansi: One man wants to move the spider to another project. The other man wants to keep Anansi at the library site.

6. The clothing changes:

- Anansi – blue top, shorts, orange headscarf
- Spirits – brightly coloured clothes (green pants, blue shirts, purple crop tops, silver shiny suits)
- Two men – fancy black suits

7. B

8. “Right arm out, left arm out, right palm up, left palm out, cross the right hand onto the left elbow, cross the left hand onto the right elbow” (p. 66)

These are the moves of the famous macarena dance. The ghosts and Anansi are also dressed in the type of bright clothing that the dancers in the macarena music video wore. The two dishonest men are wearing wedding suits and brightly coloured ties like the two male lead singers in the song.

9. One motive that Anansi had was to keep the men dancing until the police could come and arrest them. In other words, he wants **justice**. Another motive that Anansi had was **revenge**. We know this because according to the book, “This was the type of punishment they wished they could give every school bully, every mean teacher, and every angry man they had to avoid by crossing to the other side of the road” (p. 68).

Are his motives acceptable? Give a reason for your answer: Student’s own answer. For instance, a student might say it is acceptable to bring the men to justice because they are stealing from the government, but it is not acceptable to want to take revenge because one shouldn’t be vindictive (nasty), even to those who hurt you.

10. Student’s own answer.

Chapter 10

1. “Gone”

2. Karabo is surprised because Anansi said that they would be stuck forever if they got the answer to the riddle wrong.

3. Summary

- Anansi says it is time for him and the spirits to go.
- He tells them how to contact him if they need him.
- The police rush in.
- The dance music stops, and Anansi disappears

- The tall crook begs the police to arrest him and his friend.
 - The two crooks keep dancing until they are handcuffed.
4. Student's own answer, e.g., maybe cheating the men is fair because they tricked Anansi, but the children did nothing wrong to the spider, so they didn't deserve to be tricked.
 5. I will help those who are doing something good.
 6. When the crooks arrived at the library, they just wanted to work out the best way to use Anansi to make money dishonestly. Now, they are so desperate to stop dancing that one man says he will admit everything he has done wrong and give back the money. They want to be arrested.
 7. It is very effective. The repeating of the letter "s" (suits/soaked/sweat) sounds almost like sweat dripping down the men. Repeating a consonant sound like this is called alliteration.
 8. Student's own answer, e.g., Yes, the men treated him badly, and they deserved to feel trapped too.

Chapter 11

1. This chapter takes place at the finished library.
2. They are both old. They both like complaining about how young people don't listen to the elderly.
3. B
4. The library bricks have been plastered and are a bright yellow colour. Before, the bricks were grey and unpainted. There is a bright yellow brick wall around the library instead of the wire fence that was there before.
5. The children are modest. They actually acted very bravely and because they went to the library, Anansi was able to repay "a trick for a trick" and escape.
6. He is scared they will call out to him, and he doesn't want anyone to know he is there because he is listening to a conversation.
7. Palesa says that the house is haunted. Vu doesn't believe in ghosts and says that he thought Palesa was intelligent enough not to believe "silly things" (p. 79).
8. Student's own answer, e.g., I think the children will discover magical creatures or supernatural reasons for the problem with the house (**statement**). I think this because the next book will be part of the *Anansi* series, and Bandile says they have their "friend Anansi

to help” (p. 82) them **(example)**. Because Anansi is clearly going to be part of the next adventure and he is magical and supernatural, it seems likely that what the children will find will also be magical and supernatural so that he can help them **(explain)**.

9. She has become more adventurous, confident and brave. When they were investigating the library site, she didn't want to go in at all.
10. Student's own answer

Study guide glossary

Antagonist: The main character's opponent or rival is the antagonist.

Characters: These are the people in a book/story, Siphe, Karabo, Bandile and Anansi.

Climax: The climax is the most dramatic/exciting part of a story.

Conflict: Conflict is tension or arguing. There are two kinds of conflict: internal conflict and external conflict. See "external conflict" and "internal conflict" for explanations of these terms.

External conflict: This is conflict (arguing/tension) between people. For example, there is conflict between Anansi and the crooks.

Genre: This is the type of story which has been written, such as a bildungsroman or a thriller.

Idiom: An idiom is an expression or a saying.

Internal conflict: This is conflict (arguing/tension) inside a person. For example, Siphe feels conflict between her fear of danger and her love for her sister.

Mystery: A mystery is a story in which something strange or unusual or even bad happens – and the characters in the story need to find out the truth behind this event.

Narrator: the person telling the story.

Plot: The plot is the related events that together form a story.

Protagonist: The protagonist is the main character in the story.

Setting: The setting is where and when the story takes place. This story takes place in a South African township, at the building site of a library although some of the places Siphe goes to are magical, such as the rooftop with the flying pigs, the kitchen with the giant baby and the beach with forests around it.

Simile: A simile compares two things using the word "like" or "as".

Symbolise: This word means "to represent". For instance, a heart symbolises/represents love.

Theme: The theme of a story is the message behind a story.

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