



Talk for Writing Home-school booklet

# Sidney Spider - A Tale of Friendship

by Alison Cooper



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Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for taking time to support your child with their learning. This booklet is designed to inspire and support your child to develop skills and confidence in English – speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Through the world of Sidney Spider, your child will explore a range of purposeful activities broken down into bite-sized chunks. Each activity is carefully explained and many could be extended. They are designed to be shared activities. At the end of the booklet, you and your child are invited to comment on how you got on with the learning.

The activities in this booklet are:

- ★ **Story of Sidney Spider**
- ★ **Talk activity about the story**
- ★ **Reading response activities**
- ★ **Who said what?**
- ★ **Quiz Time**
- ★ **Exploring words together**
- ★ **Enjoying a rhyme together: Incy Wincy Spider**
- ★ **Helping Sidney to improve his punctuation**
- ★ **Helping Sidney to improve his handwriting**
- ★ **Suggesting hiding places for Sidney: developing confidence with prepositions**
- ★ **A spider fact file**
- ★ **Becoming a mini-beast hunter**  
Writing a fact file for a new creature
- ★ **Party time!**  
Writing an invitation to Sidney's party  
Baking for the party
- ★ **Review of learning**

You can listen to a recording of the story of Sidney Spider – A Tale of Friendship here:  
<https://soundcloud.com/talkforwriting/sidney>

*Have fun together!*

## Sidney Spider - A Tale of Friendship

Once upon a time, there was a large spotted spider called Sidney who lived in the top corner of Mrs Brown's shed. He was a very special spider because he spun beautiful golden webs, but Sidney was lonely. When he arrived last year, all the other spiders said, "Go away, Sidney. We don't want you here. You'll steal all our prey with your golden webs." So, Sidney hid away in his dark corner feeling sad.

One bright, sunny morning, Mrs Brown decided to spring clean her shed. So, she opened up the door and banged her broom, feather duster and dustpan down on the floor. Sidney and all the other spiders in the shed shivered in fear. Soon, Mrs Brown started to sing Incy Wincy Spider at the top of her voice and Sidney shivered a bit more. Then Mrs Brown picked up her broom and started to sweep: swish, swash, swish, swash, swish, swash.

Sidney looked down from his deep, dark corner and saw Mrs Brown's broom coming closer and closer and closer: swish, swash, swish, swash, swish, swash. "Help!" cried Sidney. "Please help me." Luckily, Susie, a tiny house spider, heard him. "I'm in the old flowerpot behind the spade," squeaked Susie. "Throw out your line and come and hide with me." So, Sidney threw out a fine golden thread and landed gently in Susie's flowerpot. "Thank you, Susie," said Sidney smiling.

A few minutes later, Sidney and Susie heard: swish, swash, swish, swash, swish, swash. Oh no, Mrs Brown's broom was

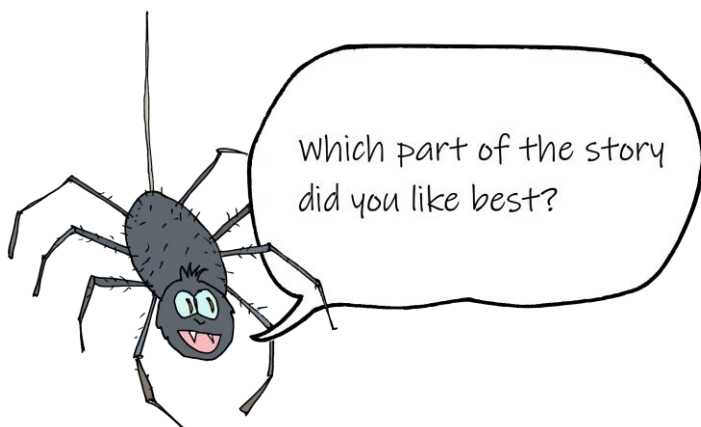
heading for the flowerpot. "Help!" cried Sidney and Susie. "Please help us."

Luckily, Stanley, an ancient spider, heard them. "I'm in the red welly boot under the bench," mumbled Stanley. "Throw out your line and come and hide with me."

So, Sidney threw out a fine golden thread and grabbed Susie. Together they landed with a gentle thump in the old red welly boot. "Thank you, Stanley," said Sidney and Susie smiling.

A few minutes later, Sidney, Susie and Stanley heard: swish, swash, swish, swash, swish, swash. Oh no, Mrs Brown's broom was heading for the red welly boot. Mrs Brown bent over to pick up the boot but, luckily, her phone rang at that very moment. "I will come immediately," they heard her say. So, Mrs Brown picked up her broom, feather duster and dustpan and rushed out of the door.

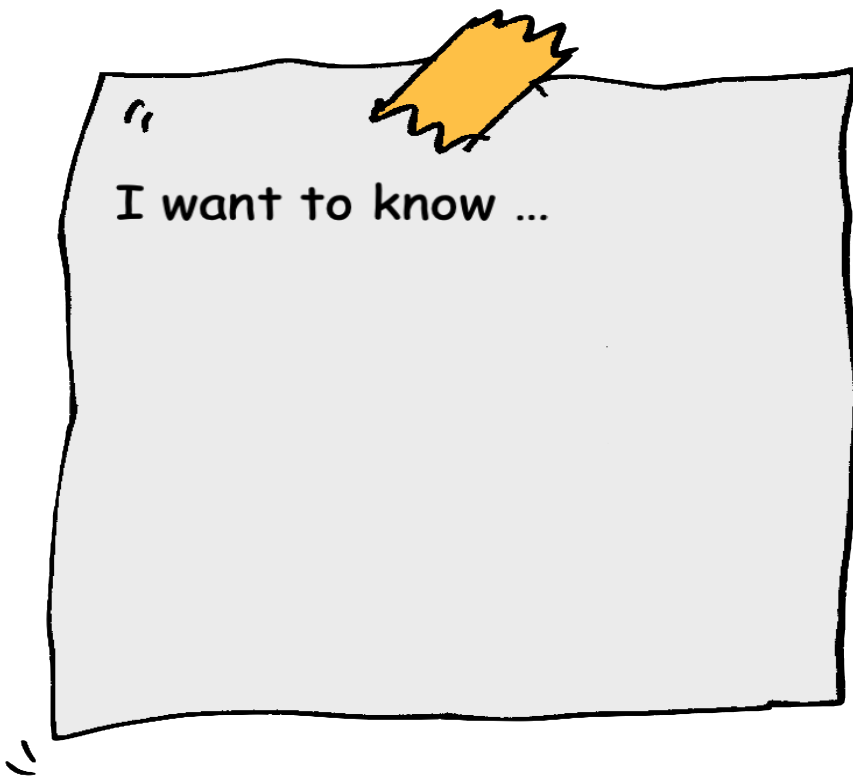
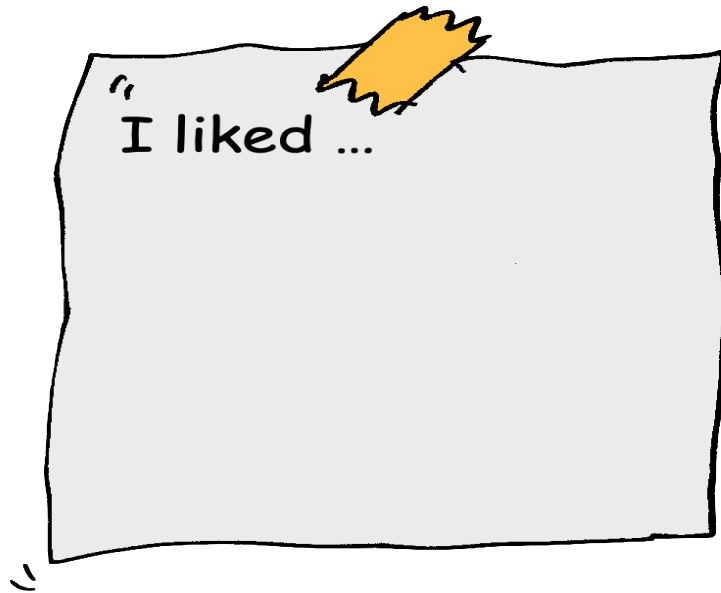
"Hooray!" said Sidney, Susie and Stanley. "Come on everyone, let's have a party!" they said.



So, all the other spiders crawled out of the holes. First, they all shook one of Stanley's legs to welcome him. Next, they danced a special spider

dance in the middle of the shed. After that, Stanley knew that he would never be lonely again.

★ Share the story of Sidney the Spider with a grown-up and talk about the story together. Then fill in Sidney's sticky notes.



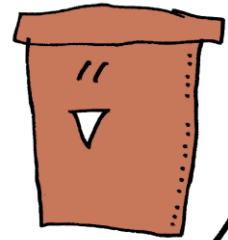
A large, light grey rectangular box with a black outline, intended for writing. At the top center of the box, there is a jagged, yellow tear-like shape. Inside the box, the text "I was surprised by ..." is written in a simple, black, sans-serif font. There are small black marks at the top-left and bottom-left corners of the box, resembling quotation marks or corner indicators.

★ Read the story together again  
Can you work out who said what?

I'm in the red welly boot  
under the bench



I'm in the old flowerpot  
behind the spade



Hooray!

Go away, Sidney.  
We don't want you here.

I will come  
immediately

## ★ Quiz time

1. Where did Sidney live at the start of the story?
2. Why was Sidney a special spider?
3. Why didn't the other spiders like Sidney?
4. What song did Mrs Brown like to sing?
5. Why did Sidney shiver with fear?
6. Why do you think Mrs Brown rushed out of the shed?
7. What made Sidney happy at the end of the story?  
How do you know?



## ★ Exploring

Here are some words from the story.  
Can you share them with an adult to work out what they mean?

Say the words slowly, quickly, softly, loudly and in as many different ways you can.

★ Can you find four things in your house that are ancient?

ancient

Something that is very old

prey

An animal that is hunted or killed for food

★ Can you name four animals that hunt for their prey?

★ Mrs Brown liked to sing, *Incy Wincy Spider*. You could ask a grown up to find the song on YouTube. Then you can sing along and make up some actions.

★ Or you can say the words yourself with members of your family:

*Incy Wincy Spider climbed up the water spout  
Down came the rain and washed the spider out  
Out came the sun and dried up all the rain  
So, Incy Wincy Spider climbed up the spout again.*

★ Now make up some actions to go with the words

*Incy Wincy Spider climbed up the water spout  
Down came the rain and washed the spider out  
Out came the sun and dried up all the rain  
So, Incy Wincy Spider climbed up the spout again.*

★ Do you know any other songs about spiders?

★Sidney Spider wrote a letter to his new friends but he's not very good at full stops and capital letters. Can you add them into his letter in the correct place?

*dear spiders,*

*thank you for keeping me safe from  
mrs brown's broom she nearly swept  
me into her dustpan I had a lovely  
time at our spider party I'm very  
happy to have some new spider  
friends and I'll help you when you  
have a problem*

*love Sidney xx*

★Sidney has very spidery handwriting. Can you write out his letter in your very best handwriting?



• I could hide *in* a \_\_\_\_\_

• I could hide *in* a \_\_\_\_\_

• I could hide *under* a \_\_\_\_\_

• I could hide *on top of* a \_\_\_\_\_

• I could hide *next to* a \_\_\_\_\_

## Spider Fact File

★ Read the fact file with a grown up.

★ Can you add anything else about spiders?

<i>What it looks like</i>	Spiders have 8 legs. Their bodies are in two parts.
<i>Where it lives</i>	Most spiders like to live in shadowy places.
<i>What it eats</i>	Most spiders eat flies and other insects.
<i>An unusual fact</i>	Spiders spin webs with a strong silk thread.
<i>Other interesting information</i>	Spiders are not insects. They are arachnids.

## Mini-beast hunting!

Can you go outside and look at some different creatures?  
If you pick them up, make sure you put them back in the same place and wash your hands afterwards.

★ Now write down what you found. Try to use and to make a longer sentence.

My turn: First, I went to the steps *and* I saw three black ants.

Your turn. Write on the lines below. These words might help you.

*and saw found ant woodlouse  
caterpillar butterfly*

First, I went to \_\_\_\_\_

Next, I went to \_\_\_\_\_

After that, I went to \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, I went to \_\_\_\_\_

# My fact file

★ Can you make a fact file for one of the mini-beast creatures you found?

<i>What it looks like</i>	
<i>Where it lives</i>	
<i>What it eats</i>	
<i>An unusual fact</i>	
<i>Other interesting information</i>	

★ Draw a picture of your creature.

# Party time!



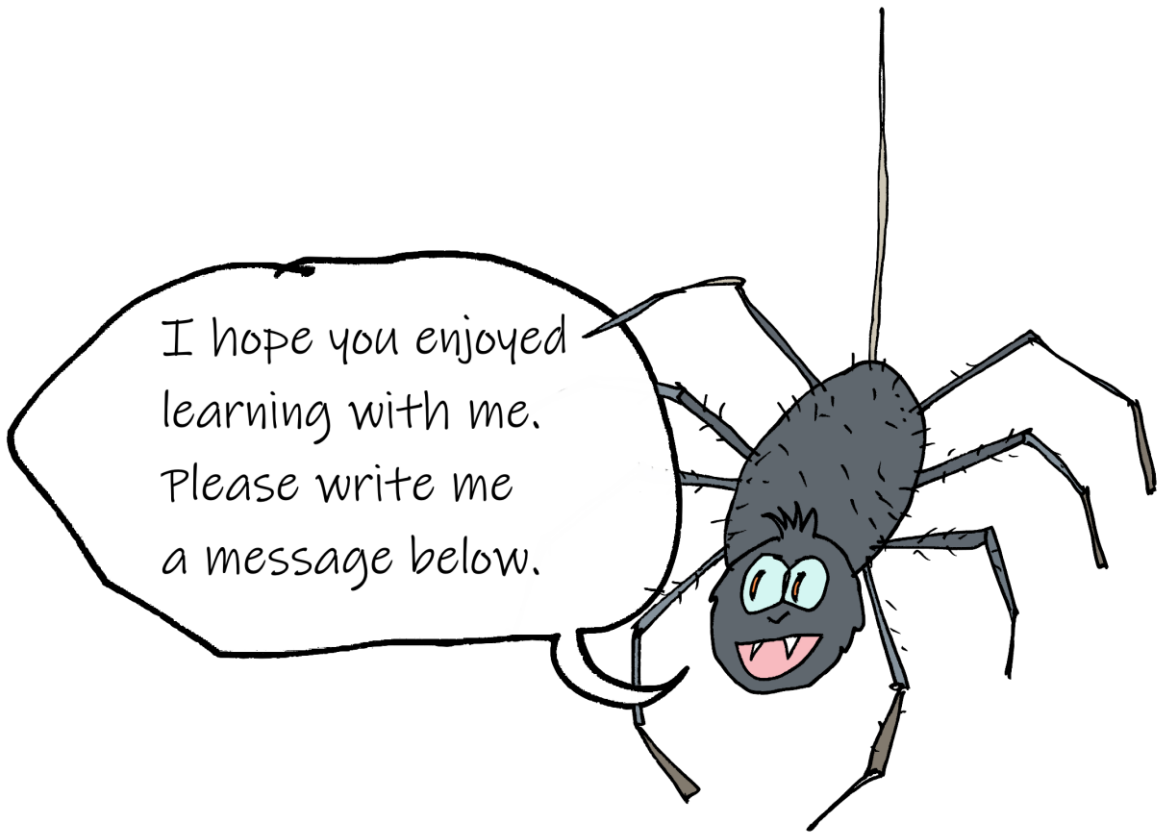
★ Sidney wants to bake some very special spider biscuits for his party. Perhaps a grown up can help

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/spider-biscuits>



There are lots of other spidery baking recipes on the internet. Perhaps you could try some others with a grown up.





The activities I like best were.....

.....

I've learned.....

.....

My special helper thinks.....

.....

.....

.....



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**Alison Cooper, former teacher and National Strategy Literacy Consultant, now works with Talk for Writing to help schools develop the approach.**

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