

# Characters In The Play Marriage Of Anansewa

**characters in the play marriage of anansewa** play a pivotal role in shaping the narrative, themes, and overall message of the drama. This classic Ghanaian play by Efua Sutherland explores complex human relationships, societal expectations, and cultural values through the interactions of its vivid characters. Understanding these characters is essential for appreciating the depth of the play and its commentary on marriage, family, and social status in Ghanaian society.

## Introduction to the Main Characters in Marriage of Anansewa

The play features a diverse cast of characters, each representing different facets of society, personal ambition, and moral values. The characters are crafted with depth and complexity, making them memorable and significant to the story's progression. Key Characters Overview - Anansewa: The central female character, whose name echoes the famous Ghanaian spider trickster figure, Ananse. She is a young woman caught between societal expectations and her personal desires. - Ebo Baa: Anansewa's father, a wealthy and somewhat manipulative man who is obsessed with securing a good marriage for his daughter. - Sewa: Anansewa's mother, who often acts as a voice of reason amidst her husband's schemes. - Okomfo Ananse: A traditional priest involved in the play's spiritual and cultural elements, representing the influence of tradition. - Sons of Ebo Baa: The potential suitors, each representing different social classes and values. - The Suitors: Multiple men vying for Anansewa's hand, each with unique backgrounds and motives. - Chorus and Servants: Supporting characters that serve to enhance the narrative, often providing comic relief or commentary.

## Character Analysis in the Play Marriage of Anansewa

### Anansewa: The Protagonist

Anansewa is the heart of the play. She is depicted as a young woman with a blend of innocence, intelligence, and a desire for independence. Her character embodies the struggles faced by women in traditional societies: balancing societal expectations with personal happiness. Key traits of Anansewa: - Youthful and vibrant: She is lively and full of hope. - Resilient: Despite her circumstances, she seeks ways to assert her own will. - Symbol of modern womanhood: Her character reflects the tension between traditional roles and emerging independence. Role in the play: - She is the central figure around whom the plot revolves. - Her relationships with her father and suitors highlight themes of manipulation and societal pressure. - Her eventual decision-making showcases her growth and assertiveness.

## **Ebo Baa: The Manipulative Father**

Ebo Baa is a wealthy merchant whose primary concern is to marry his daughter into a prominent family for social prestige and economic benefit. Characteristics: - Cunning and manipulative: He devises schemes to secure advantageous marriages for Anansewa. - Materialistic: His focus is on social status rather than love or personal happiness. - Authoritarian: He exerts control over his daughter's life, often disregarding her feelings. Significance in the play: - Ebo Baa's actions drive much of the plot, including the deception involving the suitors. - His character highlights the societal obsession with wealth and status. - His manipulative tactics generate conflict and tension within the play.

## **Sewa: The Voice of Reason**

Sewa, Anansewa's mother, often provides a counterpoint to her husband's schemes. She is more empathetic and concerned about her daughter's well-being. Traits: - Nurturing and caring: She shows maternal concern for Anansewa. - Realistic: She recognizes the flaws in her husband's plans. - Supportive: She attempts to mediate conflicts and protect her daughter. Role: - Acts as the moral compass of the play. - Represents traditional values and maternal wisdom. - Her interactions with Ebo Baa reveal the tension between tradition and progress.

## **The Suitors and Their Representations**

The suitors in the play are not merely romantic interests but also symbols of various social strata and values. Types of suitors: - The Wealthy Merchant: Represents material success and social aspiration. - The Young Gentleman: Embodies youthful ambition and modernity. - The Traditionalist: Values cultural and spiritual traditions over material wealth. - The Comic Suitor: Provides comic relief, often representing foolishness or greed. Significance: - Their different backgrounds showcase Ghanaian societal diversity. - Their interactions with Anansewa reveal societal expectations of marriage. - The competition among suitors highlights themes of greed, deception, and social mobility.

## **Thematic Roles of Characters in Marriage of Anansewa**

Each character contributes to the overarching themes of the play:

### **Tradition vs. Modernity**

- Characters like Anansewa and her mother embody traditional values, while the suitors often symbolize modern aspirations. - The conflict between traditional authority (Ebo Baa) and individual desires underscores societal change.

### **Deception and Manipulation**

- Ebo Baa's schemes involve deceit, which is reflected in the characters of the suitors and the play's

plot twists. - Anansewa's clever responses demonstrate resistance to manipulation.

## Marriage and Social Status

- The characters' pursuits of advantageous marriages highlight the importance placed on social mobility. - The play critiques the superficiality of marriage based solely on social gain.

## Conclusion: The Significance of Characters in Marriage of Anansewa

The characters in Marriage of Anansewa serve as vital instruments for exploring cultural, social, and moral themes. Their interactions and development portray the complexities of Ghanaian society, especially concerning marriage, tradition, and modernity. Understanding these characters enriches the viewer's appreciation of the play's message and its enduring relevance.

## Summary of Key Characters and Their Roles:

1. **Anansewa:** The young woman seeking independence.
2. **Ebo Baa:** The manipulative father obsessed with social standing.
3. **Sewa:** The caring mother and voice of reason.
4. **Suitors:** Representatives of different societal values and aspirations.
5. **Supporting characters:** Add humor, tension, and cultural context.

## SEO Keywords for Better Visibility

- Characters in Marriage of Anansewa - Anansewa play character analysis - Ghanaian play characters - Efua Sutherland's Marriage of Anansewa characters - Themes in Marriage of Anansewa - Role of characters in Ghanaian drama - Cultural significance of characters in Anansewa  
Understanding the characters in Marriage of Anansewa is crucial for appreciating the play's rich thematic content and cultural commentary. By analyzing each character's traits, motivations, and relationships, readers can gain insight into the societal issues and traditional values depicted in this classic Ghanaian drama.

Characters in the Play Marriage of Anansewa: A Deep Dive into Roles, Personalities, and Symbolism  
The play Marriage of Anansewa by Efua Sutherland is a compelling exploration of societal norms, individual ambitions, and cultural values within Ghanaian society. Central to its narrative are a diverse array of characters, each embodying particular traits, social positions, and symbolic meanings that propel the story forward. Understanding these characters not only enriches one's appreciation of the play but also offers insight into the themes it seeks to explore. This article provides a detailed analysis of the key characters, their personalities, relationships, and their roles within the broader social and cultural context.

## **Introduction to the Main Characters**

The play is driven by a cast that represents different facets of Ghanaian society—ranging from traditional authority figures to ambitious young women and scheming relatives. They are woven into a narrative that questions societal expectations, gender roles, and the pursuit of personal happiness. The primary characters include Anansewa, her father Okomfo Ananse, her suitors, and various family members and friends. Each character embodies specific traits and serves unique functions within the story.

### **Okomfo Ananse: The Patriarch and Principal Architect of the Scheme**

**Profile and Personality** Okomfo Ananse, the father of Anansewa, is a traditional priest and a shrewd, ambitious man. His character is rooted in the archetype of the cunning patriarch who seeks to secure his family's future through strategic manipulation. - Traits: - Clever and resourceful, often using wit to navigate societal constraints. - Ambitious, desires social elevation and financial gain. - Manipulative, orchestrating events to serve his personal interests. - Traditional and authoritative, upholding cultural norms but willing to bend them for personal gain. **Role in the Play** Okomfo Ananse's primary role is as the mastermind behind the marriage scheme. He persuades Anansewa to accept suitors who are willing to pay high dowries, with the ultimate goal of enriching himself. His actions raise questions about morality, traditional authority, and the exploitation of cultural practices for personal benefit.

### **Anansewa: The Young Woman Caught in Societal Expectations**

**Profile and Personality** Anansewa, the play's protagonist, is a teenage girl caught between her desires and societal expectations. She embodies innocence, naivety, and the struggles faced by young women in conforming to traditional roles. - Traits: - Obedient yet increasingly aware of her circumstances. - Naïve, initially trusting her father's plans. - Resilient, showing strength in navigating her predicament. - Curious about love and independence. **Role in the Play** Anansewa's character is a reflection of societal pressures placed on young women regarding marriage and social status. Her willingness to accept multiple suitors illustrates her naivety but also her desire for security and acceptance. Her character progression raises themes of autonomy, deception, and societal expectations.

### **The Suitors: Embodying Greed, Desperation, and Social Aspirations**

The play introduces several suitors vying for Anansewa's hand, each representing different social classes and personal motives. **Notable Suitors** - Olowu: A wealthy merchant, symbolizing material wealth and social ambition. - Oseku: A humble man, representing modesty and traditional values. -

Okae: A young, naive suitor, embodying innocence and infatuation. - Other suitors include individuals with varying motives, including greed, status-seeking, or genuine love. Traits and Significance - Greed and materialism: Many suitors are motivated by the prospect of wealth or social elevation. - Desperation: Some are eager to marry at any cost, highlighting societal pressures. - Diverse backgrounds: Representing the spectrum of Ghanaian society, their interactions reveal class distinctions and societal hierarchies. The suitors' varied personalities and motives serve to critique the commodification of marriage and the superficiality of social status.

## **Supporting Characters and Their Roles**

Apart from the main characters, several supporting figures enrich the play's narrative and thematic layers. Sunkwa: Anansewa's Friend and Confidante - Role: Acts as a moral compass and offers a contrasting perspective to Anansewa's naivety. - Traits: Wise, perceptive, and sympathetic. - Significance: Highlights the gap between societal expectations and individual desires, and offers a voice of reason. Nana Yaw: The Servant - Role: Serves as comic relief, often providing humorous commentary. - Traits: Loyal, witty, and perceptive. - Significance: Represents the common people's perspective and adds levity amid serious themes. The Mother and Other Family Members - These characters reinforce traditional roles and societal norms, sometimes encouraging or criticizing the schemes around marriage.

## **Symbolism and Character Interactions**

The characters' interactions serve as a mirror to Ghanaian societal values and conflicts. - Okomfo Ananse's scheming symbolizes the exploitation of cultural traditions for personal gain. - Anansewa's innocence embodies the vulnerability of young women within a patriarchal society. - Suitors' varied motives critique superficial social aspirations rooted in materialism. - Supporting characters provide contrasting viewpoints, enriching the narrative's complexity. These interactions reveal underlying themes such as greed, deception, societal pressure, and the quest for happiness.

## **Conclusion: The Rich Tapestry of Characters and Their Cultural Significance**

The characters in *Marriage of Anansewa* are more than mere figures within a play; they are representations of societal values, cultural norms, and human follies. Through their personalities, motives, and interactions, Efua Sutherland crafts a narrative that challenges audiences to reflect on the true meaning of marriage, morality, and societal progress. Okomfo Ananse, with his cunning; Anansewa, with her innocence; the suitors, with their ambitions; and supporting characters, each contribute to a rich, layered story that remains relevant beyond its Ghanaian setting. Their portrayals serve as a mirror to societal realities, prompting critical reflection on how cultural practices influence individual lives and societal development. In understanding these characters, audiences gain deeper insight into Ghanaian cultural dynamics and the universal themes of human ambition, deception, and the pursuit of happiness. The play's characters, therefore, stand as

enduring symbols within a narrative that continues to resonate globally, highlighting the timeless nature of human societal interactions.

## Questions & Answers About characters in the play marriage of anansewa

| No | Question                                                                              | Answer                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Who is Anansewa in the play 'Marriage of Anansewa' and what is her role?              | Anansewa is the main female character who is the daughter of Oseke. She is the central figure around whom the plot revolves, as her marriage prospects and the schemes of her father drive the story.            |
| 2  | What is the character of Oseke in 'Marriage of Anansewa'?                             | Oseke is Anansewa's father, a cunning and manipulative man who devises schemes to marry off his daughter for financial gain, often using deception and trickery.                                                 |
| 3  | How does the character of Nana influence the play's events?                           | Nana is Anansewa's mother, who is more cautious and critical of Oseke's schemes. Her interactions with other characters reveal her concern for her daughter's well-being and add depth to the familial dynamics. |
| 4  | What role does the character of Pa Anansewa play in the story?                        | Pa Anansewa is a comic character who often provides humorous relief and represents traditional values, contrasting with Oseke's manipulative tactics.                                                            |
| 5  | How is the character of Sewa portrayed in the play?                                   | Sewa, a suitor, is portrayed as a naive and hopeful young man who is eager to marry Anansewa, unaware of her father's deceptive plans.                                                                           |
| 6  | What is the significance of the character of Nana's suitor in 'Marriage of Anansewa'? | Nana's suitor is involved in the subplot that highlights themes of love, deception, and social expectations, adding complexity to the narrative.                                                                 |
| 7  | How does the character of Anansewa evolve throughout the play?                        | Anansewa's character develops from a passive victim of her father's schemes to someone who begins to assert her independence and question her future.                                                            |
| 8  | What is the role of the character of the Reverend in the play?                        | The Reverend represents moral authority and societal norms, often providing advice or commentary on the characters' actions, and highlighting themes of morality and tradition.                                  |
| 9  | How do the characters in 'Marriage of Anansewa' reflect Ghanaian society and culture? | The characters embody various societal roles and values, such as family hierarchy, marriage customs, and traditional beliefs, offering insights into Ghanaian culture and social dynamics.                       |

Anansewa, Ghanaian theatre, West African drama, gender roles, family dynamics, social satire, comedic play, traditional customs, cultural values, Nigerian play