

The Elves & the Shoemaker

What have we already learned? Who are the 4 tradespeople we studied yesterday? Who can tell me about the 4 tradespeople who made garments for the customers who came into their shops in town, during colonial times?

Yesterday we talked about the cobbler. Remember that another name for a cobbler is a shoemaker. Today you will hear a fictional story about a shoemaker or cobbler.

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Let's compare the people who sell clothes today, to those who sold clothing long ago. In today's time, usually the people who make the shoes we wear are not the same people who sell us those shoes. Our shoes are usually made in factories by factory workers, who specialize in running the machines that make the shoes. When we go to the shoe store, sales clerks--people who specialize in helping customers--are there to help us.

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In towns from long ago, many tradespeople had to make their products in their shops as well as sell their products in their shops--two very different jobs today. A cobbler may be very good at making shoes, but may not be very good at deciding what style shoes to make in order to interest customers in buying shoes. What if a miller made great flour but charged too much money for each bag and couldn't sell it? What if a dressmaker sewed very well, but didn't have fabrics that women liked?

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Running a shop and making sure customers bought your product was hard work--sometimes harder than making your product!

You are going to hear a fictional story about a once successful shoemaker who had become poor. Listen carefully to find out how he once again became successful and who helped him.

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Once there was a shoemaker who had grown very poor over the course of several years. He didn't have much money. The shoemaker had been good at his trade; he made attractive or good looking shoes that fit well and made his customers happy.



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But, unfortunately, fashions had changed over time, and the shoemaker's shoes had gone out of style. People didn't want to buy them anymore. They preferred the shoes that the shoemaker in the next town made.



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The shoemaker looked around at his shop, which was in the front of his house. He had very few supplies left to make new shoes. What supplies or materials does he need to make a pair of shoes? Since people had stopped buying his shoes, he wasn't making any money.



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Because he wasn't making any money, he wasn't able to buy new supplies. He picked up the tiny bit of leather that he had left. He thought, perhaps, he would be able to squeak out one last pair of shoes before he closed his shop for good and moved to the poorhouse with his wife.



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People who couldn't afford their own house lived together in a place called the poorhouse. He carefully cut out the pieces he needed and set them on his work table. But he was too tired to work, so he yawned, kissed his wife goodnight, and went to bed. What do you think will happen to the poor shoemaker?



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The next morning, he rubbed his eyes, kissed his wife good morning, and went directly to his shop to work on that last pair of shoes. When he entered his shop, he stopped short. He rubbed his eyes again. There, on his work table, where he'd left the pieces of shoe leather the night before, was a perfectly assembled pair of shoes.



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Wow! Where do you think the finished shoes came from?

The shoemaker picked up a shoe. The stitching was neat and attractive. The shoe was more stylish and interesting than the shoes the shoemaker himself made. But where on earth had the shoes come from?



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Who had made them? The shoemaker had no idea. The shoemaker asked his wife, but she also had no idea. Not knowing what else to do, the shoemaker picked up the shoes and placed them in his front window.



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Just then, a gentleman walked by. He stopped at the window and peered in. He quickly opened the door and pointed to the new shoes. "I simply must have those shoes. What will you take for them?"

The shoemaker shrugged and gave his normal price.



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The man waved his arms excitedly. "No, no, no, those shoes are worth twice that much." He insisted that the shoemaker take double his normal price for the new shoes.

The shoemaker accepted the money graciously or with thanks.



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As soon as the man walked out of the shop, the shoemaker clicked his heels, kissed his wife, and ran out the door to go to the leather shop. With the money he'd just been paid, he was able to buy enough leather for two new pairs of shoes.



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Later that day, the shoemaker cut out the pieces to make two new pairs of shoes. But he was tired, so he yawned, kissed his wife goodnight, and went to bed.



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In the morning, the shoemaker found two new pairs of shoes, just like the pair he had found the day before. The stitching on both pairs was just as neat and attractive as the stitching on the previous pair, and the style was just as interesting.



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He put the two new pairs in the front window and was pleased when two men walked in within minutes and offered double the normal price for the two pairs of shoes.



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The shoemaker again clicked his heels, kissed his wife, and ran to the leather shop. He bought enough leather to make four new pairs of shoes.

Again, he cut out the leather and went to bed. What do you think will happen.



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Again, the shoes sold quickly for double the shoemaker's normal price; and again, the shoemaker clicked his heels, kissed his wife, and ran to the leather shop to buy more leather.



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This went on and on and on until the shoemaker had sold so many pairs of shoes that he became a very rich man. Now he had a lot of money. One evening, just as he was about to kiss his wife goodnight, he suggested to her that they stay up and find out who was responsible for making all these shoes that had made them so rich.



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His wife thought that was a good idea, so the two of them hid in a dark corner of the shop and struggled to stay awake. What or who do you predict they'll see?



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At about midnight, they saw two little elves enter the shop. Elves are small magical characters or fairies. The elves were wearing old, worn-out clothes, with holes in the elbows and knees. They went straight to the leather and began to work, stitching together shoe after shoe after shoe.



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When they were done, they lined the shoes up neatly into pairs and then quietly left the shop. Is this what you predicted?

The shoemaker and his wife were very surprised. "Who would have imagined that two little elves could make such stylish shoes?" The shoemaker said.



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“Yes,” said his wife, “and yet, they have no shoes of their own nor do they have decent clothes. I would like to make them each a new set of clothes. It is the least we can do for all they have done for us.”

“That is a nice idea,” said the shoemaker.



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So, the shoemaker's wife worked all day. She made two little shirts and two little pairs of trousers or pants. She made two little pairs of suspenders and two little pairs of socks and two little pairs of shoes. The little shoes looked exactly like little versions of the stylish shoes that the elves themselves made.



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That night, the shoemaker and his wife laid out the new sets of clothes in the place where they usually set out the shoe leather. They hid in the corner to watch how their little elf friends would react when they saw their presents.

How do you think the elves will react?



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At midnight, the two elves entered the shop. They saw their new clothes and looked thrilled to pieces. Do you think thrilled means really happy or really sad? They quickly put everything on. Then they danced together.

“We are two fine or fancy gentlemen now,” said one elf.



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“Yes, we are,” said the other. “We are so fine that we could never think of working as shoemakers, ever again.”

They joined arms and skipped out of the shoemaker’s shop.



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The shoemaker and his wife never saw the elves again. But, by this time, they had grown very rich and never had to make shoes again. And so they lived happily ever after.



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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

Who are the main characters in this story?
What is the setting of this story, or where
does it take place?

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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

What material does the shoemaker use to mke his shoes?

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Comprehension Questions:

Literal

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

The shoemaker leaves his last scrap of leather on his work table before going to bed one night. What does he find on his work table when he wakes up?

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Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

How can you tell the shoemaker is excited
after he sells the shoes?

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Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

*Why had the once-successful shoemaker
become poor?*

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Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

What does the shoemaker's wife do for the elves? Why do you think she does this?

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Comprehension Questions:

Inferential

PLEASE answer in
COMPLETE sentences.

Why do the elves stop making the shoes?

Think Pair. Share.



I'm going to ask you a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

Think Pair. Share

Evaluative:



We have heard a lot of read-alouds about things that really happened in typical towns long ago. Could this story have really happened? Why or why not?

Word Work

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

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*In the read aloud you heard, "The elves saw their new clothes and looked **thrilled** to pieces."*

*Say the word **thrilled** with me.
Whisper thrilled to the ceiling.
Whisper thrilled to your neighbor.
Let's clap it out.*

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*If you are **thrilled** it means very happy or excited.*

Mark was thrilled to go to the baseball game with his father.

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Have you ever felt thrilled? Try to use the word thrilled when you tell about it.

“I felt thrilled once when....”

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*What's the word we have been talking
about?*

Let's clap it out.

