



## A Lesson on The Elves and the Shoemaker by Christina Williams

**Grade Level:** Grade 6

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 2 hours

**Lesson Keywords:** Shoemaker, prosperous, discover, and stitch

**Lesson Description:** In this activity, students should be able to use and comprehend new vocabulary. Students will be able to use context clues to answer questions about the text, as well as providing citations to support their claims.

### Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.5: Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.7: Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they ?see? and ?hear? when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.2: Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.4a: Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word?s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

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## Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

**Instructions:** Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

### The Elves and the Shoemaker

by

**Content:** Once upon a time there was an honest shoemaker who was very poor. He worked as hard as he could, and still he could not earn enough to keep himself and his wife. At last there came a day when he had nothing left but one piece of leather, big enough to make one pair of shoes. He cut out the shoes, ready to stitch, and left them on the bench; then he said his prayers and went to bed, trusting that he could finish the shoes the next day and sell them.

Early the next morning, he rose and went to his workbench and discovered there a pair of shoes, beautifully made. The leather was gone, and there was no sign of anyone having been there. The shoemaker and his wife did not know what to make of it. Then the first customer who came was so pleased with the beautiful shoes that he bought them, and paid so much that the shoemaker was able to buy leather enough for two pairs.

Happily, he cut them out, and then, as it was late, he left the pieces on the bench, ready to sew in the morning. But when morning came, two pairs of shoes lay on the bench, most beautifully made, and no sign of anyone who had been there. It was another puzzle. That day a customer came and bought both pairs, and paid so much for them that the shoemaker bought leather for four pairs, with the money.

Once more he cut out the shoes and left them on the bench. As before, the next morning he discovered that all four pairs were made.

It went on like this until the shoemaker and his wife were prosperous. They were concerned, they could not be satisfied to have so much done for them and not know to whom they should be grateful. So one night, after the shoemaker had left the pieces of leather on the bench, he and his wife hid themselves behind a curtain, and left a light in the room.

Just as the clock struck twelve, the door opened softly and two tiny elves came dancing into the room, hopped on to the bench, and began to put the pieces together. They were quiet, they made little conversation, and they had brought tiny scissors and hammers and thread. Tap! Tap! went the little hammers; stitch, stitch, went the thread, and the little elves were hard at work. No one ever worked so fast as they. In almost no time all the shoes were stitched and finished. Then the little creatures whisked away out of the window.

The shoemaker and his wife looked at each other and said, How can we thank the little elves who have made us happy and prosperous?

I should like to make them some pretty clothes, said the wife.

I will make the shoes if you will make the coats, said her husband.

That very day they worked on this surprise for the elves. The wife cut out two tiny, tiny coats of green, two little pairs of trousers, of white, two very small caps, bright red, and her husband made two little pairs of shoes with long, pointed toes. They made the clothes as good-looking as could be, with nice little stitches and pretty buttons. By Christmas time, they were finished.

On Christmas Eve, the shoemaker cleaned his bench, and on it, instead of leather, he laid the two sets of clothes. Then he and his wife hid away as before, to watch.

Promptly at midnight, the little elves came in. They hopped upon the bench; but when they saw the little clothes there, they laughed and danced for joy. Each one caught up his little coat and things and began to put them on. They were so happy. Then, when the clock struck two, they left smiling.

They never came back any more, but from that day they gave the shoemaker and his wife good luck, so that they never needed any more help.

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## Task 1: Vocabulary

**Instructions:** Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

**Q: 1 WordPhrase:** Prosperous **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The author in our story says, "How can we thank the little elves who have made us happy and prosperous?" What does the word "prosperous" mean in this sentence?

- A: poor
- B: wealthy and successful
- C: weak
- D: timely

**Question:** Which sentence uses the word "prosperous" correctly?

- A: The man lost his job, he was prosperous.
- B: Hank prosperously, threw parties at his house every weekend.
- C: It used to be a very prosperous town.
- D: The man never had to worry about paying his prosperous bills.

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** Discover **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The author in our story says "... he rose and went to his workbench and discovered there a pair of shoes..." What does the word "discover" mean in this sentence?

- A: to lose
- B: to make or create
- C: to throw away
- D: to find unexpectedly

**Question:** Which one of the sentences below uses the word "discover" correctly?

- A: Diane spent hours looking for her discovered keys.
- B: It took awhile, but Lacy discovered her dog at the park.
- C: It was clear that Johnny didn't want to go discover the mountains.
- D: Josie was liked to by her mom, she felt discovered.

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** Stitch **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** The author in our story says "Tap! Tap! went the little hammers; stitch, stitch, went the thread..." What does the word "stitch" mean in this sentence?

- A: a bakery on the corner
- B: a cluster of fabric
- C: laughing uncontrollably
- D: a loop of thread or yarn resulting from a single pass of the needles in sewing

**Question:** Which one of the sentences below uses the word "stitch" properly?

- A: I had to stitch my two banks accounts together because having them separate was too much.
- B: The stitch at the end of the street, has great bread rolls.
- C: I had my grandma hand stitched my pockets on my dress.
- D: Theresa was stitching, after her friend told her a joke.

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** Leather **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** The author in our story says " At last there came a day when he had nothing left but one piece of leather..." What does the word "leather" mean in this sentence?

- A: to lather all over
- B: ingredient used in dress making
- C: a material made from the skin of an animal by tanning or similar process
- D: enclosed

**Question:** Which one of the sentences below uses the word "leather" properly?

- A: While my sister loved the feel of velvet, she prefers leather skirts.
- B: Everyday Macy kept her dog leathered, while she was out of the house.
- C: The secret ingredient for my cookies is leather.
- D: Tracy needed to leather her face with cream before going to bed.

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## Task 2: Forum Discussion

**Instructions:** This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

### 1 - In this short text...

In this short text from the reading, why do you think this random act of kindness was considered important to the husband and wife? The short text for this is:

Early the next morning, he rose and went to his workbench and discovered there a pair of shoes, beautifully made. The leather was gone, and there was no sign of anyone having been there. The shoemaker and his wife did not know what to make of it. Then the first customer who came was so pleased with the beautiful shoes that he bought them, and paid so much that the shoemaker was able to buy leather enough for two pairs.

### 2 - Using the reading...

Using the reading, along with your own personal experience, identify the main characters of the story and give a short explanation of how you, as the reader, relate to them and their conflict.

### 3 - "Once upon a time...."

Once upon a time, there was an honest shoemaker who was very poor.

Reading this excerpt, give a short explanation as to why the writer made it clear at the beginning to say the shoemaker was honest.. and .. was very poor? Think about how this sentence alone helps build the theme throughout the story.

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### Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** For your writing assignment, you are going to read this small passage below and write a 2-3 paragraph (minimum of 250 words) response explaining a time when you were given a helping hand (the little elves) in a tough situation or maybe when you were the little elves. Make sure to provide some text from the reading to tie into your response. The text you will use is:??

Just as the clock struck twelve, the door opened softly and two tiny elves came dancing into the room,?hopped on to the bench, and began to put the pieces together. They were quiet, they made little conversation,?and they had brought tiny scissors and hammers and thread. Tap! Tap! went the little hammers; stitch, stitch,?went the thread, and the little elves were hard at work. No one ever worked so fast as they. In almost no time all?the shoes were stitched and finished. Then the little creatures whisked away out of the window.?

The shoemaker and his wife looked at each other and said, How can we thank the little elves who have?made us happy and prosperous??

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