



A Lesson on The Elves and the Shoemaker by Courtney Harper

Grade Level: Grade 5

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 1 hour 30 minutes

Lesson Keywords: reading, writing

Lesson Description: This lesson requires students to read a fairy tale and answer inferential questions.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.1: Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.2: Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.4a: Use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

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.

Bright and early the next morning, he rose and went to his workbench. There lay a pair of shoes, beautifully made, and the leather was gone! There was no sign of anyone having been there. The shoemaker and his wife did not know what to make of it. But 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 a 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. And in the morning all four pairs were made.

It went on like this until the shoemaker and his wife were prosperous people. But 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, but they had wee little 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 commenced their task. The wife cut out two tiny, tiny coats of green, two little pairs of trousers, of white, two bits of caps, bright red, and her husband made two little pairs of shoes with long, pointed toes. They made the clothes as dainty 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.

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: "It went on like this until the shoemaker and his wife were prosperous people." What does the word 'prosperous' mean in this sentence?

- A: greedy
- B: successful
- C: poor
- D: unlucky

Question: Which sentence below uses the word 'prosperous' correctly.

- A: The prosperous family had many terrible things happen to them.
 - B: The prosperous child ate all the food.
 - C: The prosperous man struggled to buy food.
 - D: The prosperous business had many customers.
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Q: 2 WordPhrase: wee **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: "They were quiet, but they had wee little scissors and hammers and thread." What does the word 'wee' mean in this sentence?

- A: tiny
- B: several
- C: tall
- D: useless

Question: Which sentence uses the word 'wee' correctly?

- A: The wee tree towered over the building.
 - B: The wee man was no help to the workers.
 - C: She could barely see the wee ants as they marched through the yard.
 - D: The wee tower had 34 stories.
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Q: 3 WordPhrase: leather **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: "At last there came a day when he had nothing left but one piece of leather, big enough to make one pair of shoes." What does the word 'leather' mean in this sentence?

- A: paper
- B: money
- C: candy
- D: a material made from the skin of an animal

Question: Which sentence uses the word 'leather' correctly?

- A: The sofa was made out of leather.
 - B: The leather was made of plastic.
 - C: The leather food was tasty.
 - D: The shirt cost two leathers.
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Q: 4 WordPhrase: stitch **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: "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." What does the word 'stitch' mean in this sentence?

- A: destroy
- B: sew
- C: glue
- D: tape

Question: Which sentence uses the word 'stitch' correctly?

- A: The woman will stitch a dress from the fabric.
 - B: The athlete had a stitch in his side.
 - C: The little girl will stitch the picture to the construction paper.
 - D: The stitch tape was not strong.
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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 - Why does the author say "But they could not be satisfied..."

But they could not be satisfied to have so much done for them and not know to whom they should be grateful. Why do the shoemaker and his wife want to know who is stitching the shoes?

2 - Gifts to the elves

Why do you think the shoemaker and his wife waited until Christmas Eve to give the gifts to the elves?

3 - "They never came back anymore..."

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. Why do you think the elves never came back again? Do you think the shoemaker and his wife will remain prosperous?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: Think about the theme of this story. What details from the story support the theme. Write a 2-3 paragraph essay explaining the theme of the story.

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