



## A Lesson on The Elves and the Shoemaker by Emily Sapp

**Grade Level:** Grade 5

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 1 hour 45 minutes

**Lesson Keywords:** Morals, folk-tales, reading and writing

**Lesson Description:** This is a lesson using a modern-day folktale with the story of a poor shoemaker, his wife and some magical elves. By reading and re-reading the story students will use their own inferences from the story to articulate a moral they've learned. Students will also identify specific vocabulary usage and use discussion as a class to better understand the story.

### 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.

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

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1b: Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.

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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.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.5c: Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs) to better understand each of the words.

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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.

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.

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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 says in the story "That very day they commenced their task." What does the word commenced mean in the sentence?

- A: ended
- B: began
- C: moved slowly
- D: disliked

**Question:** Which sentence below uses commence correctly?

- A: They commenced the end of class today.
- B: My teacher told our class that he commenced our singing today.
- C: The coach commenced the race at 8 am last Saturday.
- D: We commence the performance of our Seniors as they graduate today.

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** prosperous **WordPhraseTier:** 2

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

- A: happy
- B: depressed
- C: rich and wealthy
- D: angry and poor

**Question:** Which of the following sentence would be considered the antonym of prosperous?

- A: The prosperous family helped throw a benefit to raise money and awareness to the American Cancer Association.
- B: The small family was prosperous as they worked hard after opening their own Bakery together.
- C: The poor couple was very prosperous as they sold their car to pay for food.
- D: The lawyer was prosperous after working for many years in his own lawfirm.

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** trousers **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The author said that "The wife cut out two tiny, tiny coats of green, two little pairs of trousers, of white..." What does the author mean by the word trousers?

- A: shoes
- B: pants
- C: jackets
- D: backpacks

**Question:** Which sentence below uses the word trouser correctly?

- A: He needed a new pair of trousers for his new job.
- B: She needs some new trousers for her car.
- C: Trousers are terrible, little creatures in the night.
- D: The elf stole the new trousers shoes from a local shoemaker.

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** dainty **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** "They made the clothes as dainty as could be..." What does dainty mean in this sentence?

- A: oversized
- B: heavy
- C: small
- D: wide

**Question:** Which sentence below uses the correct form of dainty?

- A: Jack and the beanstalk is a story about a boy, some magic beans and a dainty giant.
- B: Jill was the smallest girl in her class, she was so dainty her mom had to make her clothes just to fit her tiny frame.
- C: John was the daintiest kid on the football team, so he was made an offense so that he could tackle other large players like himself.
- D: The clothes in the men's Big and Tall store were so dainty only a few men needed to shop there.

**Q: 5 WordPhrase:** whisked **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** "Then the little creatures whisked away out of the window." What does whisked mean in this sentence from the story?

**A:** they stopped

**B:** they sat and looked out the window

**C:** they moved quickly and suddenly

**D:** they sewed more shoes by the window

**Question:** Which sentence uses the word whisked in the opposite or antonym form?

**A:** They whisked away to their honeymoon after the wedding.

**B:** They whisked the children off to school as they were running very late that morning.

**C:** They whisked off to the grocery store to get the last ingredient for their surprise dessert.

**D:** They whisked down their street on a long and leisurely walk together.

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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 - Elves are helpers

Why do you think that the elves decided to help the shoemaker and his wife? Explain why your answer with one specific example from the story.

### 2 - The shoemaker and his wife...

Do you think that there is the more the shoemaker and his wife should have done to help repay the elves? Why or why not?

### 3 - The shoemaker and the elves

Do you think that the elves and the shoemaker could have done more for each other in the end? Explain your reasoning as to why or why not?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** You are to write and post a 2-3 paragraph response as to what you think the lesson or moral of the story is. Use 2 specific quoted examples in your response.

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