



## A Lesson on The Elves and the Shoemaker by Margaret Duguid

**Grade Level:** Grade 5

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 2 hours

**Lesson Keywords:** Reading, writing, the shoemaker and the elves

**Lesson Description:** The goal of this lesson is to give students the opportunity to use the reading and writing habits they've been practicing on a regular basis to absorb deep lessons from *The Shoemaker and the Elves*. By reading the passage closely, and answering questions and a discussion about the text, students will develop a better understanding of 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.5.2b: Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.6: With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.

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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:** It went on like this until the shoemaker and his wife were prosperous people. **WordPhraseTier:** 2  
**Question:** The author in our story says "It went on like this until the shoemaker and his wife were prosperous people." What does the word "prosperous" mean in this sentence?

- A: Poor
- B: In debt
- C: Successful
- D: Healthy

**Question:** Which of the following sentences uses the word "prosperous" correctly?

- A: The prosperous man never had to worry about having enough money to pay his bills.
- B: The town was prosperous and full of people who could barely afford to pay rent.
- C: They showed how prosperous they were by stealing.
- D: After attending the hospital, the couple was prosperous.

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** 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. **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** "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." What does the word "bright" mean in this context?

- A: Clear
- B: Sunny
- C: Clever
- D: Bold

**Question:** There are different meanings for the word "bright." Choose the sentence that uses "bright" in the same context as the previous question.

- A: It was very bright this morning.
- B: The girl is very bright; she gets A's on her report cards.
- C: I found a bright yellow umbrella on the floor in the restaurant.
- D: I really like when people have bright, happy smiles.

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** Bright and early the next morning, he rose and went to his workbench. **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** The author of the story says "Bright and early the next morning, he rose and went to his workbench." What does "workbench" mean in this sentence?

- A: A seat the shoemaker sits on while he is working.
- B: A table the shoemaker works at.
- C: A shelf to display the shoemaker's finished shoes.
- D: A computer program to manage the shoemaker's desktop.

**Question:** Which sentences uses the word "workbench" correctly?

- A: The computer had trouble downloading the new workbench software.
- B: The school finally set up new workbenches on the football field.
- C: I hate sitting on the workbench, it is far too low.
- D: The carpenter used his workbench to work on new and old projects.

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** He cut out the shoes, ready to stitch, and left them on the bench... **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** In the story, the author says "He cut out the shoes, ready to stitch, and left them on the bench..." What does the word "stitch" mean in this sentence?

- A: Spasm
- B: Go
- C: Color
- D: Sew

**Question:** Which sentence uses "stitch" correctly?

- A: They needed to stop the stitch before it became too violent.
- B: I like when they ask us to find a stitch instead of an antonym.
- C: She had to stitch the quilt together.
- D: Last time he had to stitch, he missed out on the party.

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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 shoemaker leave the unmade shoes on the workbench?

The shoemaker does this several times. He plans to work on them in the morning. What could be some reasons why he wouldn't be able to finish them at night?

### 2 - Why do the elves decide to stop coming to help the shoemaker?

The elves stop coming right after the shoemaker and his wife make them clothes and shoes. Why might they do that? Do you think that that helped the shoemaker? Why or why not? Please support your opinion with facts from the story.

### 3 - Why do the elves come at midnight?

The autor says the elves come just as the clock struck twelve and promptly at midnight. What are some possible reasons for them coming and leaving when they do? (Example: the elves knew the shoemaker and his wife would be asleep)

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Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** For your writing assignment, explain why the shoemaker and his wife give the elves clothing and shoes and describe the elves reaction to their gift. Your response should be 2-3 paragraphs (minimum of 250 words) and explain how the characters were feeling as well as how they expressed their emotions. Use information from the story to justify your response. Submit your assignment using the box below.

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