

THE ELVES AND THE SHOEMAKER

Once upon a time there was a poor and honest shoemaker, who had worked hard all his life but wasn't rich at all. No matter how hard he tried, he couldn't save enough for more than just one piece of leather - enough to make only one pair of shoes.

Every evening he would cut out the leather and prepare it for the next day, so that he could start working early in the morning. He was a poor and honest man and he went to bed with a light heart, because his conscience was clear and he had left his troubles to God. This night wasn't any different than any other night and the man soon fell asleep.

When he woke up in the morning he sat at his work bench and looked for the leather, but it was missing. Instead he found a new pair of shoes, already made. The man didn't know how it could have happened but he knew it was the weirdest thing that had ever happened to him. He looked at how the shoes were made to see whether they had any faults, but no matter how carefully he looked, he couldn't find a single bad stitch. The job was perfect. "A masterpiece!" he said. The shoemaker sighed, because these shoes were so much better than his. So there was nothing he could do but sell

the shoes. A customer soon entered the shop and the shoes fit his feet perfectly, so he bought them for twice the price the shoemaker usually charged. With the money he earned, he bought twice as much leather as normal. That meant he could make two pairs of shoes the next morning. Again he cut out the leather and went to bed.

The next morning he woke up to find that someone has done the work for him again, and two pairs of shoes were waiting on his work bench. He was astonished by the faultless work that had happened overnight. He waited for clients to enter his shop. Soon two men came in and bought the shoes. They liked them so much, that they paid the shoemaker quite a handsome amount of money. With it he bought enough leather for four pairs of shoes and just like every other night he cut out the leather so that it could be ready in the morning.

When he woke up the next morning he saw eight pairs of shoes - perfectly sewn, polished and laid out on his work bench.

This continued for quite a long time - so long that the shoemaker and his wife became just not well off but incredibly rich. They had no problems of any sort now that they had enough money to live a wealthy life.

A day before Christmas, as the shoemaker and his wife were sitting before the fireplace, having breakfast, he said, "I think I want to finally understand who comes every day and does my job for me. The workshop will be closed tomorrow, so I can stay up all night." His wife agreed and in the evening they left a candle burning in the workshop, so that they could see better.

At midnight the man was hidden behind the curtains waiting, when two naked elves entered the room. They were so cheerful and so happy that you would think they were Santa's elves. They sat on the shoemaker's bench and started measuring and sewing, and



stitching so fast that their hands couldn't be seen. They didn't stop for a second until the job was done. They finished long before dawn. As soon as the two elves finished their job, they disappeared into the thin air.

The next day at breakfast the wife said, "We should be thankful to the dwarfs. They have made us rich and since they started coming we have no troubles at all. Don't you think it would be a good idea to give them a gift?"

"Yes, that's a great idea. But what should we give them?" asked the shoemaker. "They wore no clothes and it is a pity to walk naked in this cold winter," she replied. "You're right, it is a pity and it's not very decent either!" the shoemaker added.

So the shoemaker's wife prepared a shirt, a waistcoat, trousers and a coat for each of the elves, and left them on the bench for the elves to see when they came at midnight. The shoemaker left a pair of shoes for each of them and hid himself.

When the elves came they sat down to work, but they couldn't find the leather. Instead there were clothes and shoes lying before them. They started laughing and seemed to be delighted by the present.

The elves put their clothes on and started dancing and singing. That night they left the house without working and never came back again, but the old couple lived happily and wealthily ever after.

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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How many pairs of shoes could the man make and sell every day?
2. Could the shoemaker and his wife save enough money to become rich?
3. What did the shoemaker use to do every evening before he went to bed?
4. What did he find on his work bench instead of his leather?
5. Could he find any faults when he looked and checked the shoes?
6. How could he become so rich?
7. Why did the shoemaker hid behind the curtains?
8. What did the shoemaker's wife prepare for the elves?



CIRCLE THE CORRECT CHOICE

1. The shoemaker would cut out before goes to bed every evening.
soles / leather / heels
2. The man found a pair of shoes on his work bench in the morning.
faultless / stitchless / heelless
3. There shoemaker was by the perfect work that had happened overnight.
disappointed / exhausted / astonished
4. The workshop was going to be the other day, so he could stay up all night.
closed / crowded / cleaned
5. The shoemaker and his wife were to the dwarfs so they prepared them gifts.
trustful / thankful / merciful
6. The elves put on the clothes and left the workshop
for a short time / for a week / for good

WRITE TRUE OR FALSE

1. _____ The shoemaker worked really hard, but he could not become wealthy.
2. _____ The shoemaker wasn't an honest man as he made faulty shoes.
3. _____ The shoemaker's wife helped him make the shoes and they earned a lot.
4. _____ The man wanted to learn who made the shoes for him.
5. _____ The elves wore the clothes and never came back to the workshop again.

ANSWER KEY

Comprehension Questions

1. He could make and sell only one pair of shoes every day.
2. No, they couldn't.
3. He would cut out leather and prepare it for the next day.
4. He found a pair of new shoes on his work bench instead of his leather.
5. No, he couldn't.
6. He sold the shoes he found on his work bench every day.
7. Because he wanted to find out who came every day and did the job for him.
8. She prepared new clothes for the elves.

Write True or False

1. True
2. False
3. False
4. True
5. True

Circle the Correct Choice

1. leather
2. faultless
3. astonished
4. closed
5. thankful
6. for good

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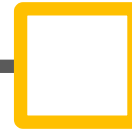
Read the texts in the boxes and number them from 1 to 8 to sequence the fairy tale



He looked at the shoes carefully to check if there were any faults, but they were perfect. He had no choice, but to sell them and soon a customer came and he bought the shoes for twice as much the price the shoemaker usually charged. With the money he earned, he bought twice as much leather as normal, so he could have two pairs of new shoes.



The shoemaker told his wife that he finally wanted to understand who came every day and did the job for him. The workshop was going to be closed the other day, so he could stay up all night. His wife agreed and in the evening they left a candle in the workshop, so they could see better. At midnight, the man hid behind the curtains and waited.



Once upon a time there was a poor shoemaker, who worked hard all his life but wasn't rich at all. No matter how hard he tried, he couldn't save enough for more than just one piece of leather - enough to make only one pair of shoes. Every evening he would cut out the leather and prepare it for the next day, so he could start working early.



The shoemaker's wife offered her husband to give the elves a gift and she made them nice clothes as they were naked and the weather was so cold. They left the clothes on the work bench that night. When the elves came, they saw the clothes instead of the leather, wore them and danced happily. They left and never came back.



He prepared the leather for eight pairs of shoes and went to bed again. In the morning he found eight pairs of perfectly sewn and polished shoes on his bench. This continued for quite a long time and the shoemaker and his wife became incredibly rich. A day before Christmas, the shoemaker and his wife were sitting and having breakfast.



He was a poor and honest man and he went to bed with a light heart. That night he prepared his leather as usual and fell asleep as usual. When he woke up in the morning and sat on his work bench, he could not find his leather. Instead, he found a new pair of shoes, already made. The man could not understand how it had happened.



Then he saw two naked elves come into the room. They were very cheerful and happy. They sat on the shoemaker's bench and started making nice pairs of shoes quickly. They didn't stop for a second. They finished their job long before dawn and then disappeared into thin air. The shoemaker and his wife were so thankful to them.



Again he cut out the leather and went to bed. The next morning he woke up to find that someone has done the work for him again and two pairs of faultless shoes were on his work bench. Two customers came and bought the shoes for quite a handsome amount of money as they liked them so much. With all this money he bought more leather.

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