

## 2. The Shoemaker and the Elves



*Most of you will know the story of the sad woodcutter who had lost his axe. Who helped him?*

Once there was a very poor shoemaker. He and his wife lived in a little house on the edge of a wood. There were not many people who would buy shoes from the shoemaker. Each day his store of leather became less and less. He did not have money to buy more leather. Day by day the shoemaker and his wife grew poorer. At last there was leather for only one pair of shoes. The shoemaker cut out the last pair of shoes. He said to his wife, "Tomorrow I will sew them."



*What are the problems that the shoemaker faced?*

Next morning the shoemaker got up and went into his shop. He was surprised at what he saw. There he saw a pair of shoes. He had never seen a better pair of shoes. The shoes were perfect; the stitches were fine. They were so very well made that they were sold at once.

*Who, do you think, kept the shoes in the shop?*



The shoemaker went to the market with the money. He bought leather for two pairs of shoes. The shoemaker cut out the two pairs of shoes and said to his wife, "Tomorrow I will sew them."

Next day when the shoemaker went into his shop he was again surprised to see two pairs of shoes beautifully finished. The shoes were very well made with very fine stitches. He was surprised. He showed them to his wife who was also surprised to see

such fine pairs of shoes. She said, "These shoes are very fine and the stitches are excellent; they will bring good money."

The shoemaker went to the market at once and sold the two pairs of shoes for a good price. With the money he bought leather for four pairs of shoes. He cut out the leather and said to his wife. "Tomorrow I will sew them."

The shoemaker got up the next morning and went to his shop. What did he find? Once again he found that his work had already been

done. Four pairs of beautiful shoes were lying ready-made on the table. They were perfectly made with very fine stitches and were sold very quickly in the market.

Every day the shoemaker would get up and go into his shop. There he would find his work already done for him. The shoes were always very nicely made. The shoemaker became very famous. Soon everybody wanted to buy shoes from him. His shoes were so very well made that even the queen of the country wore them. She was very pleased with the shoes. She called the shoemaker and gave him one hundred gold pieces.



*'The shoemaker no more poor.' Give your opinion.*

The shoemaker grew very rich. One day he and his wife made up their minds to find out who made the shoes. They said to each other, "We must find out who makes the shoes." So, when night came, they went into the shop. There they hid themselves behind the curtains. From there they could watch the bench on which the leather for shoes was kept.

*What, do you think, they saw?*

They waited for a long time. Nothing happened. They got very tired of waiting for something to happen. Just





#### The Shoemaker and the Elves

then the clock struck twelve. What do you think happened next? Two little elves jumped into the shop from the window. The elves wore pointed caps and wore only rags.

They went dancing and skipping up to the table. With a hop and a skip they jumped on to the table.

The elves sat cross-legged and took up the leather left there by the shoemaker. They began to work. Their needles flew in and out, in and out of the leather. Their little hammers went rap-a-tap, rap-a-tap on the leather. The elves worked very fast. Almost in no time the work was complete.

Then the two elves started dancing. They jumped up and down, up and down. They raced in and out and around the shoes. Before the shoemaker and his wife had time to think, they were gone.

Next morning the husband and wife made up their minds to do something for the little elves. The shoemaker said to his wife, "What can we do for the nice little elves?" His wife said, "The elves did not have good clothes. They wore only rags. I shall make them little coats and trousers to wear." "That will be very nice," said the shoemaker, "I will make tiny shoes for the good elves. Their little feet were bare."

So the shoemaker and his wife worked and worked. When the clothes and shoes were ready they were put on the table. The shoemaker and his wife again hid behind the curtains. They waited silently. Once again when the clock struck twelve the elves jumped into the shop from the window.

They danced and jumped on to the table to do their work. There they saw little coats, trousers and neat little shoes left for them by the shoemaker and his wife. The elves were very happy. They clapped and laughed with joy. What do you think the elves did next? They put on their little clothes and skipping and dancing went out of the window.

The little elves never came back again. But the shoemaker and his wife always had good luck. They grew richer and richer and lived happily ever after.



## Word Meanings

to scrub	to rub hard for cleaning
elves (plural of Elf)	a little fairy like creature with pointed ears
perfect	without fault or defect
surprise	wonder
to finish	to complete
excellent	of very high quality
curtain	a piece of cloth hung up at a door or window
rags	old and torn clothes
instead	in place of something
cross legged	sitting with one leg placed across the other
bare	without clothes or covering

## Reading Comprehension

### A. Tick the correct answer:

- i. The shoemaker wanted to sew shoes -
  - (a) early in the morning
  - (b) next day
  - (c) at midnight
  - (d) previous day
- ii. When the shoemaker saw a better pair of shoes, he was -
  - (a) annoyed
  - (b) surprised
  - (c) very sad
  - (d) happy
- iii. The elves wore -
  - (a) over coat
  - (b) rain coat
  - (c) old and torn clothes
  - (d) dress
- iv. The beautiful shoes were made by -
  - (a) elves
  - (b) magician
  - (c) joker
  - (d) fairies
- v. How many gold pieces were given to the shoemaker ?
  - (a) one hundred
  - (b) two hundred
  - (c) three hundred
  - (d) four hundred

### B. Say whether the following statements are true or false:

1. The shoemaker was very poor. ( )
2. The shoemaker was surprised when he saw a better pair of shoes. ( )
3. The shoes were made by the elves at night. ( )
4. The elves wore beautiful clothes. ( )
5. The shoemaker and his wife made little coats and trousers for the elves. ( )

**C. Answer the following questions:**

1. Where did the shoemaker live ?
2. Why was the shoemaker poor ?
3. What did the shoemaker do when he saw a better pair of shoes ?
4. How did the shoemaker become rich ?
5. What did the shoemaker and his wife give the little elves ?
6. Why did the little elves never come back ?

**Vocabulary**

**A. Fill in the blanks choosing appropriate words given below:**

stitches, rags, excellent, curtains, elf



1. A fairy-like creature with pointed ears is called \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Beggars usually wear \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ are hung at doors and windows.
4. He is an \_\_\_\_\_ cricket player.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ on these trousers are very fine.

**B. Some words are given in the box. Make sentences using these words. The first one is done for you:**

edge      excellent      store  
tiny      struck      rag

**Example :-** There is a hut at the edge of the forest.

**C. The words given below have more than one meaning. Consult the dictionary and write their meaning:**

**Example:** Wood  forest  
hard substance of a tree used for fuel .

1. fine ..... .
2. present ..... .
3. object ..... .
4. match ..... .

**D. Make some words using the following suffixes:**

–ian, –er, –ist

**Examples:** Music      Music–ian (musician)  
Cricket      Cricket–er (Cricketer)  
Art      Art–ist (Artist)

**Activity****A Listen to a story and give the information:***See Appendix-1 Lesson-2***1. (i) Who said :**

- (a) "Why not forget your work and have fun with me instead," \_\_\_\_\_.
- (b) "But I've food for today," \_\_\_\_\_.
- (c) "I am storing food for winter," \_\_\_\_\_.

**2. Fill in the blanks.**

- (i) One summer's day, a grasshopper was \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- (ii) An ant was dragging \_\_\_\_\_.
- (iii) It was so heavy that he could hardly \_\_\_\_\_ it.
- (iv) The grasshopper had no food and was \_\_\_\_\_ of hunger.

**B. (i) Imagine that you are one of the elves. What would you say if you got a new dress ? Say it in one word or a phrase or a sentence.****(ii) Here is some interesting pair work for you. Imagine that one of you is an elf and the other person is the shoemaker's wife:**

After the elf puts on the new clothes and shoes, the shoemaker's wife asks the elf what else he wants. The elf asks for things that the shoemaker's wife cannot give. She is sorry and she refuses. Play the role of the elf and the shoemaker.

Given below is an example :

**The elf :** Would you please give me a belt made of gold ?

**Shoemaker's wife :** I am sorry dear. How could I buy so much gold ?

**C. Present the story 'the shoemaker and the Elves' in the form of a skit.**

Remember to write the dialogues, learn them and practise the skit before presenting it. You can use the dialogues in the lesson.

**Project**

There are many describing words in the lesson.

**Example:** poor, little, perfect, fine.

**Make a list of describing words. You can refer to any book or lesson.**

**Use the following proverb in your sentence. Meaning is given.**

**Proverb**

Tomorrow never comes.

**Meaning**

Don't put something off for tomorrow.

