

Level  
1

# The Elves and the Shoemaker

### Summary of the story

*The Elves and the Shoemaker* begins with a poor shoemaker and his wife. Their business is unsuccessful and they are not happy. One morning they find some beautiful shoes on the table, and they put them in the shop to sell. The shoemaker finds out that it is elves who are doing it. They make some new clothes for them. The elves like their new clothes. When they stop coming they leave the shoemaker and his wife the gift of making beautiful shoes, and the tale ends on a happy note.



### About the authors

Jacob Ludwig Carl Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Carl Grimm (1786-1859) are better known as The Brothers Grimm. The two brothers were professors in Germany. They collected nearly 200 popular folk tales, which were published in two volumes in 1812 and 1814. The first English edition was published in 1823.

### Topics and themes

**Clothes.** What is a beautiful shoe? How do shoe fashions change? The topic of making clothes is also an appropriate one, led into by the shoemaker and his wife making clothes for the elves.

**Fairy tales.** The shoemaker and his wife are good people who repay the elves and are then rewarded with the gift of making successful shoes. They could have been selfish or greedy.

**Jobs.** Use *The Elves and the Shoemaker* to introduce the theme of jobs as a classroom topic. A shoemaker 'makes shoes'. What does a baker make? What does a tailor make? For a history topic the focus could be on jobs that are no longer done (e.g. candlestick maker) or the type of work done at home and in factories. There could also be a discussion on the differences between 'make' and 'do' for

occupations; what does a policeman 'do', for example.

As a rags-to-riches story, *The Elves and the Shoemaker* provides the opportunity to compare the lifestyle of the shoemaker before and after the elves' arrival. Such a comparison would be a great introduction to a 'lifestyles project'

**Magic** appears in the form of the elves and their beautiful shoes.

**My body.** The shoemaker is sad at the beginning of the story and happy at the end. Encourage the pupils to describe the pictures in the book, concentrating on the faces of the characters. This allows for revision of feelings adjectives, but also of the present continuous: 'he is smiling', for example.

### Making use of the Reader

**Footprints.** Prepare some footprints of animals (drawings, pictures, or actual prints) a bird, a cat, a dog, for example and some pictures of the animal itself. Keep one animal and one print aside. Hand out the footprints and ask the pupils to which animal they think it belongs.

Hand out the pictures of the animals. In pairs, the pupils try to match the print with the animal. The first pair to finish is the winner. Then show the pupils the picture of the animal that you have kept aside, ask them to work together to draw a picture of the footprint they imagine it would have. Later, show them the actual print and compare with their version.



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**Shoe vocabulary.** Prepare some pictures of different types of shoe (or the real thing if possible), sandal, sneakers, slipper, boot etc. Put the uses for the different types of shoe on the board or on a handout, e.g. for running, for gardening etc. The pupils work in groups to decide on the uses for the different types of shoe. Give points for correct answers.

**Spot the difference.** Give the pupils some pieces of paper and colored pencils. Tell them to choose one picture from the book and to draw and color it twice, making 5 small differences between the two pictures. They then write down the 5 differences. The pupils then work in pairs.

They exchange their pictures with a partner who has to spot all of the differences and to say them out loud. The pair to have spotted all of the differences in the shortest time is the winner.

**Masks.** Give the pupils a paper plate each. Divide them into groups of four. One person is to draw a picture of the shoemaker and one his wife, and two elves. When the pictures are finished, show the pupils how to make a mask by threading string through the sides of the plate and tying them at the back. The masks can be used for the any role-play exercises.

## Using the accompanying video and audio cassette

### Watching/listening for the plot – whole class/self-study

Create a list of the plot stages and hand these out to the class in the wrong order. e.g. Sad shoemaker/surprise on the table/putting the shoes in the shop/more shoes in the morning/a lot of people come to the shop/who makes the shoes?/elves work at night/new clothes/happy elves/happy shoemaker and his wife. In pairs or groups the pupils must order the plot of the story as they watch or listen.

### Responding to the cassette – whole class/self-study

Give each student a piece of paper 12 inches by 2 inches, segmented into six squares (like a

comic strip). Play the video or cassette in six chunks. The pupils draw a picture in each square to represent each chunk of the viewing or listening exercise. The comic strips could then be used to re-create the story, or to make up a dialogue.

### Before listening or watching – whole class/self study

The pupils prepare some simple questions about the story in groups or alone: How many characters are there in the story? Who says 'Come in Come in'? for example. The pupils answer their own questions while listening to the cassette.

## Answers to the activities

### In the back of the Reader

#### Before you read

These activities can be done either as a reading or a listening comprehension, or they could be prediction exercises to be done before reading or listening.

You can see: a shoemaker, shoes, a shop, elves, hats, coats.

**After you read** (Please note that Questions 4 and 7 cannot be answered by yes or no.)

1. Yes 2. No 3. No 4. Day
5. No 6. Yes 7. Two 8. No
9. Yes 10. No

### In the factsheet

**Activity 1** hats, coats, shoes, trousers.

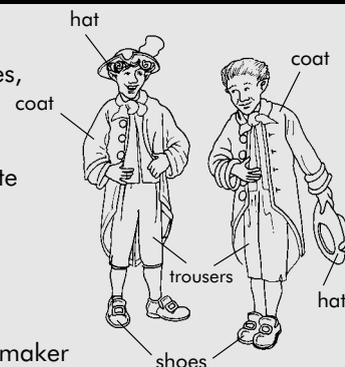
#### Activity 2

1. They are the king's favorite shoes.
2. The shoemaker puts the shoes in the shop.
3. They are dancing.
4. The elves have got some beautiful shoes. 5. The shoemaker and his wife look at the elves or The elves look at the shoemaker and his wife.

**Activity 3** d, g, e, c, a, f, b.

**Activity 4** b. He is making some shoes.

c. They are smiling. d. They see the elves. e. They are dancing.



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Name.....

## Activity 1

Look at the picture. Read the words.  
Put the words next to the picture.

Hat, coat, trousers, shoes.



## Activity 2

Make sentences from the words.

Example: makes beautiful who the shoes ?

Answer: Who makes the beautiful shoes?

1. king's shoes they favorite are the
2. puts shop shoes in the the the shoemaker
3. dancing they are
4. have the got elves beautiful some shoes
5. at look shoemaker the wife elves and his the



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Name.....

### Activity 3

Make the story of *The Elves and the Shoemaker*. Put a number 1 - 7 next to the words. One has been done for you.

- a. The shoemaker and his wife see the elves at night.
- b. The elves do not come to the shop again.
- c. A man comes to the shoemaker's shop. He likes the shoes.
- d. The shoemaker is sad. His shoes are not beautiful.
- e. In the morning there are some beautiful shoes on the table.
- f. The shoemaker and his wife make beautiful coats, hats, trousers and shoes for the elves.
- g. The elves make the shoes.

### Activity 4

What are they doing?  
Match the words and the pictures.

Example: He is making a coat. (a)

They see some elves.

He is making some shoes.

They are dancing.

They are smiling.

