



## The Elves and the Shoemaker

Two hundred years ago, an old shoemaker was worried. He didn't have enough money to pay his landlord, and he couldn't afford to buy food. He was a very good shoemaker, but he was old and his fingers were tired. He couldn't make enough shoes any more.

One day, he realised that he only had one pair of shoes left in his shop. The old shoemaker was a kind man and didn't like to see people suffer. On that day, he saw a frail old lady staggering through the snow with bare feet. He rushed outside and gave her his final pair of shoes. Now he had no shoes and no money. Luckily, he had just enough leather left to make one more pair.

It was soon nearly his bedtime. He had cut the leather ready for the next day, and he lay it down on the table. Throughout the night, he heard scuttling and rustling noises coming from the workshop. He assumed it was rats and went back to sleep.

In the morning, the leather had been turned into a bright new pair of shoes. These shoes were so good that the man sold them for twice as much as he normally would. He used the money to buy a little bit of food and some more leather. This time he had enough to make two pairs of shoes.

During the night, he heard the same scuttling and rustling sounds. When he woke up,

### VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. Which word in the first paragraph tells you how the shoemaker was feeling?
2. What does the word "suffer" mean?
3. What does the word "staggering" tell you about how the lady was moving?
4. Draw a picture of what a stout pair of boots might look like.
5. Write a word that means the opposite of "crept".

there were two pairs of shiny new shoes. He sold the shoes and bought more food and more leather.

That night, the old man decided to stay awake and see what happened. He was delighted when he saw a group of three small elves scramble down the chimney. They didn't notice him in the corner. Silently, they took the leather and set to work. It didn't take long before three pairs of new shoes, and a pair of stout new boots were sat on the table.

The old shoemaker crept to bed and woke his wife. He explained what he had seen, and they both decided to make the elves a new set of clothes. They worked all through the next day and left the clothes next to another sheet of leather.

Unfortunately, if you give elves clothes, then you set them free. When they awoke the next morning, the clothes were gone and the leather hadn't been touched. They never saw the elves again.



## VIPERS QUESTIONS

**R**

How many pairs of shoes did the elves make on the second night?

**I**

How did the man and his wife feel when they knew what the elves were doing?  
How do you know?

**S**

What did the man do after he saw the elves?

**R**

Why did the elves disappear?

**P**

What do you think happened to the shoemaker next?

Answers:

1. Worried
2. To be in pain or distress/upset
3. She was falling down or tripping. She was finding it difficult.
4. Ran, rushed, raced etc

R: Two

I: Grateful - They made them clothes

S: Went and told his wife

R: They gave them clothes which set them free

P: Any prediction with valid reasons - either he returned to being poor, or he had enough shoes now to keep making money.