

Deepening Understanding

LKS2 Fiction Text

The Elves and the Shoemaker by Joe Duffin



In a small rural village, far, far away, lived a man named Tom. Tom worked in the village making shoes. Tom was a unique and talented shoemaker and, unlike his competitors in towns nearby, Tom did not make shoes out of leather. Instead, Tom opted to make shoes out of hemp and organic cotton, which was better for the environment. Tom's dream was to inspire more shoemakers to create shoes with sustainable and eco-friendly materials.

However, despite Tom's noble intentions, not enough people were buying Tom's eco-friendly shoes. One day, Tom found himself down to his last bit of organic cotton and hemp. He was very concerned because if he did not make the perfect pair of shoes with the last bit of material, he would have nothing to sell. With no product, Tom would not make any income and would lose his business.

It was late at night, so Tom left the material on the table and went home. He would try to make the perfect pair of shoes in the morning. Night quickly turned to day and Tom walked back into his shop, rubbing his eyes sleepily. As soon as he cast his eyes over to the table, his jaw nearly hit the floor. The shoes had already been made! Tom picked up

the shoes and examined them...they were perfect! The craftsmanship was incredible and not a single stitch was out of place. He felt overwhelmed with excitement and shock. "How on earth have these shoes been made?" he gasped.

Before Tom could even close his mouth, the shop door swung open and a well-dressed man walked in. It was Derek who worked in the village bank. He was also very influential and many followed his example. Everyone in the village who drove an electric car owned one just because Derek bought one years ago. Now, here was Derek, visiting Tom's humble store.

"Hi Tom," began Derek, shaking Tom's hand with a firm grip. "My shoes have a hole in them and I'm looking for a new pair. Would you be able to help me?"

Tom looked at the new pair of shoes that had been made, seemingly by magic. They were perfect but would they fit Derek's feet? This was Tom's big moment. If the shoes fit, and if Derek liked them, this could help Tom's business massively. Nervously, Tom handed over the shoes. Derek tried them on and he walked around in them for what, to Tom, felt like a lifetime. "I'll take them," Derek smiled.

Derek handed over his money, tipping Tom very generously and walked out wearing the perfect shoes. Tom shook his head in disbelief. Had that really just happened? Was Tom's luck about to change?

As quickly as he could, Tom purchased more material to make even more shoes. However, by the time the material arrived, it was midnight again, so Tom left the material on his worktable and walked back home. Tom wondered if the material would be made into shoes again. He daredn't believe that he could be so lucky twice...

When Tom arrived back the next morning, his jaw nearly hit the floor and his eyes nearly popped out of his head. There were now four pairs of perfect shoes created! "Who did this?" said Tom to nobody in particular.



He looked around but there was no one in sight. There was also no trace of anyone having even entered the shop whilst Tom had been sleeping. Tom wondered if the table was magic. Before Tom had time to dwell on what had just happened, the door of his tiny shop swung open. Four well-dressed men entered the shop and Tom felt a bit claustrophobic all of a sudden. "We'd like to buy some eco-friendly shoes," said one of the men. Fortunately, the shoes all fit the customers' feet and Tom was able to sell them all.

Now, Tom had even more money to buy materials to make even more pairs of shoes. This was amazing! If this kept up, Tom would be rich. But before Tom could become too excited, he was still puzzled by one thing. Who was making the shoes? Tom ruminated for a while and decided it would be unwise to keep hoping for miracles each morning. He had to discover how to make them himself.

So that day, Tom hatched a plan. Instead of going home at midnight, Tom would hide in one of the shop cupboards, specifically the cupboard with a big enough hole to see out of.

When day finally turned into night, Tom hid in the cupboard and waited. It turned 12 o'clock, then 1 o'clock in the morning, then 2 o'clock, then 3...nothing had happened. Tom frowned, but just as he was about to leave the cupboard, he heard some whistling. Tom's heart began racing as two small creatures wandered into the shop. They couldn't have been taller than the shoes they were making. The two creatures walked up to the table, nimbly climbed up and began making the shoes.

Tom pinched himself to ensure he wasn't dreaming. The sensation he felt in his arm assured him he was still awake. These strange little creatures were making shoes but why? Tom couldn't make out much detail as the room possessed little light. He squinted harder. They appeared to have blue skin, were wearing red clothes and they also had little hats on their head and pointy ears. Their faces looked human. Tom waited until the elves finished their shoes. He decided that when they finished, he would introduce himself to them to express his thanks.



For the next hour, Tom watched the elves at work in awe. They were so delicate, so skilled, so precise! When they appeared to have finished, Tom started to emerge from the cupboard, however no sooner had he done so than a cloud of smoke filled the table! The smoke quickly vanished but so too had the little creatures. "Where have you gone?" exclaimed Tom, scanning the room frantically. It was just as Tom was coming to the end of his sigh that he noticed the note on the table. It read:

Dear Tom,

We are two little, humble elves. We enjoy stitching, baking and shoe-making. We noticed you were struggling to make shoes with the environmentally friendly materials and thought we would lend you a hand. We appreciate that you are trying to make the world a better place in your own small way and would never want you to be discouraged. Keep leaving eco-friendly materials on the table, and we'll keep making shoes for you!

Your small elf friends.

Tom smiled.

