



## The Elves and the Shoemaker

- Introduce your students to the story of *The Elves and the Shoemaker*, which can be found online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), or you can share the story summary found at the end of this document, which emphasizes these story elements:
  - The shoemaker and his wife are lonely because their neighborhood is changing and they don't know their new neighbors.
  - We are better when we invite new people into our lives.
- The music from *Once Upon a Symphony* is found on this [Spotify](#) playlist. Here's how the music helps to tell the story:
  - *Pizzicato Polka* by *Johann Strauss, Jr. and Josef Strauss*
    - This music expresses the tap, tap, tapping of the shoemaker's hammer.
  - *Waltz, Op. 39 No.15* by *Johannes Brahms*
    - This music illustrates the "good ole days" that the shoemaker and his wife long for.
    - Dancing to this music lifts the spirits of the shoemaker and his wife.
  - *Badinerie from Orchestral Suite No. 2* by *J.S. Bach*
    - This piece represents the different people who live in the neighborhood with the shoemaker and his wife.

## ***The Elves and the Shoemaker***

## **Story**

*Grimm's Fairy Tale*  
*Adapted by Ashley Honore Roberson*  
*Summary by Katy Clusen*

Once upon a time not too long ago, in a land not too far away, there lived a poor old shoemaker and his wife, who were feeling very lonely.

Over the years, many new families had moved into their neighborhood, and while they wanted to get to know their new neighbors, they just didn't know how to.

The neighborhood was growing and changing, and they were feeling anxious about the change. All around them there was the constant sound of construction and traffic...

"It's too loud," said the shoemaker, "I cannot concentrate!"

New shops were moving in, selling shiny new things that the shoemaker did not know or understand. Worst of all, the more the neighborhood changed, the less people came into their store to buy shoes! And when they did get customers, they never had the shoes the customers wanted.

But that was not always the case. There was once a time, when their neighborhood was a little less noisy, and the shoemaker and his wife were a little less along in years, that their shoes were the talk of the town. Throughout the city one could hear their shoe's trademark, TAP, tap, tap. TAP, tap, tap. TAP, tap, tap TAP. You see, the shoemaker had a knack for making shoes that were so feather light, so comfortable in the toes and so beautifully made, that it was impossible to walk when wearing them. No, no, no! These wondrous works of art made the wearer want to waltz!

Those were the good ole days! In fact, they were the very last shop still open from the good ole days. In stock at the very moment, tucked away in a corner, wrapped up tight for safekeeping, was just enough leather for one more pair of shoes.

The shoemaker and his wife went to bed with hopes that inspiration might strike in their sleep. However, what happened next, was beyond their wildest dreams.

A group of elves appeared, snuck quietly into the shop, listened for a moment to the music on the street, did a little jig, and then got quickly to work! They cut out the pieces of leather with precision and care. Nailed down the sole with a tap, tap, tap. And finally stitched it all up!

As the sun rose in the city, the elves disappeared, leaving behind a beautiful pair of shoes! The shoemaker and his wife could not believe their eyes! "Where did these shoes come from?" they exclaimed.

At that very moment a customer walked in the shop door. "Hola! Are these beautiful shoes for sale?"

“Yes!” said the shoemaker and his wife. They couldn’t believe their luck!

The shoes were so wonderful that the customer offered to pay double the price! The shoemaker and his wife now had enough money to buy supplies for two more pairs of shoes.

Again that night, as the shoemaker and his wife slept, the strange little elves appeared at the shop and began making shoes inspired by the music they heard playing outside on the street. They cut out the pieces of leather with precision and care. Nailed down the sole with a tap, tap, tap. And finally stitched it all up!

As the sun rose in the city, the elves disappeared, leaving behind a beautiful pair of shoes!

At that very moment a customer walked in the shop door. “Namaste! Are these beautiful shoes for sale?”

“Yes!” said the shoemaker and his wife. “Please come in and try them on.”

“They fit perfectly,” said the customer.

Filled with gratitude and joy, the shoemaker’s wife was determined to learn who was making these beautiful shoes! So, that night, the shoemaker and his wife hid away and waited to see what they could see. As soon as the music on the street began to play, in came the elves, ready to make shoes inspired by the music they were hearing.

The shoemaker and his wife watched in awe. They couldn’t believe their eyes. The elves cut out the pieces of leather with precision and care. Nailed down the sole with a tap, tap, tap. And finally stitched it all up!

“We have to thank them,” said the shoemaker’s wife. So they waited for the elves to leave and then quickly got to work making a beautiful pair of shoes for each elf.

That night, the shoemaker and his wife hid, and when the elves appeared, they jumped out and said, “Thank You!”

The elves loved their new shoes! They put them on and everyone danced all night long!

The next morning, as the sun rose, the elves smiled, pleased with their work, and disappeared, leaving behind a shoemaker and his wife who had now become a part of a community full of friends.

In fact, that very day, they decided to begin a new tradition. Every year they brought their neighbors together to celebrate all their styles and customs. Therefore, no matter how the neighborhood grew or changed, no matter who moved in or out, their shoes kept everyone dancing happily ever after!