

3. The Gift of the Magi

WORKSHEET

1

COMPREHENSION

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

Difficulty is experienced at Christmas and New Year and at other times in bestowing gifts, since it is always so pleasant to be generous, though very vexatious to pay debts. But the impediment lies in the choosing. If, at any time, it comes into my head that a present is due from me to somebody, I am puzzled what to give, until the opportunity is gone. Flowers and fruits are always fit presents.

For common gifts, necessity makes pertinences and beauty every day, and one is glad when an imperative leaves him no option, since if the man at the door has no shoes you have not to consider whether you could procure him a paint box. And it is always pleasing to see a man eat bread, or drink water, in the house or out of doors, so it is a great satisfaction to supply these first wants.... Next to things of necessity, the rule for a gift is that we might convey to some person that which belonged properly to his character, and was easily associated with him in thought...Rings and other jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only gift is a portion of thyself. Therefore, the poet brings a poem; the shepherd, his lamb; the farmer, corn; the miner, a gem; the sailor, coral and shells; the painter, his picture; the girl, a handkerchief of her own sewing. This is right and pleasing.... But it is a cold, lifeless business when you go to the shops to buy me something, which does not represent your life and talent, but a goldsmith's.

– 'Gifts' by R. W. Emerson

A Answer the following questions.

1. What is the impediment in giving gifts?

2. What are always fit presents?

3. Why does the author say that you do not have to give a paint box to the man at the door?

4. Which are the 'first wants' that the author speaks of?



5. What is the rule for a gift, according to the author?

6. What is the best and only gift?

B Fill in the blanks using words from the passage.

1. It is always so _____ to be _____, though very _____ to pay _____.
2. For common gifts, necessity makes _____ and _____ every day.
3. It is a _____, _____ business when you go to the shops to buy me a _____.

GRAMMAR

A Form adjectives from the following words.

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| 1. Habit | _____ | 2. Sentiment | _____ |
| 3. Man | _____ | 4. Read | _____ |
| 5. Haste | _____ | 6. Kindness | _____ |
| 7. Curiosity | _____ | 8. Ghost | _____ |
| 9. Child | _____ | 10. Miser | _____ |

B Correct the following sentences.

1. Give this book to the man tall old.

2. American five ladies fat climbed into the bus.

C Write the correct degrees of comparison below.

- | Positive | Comparative | Superlative |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ | Best |
| 2. _____ | Fairer | _____ |
| 3. Intelligent | _____ | _____ |

VOCABULARY AND WRITING

A Add prefixes from the Help Box to complete the following words.

under pre auto semi mis post

1. _____script _____pone

2. _____fix _____dict

3. _____colon _____circle

4. _____graph _____biography

5. _____take _____lead

6. _____go _____ground

B Make sentences using the following words.

1. anticipate: _____

2. contradict: _____

3. nimble: _____

4. prevent: _____

5. fountain: _____

C Write five sentences on giving a gift to your best friend.
