

2. The Gift of the Magi

WORKSHEET 1

COMPREHENSION

Read the passage below 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 _____.

WORKSHEET 2

GRAMMAR

A. Change the following adjectives and verbs into nouns.

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------|------------|-------|
| 1. Brave | _____ | 2. Honest | _____ |
| 3. Exist | _____ | 4. Bake | _____ |
| 5. Curious | _____ | 6. Advise | _____ |
| 7. Bless | _____ | 8. Long | _____ |
| 9. Truthful | _____ | 10. Inform | _____ |

B. In the following sentence, underline the nouns and state whether they are the subject, direct object, indirect object or object of a preposition.

Mary gave a player to Timothy so that he could enjoy listening to music.

C. Change the following adjectives and verbs into nouns.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-------|----------|-------|
| 1. Aunt | _____ | 2. King | _____ |
| 3. Prime Minister | _____ | 4. Chair | _____ |
| 5. Doctor | _____ | 6. Cow | _____ |
| 7. Lamp | _____ | 8. Hen | _____ |
| 9. Umpire | _____ | 10. Monk | _____ |

D. Change the following nouns into singular or plural.

- | | |
|-----------|------------------|
| 1. Wolf | 2. Sister-in-law |
| 3. Sheep | 4. Mice |
| 5. Teeth | 6. Child |
| 7. Ox | 8. Kites |
| 9. Tomato | 10. Spectacles |

WORKSHEET 3

VOCABULARY AND WRITING

A. Each group of words is derived from a Latin or Greek root which is given in the Help Box with its meaning in brackets. Select the correct root of each group.

	(a)	(b)
1. _____	aquarium	aquatic
2. _____	major	magnify
3. _____	proverb	verbal
4. _____	dialogue	catalogue
5. _____	architect	technical
6. _____	democracy	epidemic

Help Box

Demos [G. The people]
 Magnus [L. Great]
 Techne [G. An art]
 Verbum [L. A word]
 Logos [G. A word]
 Aqua [L. Water]

B. Use the following foreign words in sentences of your own.

1. Bona fide _____
2. Lingua franca _____
3. Resume _____
4. Extempore _____
5. Ad hoc _____

C. Write a paragraph about your pet cat or dog [an imaginary one if you don't have a pet] in about 150 words.
