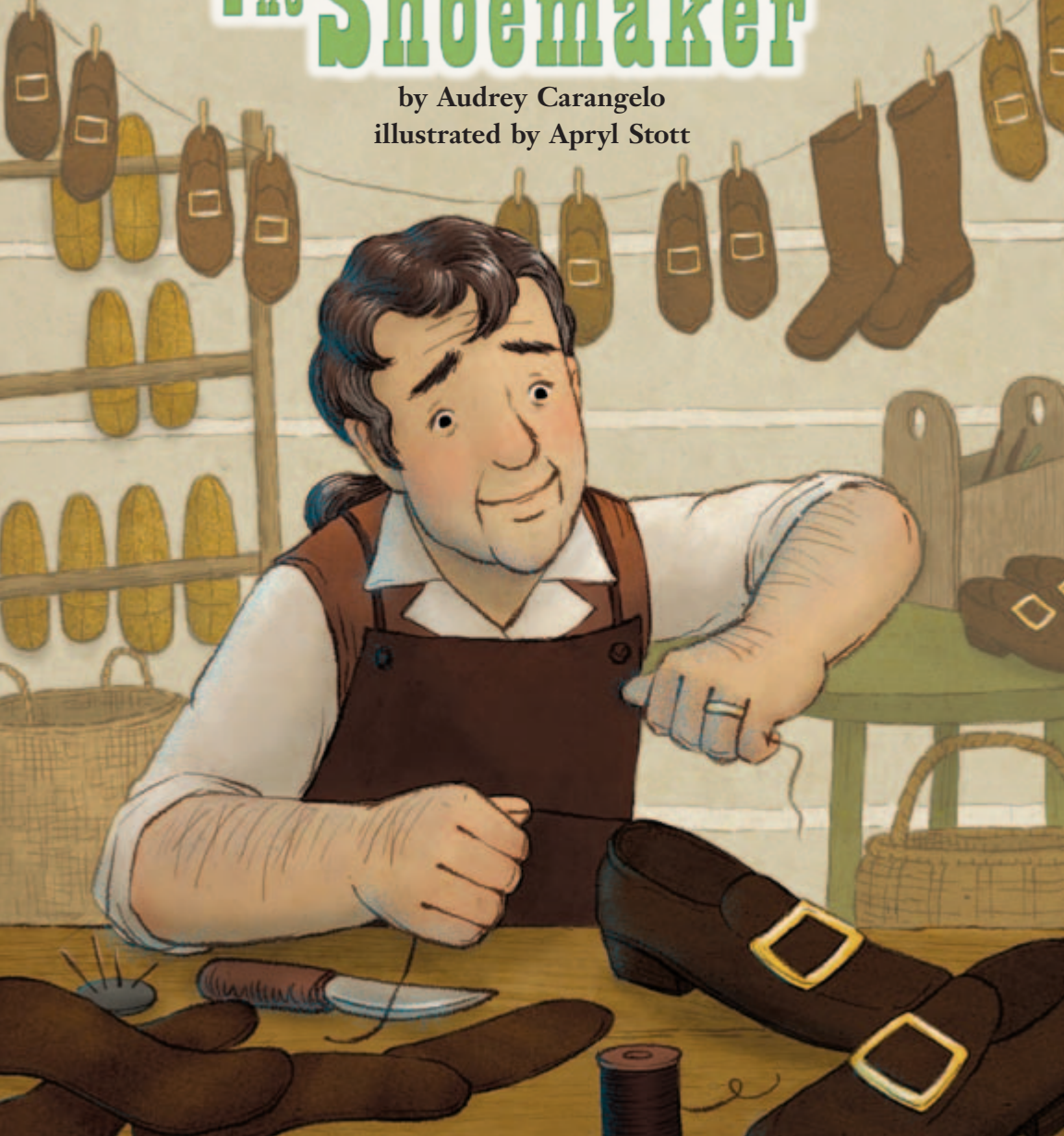




The Shoemaker

by Audrey Carangelo
illustrated by Apryl Stott



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT

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🔊 Long, long ago, there was a quiet village where all the people worked very hard. The village was near a rushing river whose sweet water helped the villagers grow their crops.

But when autumn came one year, the harvest was quite sparse. Insects had destroyed most of the wheat and corn.





🔊 One day that autumn, a stranger walked into the village.

“Good day,” the stranger said to a young boy chopping firewood. “Can you tell me where the famous shoemaker lives?”

“You must mean Nathaniel,” answered the boy. “He is known throughout the land for making the best shoes. I will take you to him.”

🔊 “Excellent, young man,” replied the stranger. “I will reward you **handsomely.**”

The boy was overjoyed as the stranger handed him a small silver coin. It was a rare and valuable gift.




▶ The boy guided the stranger through the village until they reached Nathaniel's workshop.

Nathaniel was bent over the table sewing leather shoes, **occupying** the same spot for as long as anyone could remember.

▶ "Greetings, Nathaniel," called out the boy.

"Greetings to you, Ben," Nathaniel answered.

 Nathaniel put down his sewing. He was an **elder** in the village, and he was very wise and kind.

“Hello, visitor,” he said, extending his worn, old hand in friendship. “I am Nathaniel, the village shoemaker.”

 The stranger shook Nathaniel’s hand, returning the greeting. “I am Clifford Baldwin, and I have heard of your exceptional shoemaking skills.”

“Clifford Baldwin?” asked Nathaniel. “I have heard of you, as well. You are the most **prosperous** man in the county. You have a great fortune to call your own.”



“Your shoes are known to be the finest in the land,” said Clifford.

“See for yourself,” answered Nathaniel, handing the man a pair of shoes to examine.

“These are excellent shoes!” exclaimed Clifford. “The leather is so soft, the stitching is so fine, and the buckle is so beautiful.”

“Thank you,” said Nathaniel. “I have learned to make these shoes from my father and he learned from his father before him, back and back, for many **generations**. We have been content to make shoes for as long as we can remember.”






“I must have these shoes!” said Clifford Baldwin. “I will give you eighty sacks of corn if you can make me twenty pairs of shoes. But you must have them ready in two days. Only then will I give you the corn.”


Nathaniel had never made that many shoes that quickly. But he knew the villagers needed the extra food. Nathaniel made his decision.

“I am happy to serve you, Mr. Baldwin. I will make you twenty pairs of shoes in two days,” he said. In truth, Nathaniel couldn’t imagine how he would ever complete this impossible task.

Nathaniel set out at once to make the shoes. He worked all day and into the night. Finally, he finished measuring and cutting the leather he needed.



 Nathaniel still had all the sewing to do, and he knew that in all his life, he had never made more than three pairs of shoes in a day.

 He sat down to gather his strength. He did not know how he would sew all the shoes that Clifford Baldwin demanded. He only knew that his village desperately needed the corn he would receive in payment. Nathaniel's eyes grew heavy, and he went to bed. Soon he was fast asleep and dreaming. He dreamed that he had twenty more hands to get his task done!



🔊 At the sound of Nathaniel's gentle snoring, suddenly a whole group of elves scampered out from their hiding places, concealed deep in the woods. They were **sprightly** tiny people who were surrounded by a bright and glimmering yellow light.

🔊 The elves went to Nathaniel's worktable and took up needles, measured out thread, gathered up leather, and then they began to sew. The elves sewed and sewed. They moved so quickly their hands looked like birds' wings.



🔊 The elves finished the shoes in no time. They lined them up neatly across Nathaniel's worktable and then they skipped merrily back into the woods. They laughed and giggled at the great surprise they had left the kind old man.

🔊 The sharp light of late morning hit Nathaniel's eyelids, causing them to open with a start. "Oh, no!" he said out loud. "I have been asleep all night, dreaming about elves. I will never complete the shoes. We will never see Clifford Baldwin's corn."





Just then Nathaniel saw the completed shoes lined across his table, and his heart filled with joy. He knew at once who had saved him!

“Thank you, elves!” exclaimed Nathaniel. “You made my dream of twenty extra hands come true! You have helped our village survive the winter!”

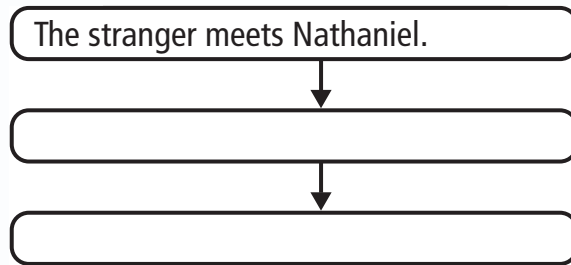


Responding



TARGET SKILL **Sequence of Events**

What happens first, next, and last in this story? Copy the chart below. Then fill in the story events. Write them in the order they take place. Add more boxes if needed.



Write About It

Text to Text What other fairy tales have you read about elves or other tiny creatures? Write a paragraph comparing this story to the other story you read.



TARGET VOCABULARY

concealed
content
glimmering
overjoyed

served
task
valuable
worn



EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY

elder
generations
handsomely

occupying
prosperous
sprightly



TARGET SKILL **Sequence of Events**

Tell the order in which things happen.



TARGET STRATEGY **Analyze/Evaluate**

Tell how you feel about the text, and why.



GENRE A **fantasy** is a story that could not happen in real life.

Level: 0

DRA: 34

Genre:

Fantasy

Strategy:

Analyze/Evaluate

Skill:

Sequence of Events

Word Count: 787

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