



Department of German Language.

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English Language.

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THE GOLDEN TOUCH

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PART 1

Is it possible to have “too much of a good thing”? You may find the answer in this famous myth.

The ancient Greeks told the story of Midas. He was a rich and powerful king who loved gold more than anything else in the world. However, if there was one thing he **adored** just as much, it was Marigold, his daughter. “She is worth her weight in gold,” the king often remarked.

At one time, the king enjoyed looking at flowers. He had planted a garden that contained the largest and most beautiful roses that any **mortal** ever saw. But now, if he glanced at the flowers at all, it was only to estimate how much they would be worth if they were made out of gold.

Midas spent part of every day in an enormous room in his palace. That huge chamber, which was filled with gold, was his treasure room. There, the king counted his many bags of gold and let the pieces of gold slip through his fingers. He often whispered to himself, “Oh, Midas, rich King Midas, what a happy man you are.” Then he always added softly, “But how much happier you would be if you had more gold.”

One day, Midas was in his treasure room counting his fortune. Suddenly, a long shadow fell upon the heaps of gold. Midas looked up and saw a young man who stood there smiling at him. Midas was certain he had locked the door, and there was no other entrance to the room. Therefore, the king **concluded** that his visitor must have very great powers. The stranger looked around the room, then smiled again. “You are a wealthy man, friend Midas,” he said. “I doubt whether any other four walls on earth contain as much gold as you have managed to pile up in this room.”



"I have done fairly well—fairly well," admitted King Midas. "But it has taken me my whole life to obtain this much. And there is so much more gold I would love to possess."

"What!" exclaimed the stranger. "Then you are not satisfied?"

"I am not," said King Midas, shaking his head.

"What would satisfy you?" asked the young man. "I am curious to know."

Midas paused and thought for some time. Finally, a really bright idea came to the king. It seemed as bright as the glistening gold he loved so much. "It is only this," the king replied. "It takes so much time, trouble, and effort to collect my treasures. I wish . . . I wish that everything I touch would turn to gold."

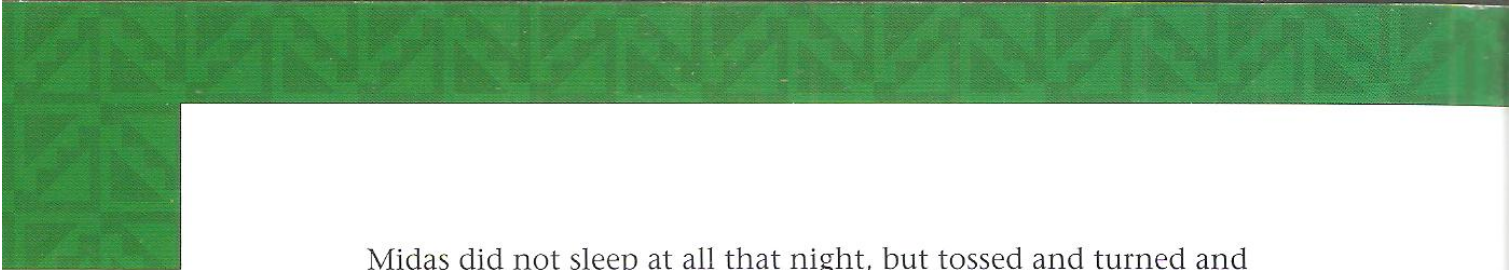
The stranger's smile lit up the room, and everything shone brilliantly. "The Golden Touch!" he said. "The Golden Touch! That is an excellent wish—an excellent wish, indeed! But are you sure that wish would satisfy you? Are you sure that your wish would make you happy?"

"How could it fail?" said Midas.

"And you would never regret that you asked for it?"

"That wish is all I ask," King Midas said. "It would bring me perfect happiness."

"Then you shall have the wish that you desire," the stranger said. "Tomorrow, when the sun comes up, everything that you touch will turn to gold. Good-bye for now," the young man said, and he disappeared as suddenly as he had come.




Midas did not sleep at all that night, but tossed and turned and waited eagerly for morning to arrive. Before the sun was up, Midas arose. He touched the table by his bed and stretched his arm to place his hand on a chair that stood nearby. But the bed and the chair
55 remained just as they had been before. Neither one turned to gold! Had it all been a dream, or had the stranger **played a trick** on him?

The disappointed king walked slowly to the window. The morning was still gray, but as the king peered outside, the first rays of sunlight reached the palace room. Midas **hastened** to the bed and
60 touched it with his hand. The bed turned to gold!

The king rushed frantically about the room. He picked up a book, which turned instantly to gold. He brushed against a mirror, which turned to gold. He put on his clothes, which also turned at once to gold. His new fine gold suit looked magnificent¹, indeed. It was a bit
65 heavy—but still, it was gold!

King Midas pushed open the door, which turned to gold. He then went down the stairs and smiled as he observed that each stair turned to gold as he descended step by step.

Into the garden Midas went. He moved from bush to bush and put
70 his hand on each and every rose, which at his touch, changed at once to gold. Then, satisfied with his good work, he returned to the palace.



1. *magnificent*: very beautiful

CHECK YOUR READING

Put an **X** in the box next to the correct answer.

Reading Comprehension

1. The king's treasure room was filled with
☐ a. large and beautiful flowers.
☐ b. diamonds and jewels.
☒ c. bags of gold.
2. In this story, Midas was granted the Golden Touch by
☒ a. a stranger.
☐ b. an ancient Greek.
☐ c. his daughter, Marigold.
3. When Midas first touched the bed and the chair, they did not turn to gold because
☐ a. he did not say the magic words.
☐ b. it had all been a dream.
☒ c. the sun had not yet come up.
4. Which was true of the king's new, fine gold suit?
☐ a. It did not fit the king well.
☐ b. It didn't look good.
☒ c. It was a bit heavy.
5. At the end of this part of the story, King Midas was
☐ a. sorry about what he had done.
☒ b. very pleased.
☐ c. quite disappointed.

Vocabulary

6. The king adored two things—gold and his daughter. The word *adored* means
☐ a. needed.
☒ b. loved.
☐ c. was proud of.
7. The garden contained the most beautiful roses that any mortal ever saw. As used here, the word *mortal* means
☒ a. a person or human being.
☐ b. a ruler or king.
☐ c. an insect or bug.
8. Midas concluded that his visitor had great powers. The word *concluded* means
☐ a. hoped for.
☐ b. worried about.
☒ c. decided.
9. The king hastened to the bed and touched it with his hand. The word *hastened* means
☒ a. hurried.
☐ b. thought about.
☐ c. slipped on.

Idioms

10. Midas wondered if the stranger had played a trick on him. When you *play a trick* on someone, you
☐ a. amuse someone.
☐ b. help someone.
☒ c. fool someone.

How many questions did you answer correctly? Circle your score. Then fill in your score on the Score Chart on page 200.

Number Correct	Score
1	10
2	20
3	30
4	40
5	50
6	60
7	70
8	80
9	90
10	100

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Exercise A ~ Checking Comprehension

Answer each question by writing a complete sentence. Begin each sentence with a capital letter, and end each sentence with a period. You may use the line numbers in parentheses to help you.

1. Who was Midas? (1)

A rich and powerful king.

2. What did the king adore as much as gold? (3)

His daughter.

3. Where did Midas spend part of every day? (11)

In his treasure room.

4. What did the king do in his treasure room? (13)

Counted his money and gold.

5. What did Midas see when he looked up? (19)

A shining light.

6. What was the king's wish? (37)

He wished that everything he touched would turn to gold.

7. When was Midas supposed to get the Golden Touch? (48)

When he was asleep.

8. What happened the first time Midas touched the bed and the chair? (54)

They remained gold as the bed and chair turned.

9. What happened when the king brushed against the mirror? (62)

It turned to gold.

10. What did Midas do when he went into the garden? (69)

He went to the garden.

Exercise B ~ Putting Events in Order

Part A

Put the events in the order in which they occurred. You may look back at the story.

1. _____ a. The stranger asked the king if he was satisfied.
2. _____ b. Midas went into the garden and touched every rose.
3. _____ c. The stranger gave Midas the Golden Touch.
4. 4 _____ d. One day, King Midas was counting his gold.
5. 1 _____ e. "I am not satisfied," said the king.
6. _____ f. The king returned to the palace.
7. 3 _____ g. Midas saw a young man who was smiling at him.

Part B

Now list the events in the correct order on the lines below. Write the complete sentences.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Exercise C ~ Adding Vocabulary

In the box are ten words from the story. Complete each sentence by adding the correct word.

effort	remarked	enormous	regret	estimate
possess	brilliantly	descended	entrance	frantically

1. The king loved his daughter. "She is worth her weight in gold," he often
_____.
2. He glanced at the flowers to _____ how much
they would be worth if they were made out of gold.
3. The king had a huge treasure room; it was _____.
4. He locked the door to the room. There was no other
_____.
5. The king had much gold, but he hoped to _____
even more.
6. It took time, trouble, and _____ to collect so many
treasures.
7. The stranger's smile lit up the room, and everything shone
_____.
8. Midas was sure that the Golden Touch would bring him happiness. He
did not think that he would ever _____ asking for it.
9. When the king realized that he had the Golden Touch, he rushed
_____ around the room.
10. Each stair turned to gold as he _____ step by step.

Exercise D ~ Picking an Adjective

Fill in each blank by adding the correct adjective. Use each adjective once.

beautiful	disappointed	bright	huge
excellent	ancient	powerful	new

Remember, an **adjective** is a word that describes (tells about) a noun.

adjective **noun**

Example: A *young* man was standing in the room.

1. Midas had so many bags of gold, he needed a _____ room for them all.
2. His garden contained large and _____ roses.
3. Midas was a king who was rich and _____.
4. After King Midas thought for a long time, he had a _____ idea.
5. When Midas wished for the Golden Touch, the stranger thought that the king had made an _____ choice.
6. The table did not turn to gold, so the king was _____.
7. His _____ suit was beautiful, but it also was heavy.
8. Long ago, the _____ Greeks told the tale of King Midas.

Write your own sentences using the adjectives in parentheses.

9. (interesting) _____

10. (large) _____

Exercise E True or False?

Part A

Write **T** if the statement is true. Write **F** if the statement is false.

1. T King Midas loved gold very much.
2. F The king never enjoyed looking at flowers.
3. T Midas spent part of every day in his treasure room.
4. F The king's treasure room was quite small.
5. F Midas thought that the Golden Touch would bring him great happiness.
6. F Midas slept very well the night the stranger gave him the Golden Touch.
7. F The king's gold suit was not heavy at all.
8. F When the king touched the roses, they changed to gold.

Part B

On the lines below, correct the four false statements.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____