

Vocabulary Words

1. puzzle (verb) to cause someone to feel confused and slightly worried because they cannot understand something
Example: The findings of the survey puzzle me - they're not at all what I would have expected.
2. chorus (verb) (of a group of people) to say similar things at the same time:
Example: "Not now," the children chorused, "we're watching TV."
3. attempt (verb) to try to do something, especially something difficult:
Example: He attempted to escape through a window.
4. banish (verb) to send someone away, especially from their country, and not allow them to come back:
Example: He was banished to an uninhabited island for a year.
5. stupid (adjective) silly or unwise; showing poor judgment or little intelligence:
Example: She was really stupid to quit her job like that.
6. hag (noun) a witch, especially one in the form of an ugly old woman
Example: He met a fat old hag in a dirty apron.
7. cloak (noun) a loose outer piece of clothing without sleeves, that fastens at the neck, and is worn instead of a coat
Example: She wore a golden cloak last Halloween.
8. shimmering (adjective) reflecting a gentle light that seems to move slightly:
Example: We drove across the desert, through the shimmering heat haze.
9. invisible (adjective) impossible to see:
Example: The aircraft is designed to be invisible to radar.
10. hearty (adjective) large or (especially of food) in large amounts:
Example: We ate a hearty breakfast before we set off.
11. goblet (noun) a container from which a drink, especially wine, is drunk, usually made of glass or metal, and with a stem and a base but no handles
Example: She prepared her golden goblets for the party.
12. doze off (verb) start to sleep, especially during the day
Example: The office was so hot I nearly dozed off at my desk.
13. giggle (verb) to laugh repeatedly in a quiet but uncontrolled way, often at something silly or rude or when you are nervous:
Example: Stop that giggling in the back row!
14. rung (noun) one of the horizontal steps of a ladder.
Example: You should never stand on the very top rung of a ladder
15. emerge (verb) to appear by coming out of something or out from behind something
Example: She emerged from the sea, blue with cold.
16. splendid (adjective) excellent, or beautiful and impressive:
Example: We had splendid food/a splendid holiday/splendid weather.
17. gleam (verb) to produce or reflect a small, bright light:
Example: He polished the table until it gleamed.

18. snap off (verb) break a piece from a whole
Example: She snapped off the end of the rose.
19. sneak (verb) to go somewhere secretly, or to take someone or something somewhere secretly
Example: I managed to sneak in through the back door while she wasn't looking.
20. applaud (verb) to show enjoyment or approval of something such as a performance or speech by clapping the hands repeatedly to make a noise:
Example: You should have heard the audience applaud - the noise was fantastic.
21. footwork (noun) the way in which the feet are used in sports or dancing, especially when it is skilful
Example: And that's a marvelous bit of footwork there from Ponti as he takes the ball from Garcia.
22. leap (verb) to make a large jump or sudden movement, usually from one place to another
Example: He leaped out of his car and ran towards the house.
23. deny (verb) to say that something is not true:
Example: He will not confirm or deny the allegations.
24. folly (noun) the condition of being foolish, or a foolish action or belief:
Example: It would be folly to attempt a trip in this snowstorm.
25. holey (adjective) piece of clothing or material has a lot of holes in it
Example: Her dress was holey.

Audio clip: [12 Dancing Princesses.mp3](#)

The 12 Dancing Princesses

Once upon a time, there lived a King with 12 daughters.

They were all very beautiful and kind, and their father loved them very much.

Every night the king would send them to sleep in their bedroom, which had 12 beds in it.

He would kiss them good night, and lock their door to keep them safe inside.

However, every morning the King would be **puzzled** to find that each of his daughters needed new shoes!



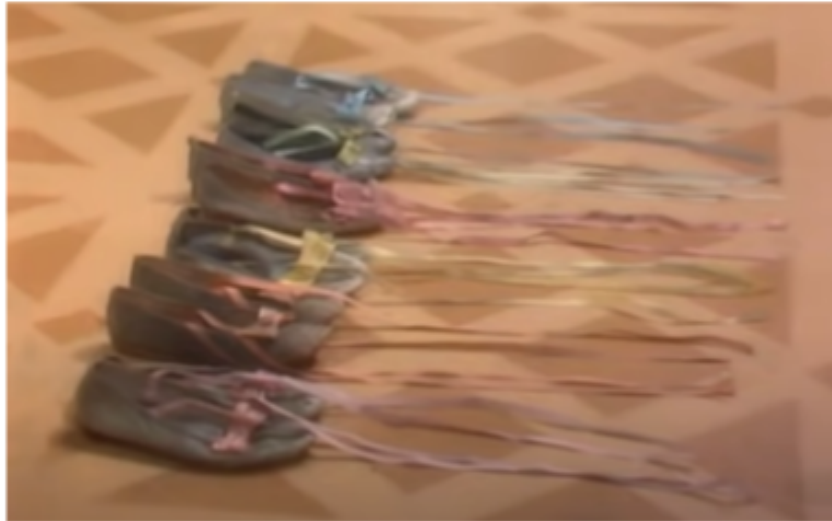
"Our shoes have holes in," they would **chorus** as he unlocked their bedroom door. The King was fed up of buying new pairs of shoes every morning, so he put a message out to the whole of the Kingdom.

"Whoever can find out what's happening to my daughters' shoes during the night can marry whichever one he chooses.

Each man who **attempts** this can stay in the castle for three nights.

If, after those three nights, the secret hasn't been revealed, that man shall be **banished** into the desert!"

Many men lined up to take the challenge.
Each man would stay in the castle for three nights inside the princesses' bedroom.
Each night, after it got dark, the men would fall into a deep sleep, no matter how hard they tried to stay awake.
Each morning, the shoes had fresh holes.



There was a poor soldier who thought himself too old and **stupid** to take the challenge.
However, one day, he was hiking near the castle and met an old **hag** on his path.
She was very frail, so he shared his food and water with her.
After she had eaten her fill, the hag said, "I would like to repay your kindness Sir!"
"I have some advice for you. Go to the castle and accept the King's challenge.
Do not drink the water they offer you, and when the clock strikes 12 put on this **cloak**."
She handed him a broad piece of cloth made of silver, **shimmering** thread.
"It will; make you **invisible** to any person's eyes."





The soldier took the old woman's advice and walked up to the castle.
Like those who had tried before him, he was given fine clothes and **hearty** food.

At bedtime, he was escorted to the princesses' bedroom.
As he laid his head down, the youngest princess brought him a **goblet** of water to drink.
Remembering the old hag's words, he poured it carefully between the cracks in the
floorboards and quickly pretended to **doze off** into a deep, heavy sleep.
The twelve princesses soon heard him snoring and **giggled** to each other.
Quietly, they jumped out of their own beds and dressed in their finest ball gowns, which
were every color of the rainbow.

They tied on their new shoes.





The soldier watched cautiously out of the corner of his eye
as the oldest knocked on her bedpost.

It sank into the floor to reveal a narrow trapdoor.

The soldier waited in his bed still snoring, until each princess had climbed carefully
down into the trapdoor.

Then, as the clock struck midnight, he placed the old woman's cloak around him and
followed them.

He followed them down many, many **rungs** of a long, wooden ladder.

Eventually, he hit solid ground and followed the princesses down a dark hallway.



They **emerged** onto a **splendid** golden walkway lined with rows of trees and tall street lights. The trees and their leaves were made of **gleaming** silver, sparkling in the lamplight. The soldier quietly broke off a single silver leaf as proof of this amazing place. Two more walkways followed, one with trees of gold and another with trees of diamond. The soldier reached out and **snapped off** one leaf of gold and one of hard diamonds. Finally, the walkways opened up into a shimmering lake with clear water. Twelve boats floated there, and in each boat was a handsome prince. Each princess climbed into a different boat and the princes began to row them over the sparkling water, towards a beautiful, white stone palace that stood in the distance.



The soldier **sneaked** into the last boat to leave the shoreline. The rowing prince said, "The boat seems to be much heavier tonight. Almost as though two people were in it!" The princess in the boat laughed thinking he was joking. When all the boats had reached the white palace, the couples went inside.

Music swelled from the palace's ballroom with trumpets, drums, pianos and guitars playing endless jazzy tunes.

The princesses danced and danced to the music, stopping only to **applaud** the band.]

The invisible soldier danced too, enjoying the music and amazing **footwork** of the beautiful girls.

They danced there until past four o'clock in the morning.



As they walked back to their boats to row home,
their shoes were in pieces around their feet.

The princesses journeyed back through the walkways and up the ladder
with the soldier following quietly behind.

He **leapt** ahead of them as they climbed back into their bedroom,
and slipped silently into bed.

The twelve sleepy princesses laughed softly at him.
They took off their colorful gowns and put their shoes back under their beds.

The next morning the King asked the soldier what had happened and he was able to answer.

He told the King the whole story, presenting his stolen leaves as proof. The princesses **denied** their **folly**, but the King went himself to press the bedpost and found the secret ladder.

He was delighted to solve the mystery of the **holey** shoes!

He offered the soldier each of the princesses' hands in marriage and being an older man, the soldier chose the oldest princess.

He never forgot that he owed such a huge debt to the mysterious hag from the hiking trail: had he not shared his food and water that day, he would not have a beautiful wife and a Kingdom to rule.

