



How Big Is A Foot?

ONCE UPON A TIME there lived a King and his wife, the Queen. They were a happy couple for they had everything in the world. However . . . when the Queen's birthday came near, the King had a problem: What could he give to Someone who had Everything? The King thought and he thought and he thought. Until suddenly, he had an idea! HE WOULD GIVE THE QUEEN A BED. The Queen did not have a bed because at the time beds had not been invented. So even Someone who had Everything—did not have a bed.

The King called his Prime Minister and asked him to please have a bed made. The Prime Minister called the Chief Carpenter and asked him to please have a bed made. The Chief Carpenter called the apprentice and told him to make a bed. "How big is a bed?" asked the apprentice, who didn't know because at the time nobody had ever seen a bed. "How big is a bed?" the Carpenter asked the Prime Minister. "A good question," said the Prime Minister. And he asked the King, "HOW BIG IS A BED?" The King thought and he thought and he thought. Until suddenly he had an idea! THE BED MUST BE BIG ENOUGH TO FIT THE QUEEN.

The King called the Queen. He told her to put on her new pajamas and told her to lie on the floor. The King took off his shoes and with his big feet walked carefully around the Queen. He counted that the bed must be THREE FEET WIDE AND SIX FEET LONG to be big enough to fit the Queen. (Including the crown which the Queen sometimes liked to wear to sleep.)

The King said "thank you" to the Queen, and told the Prime Minister who told the Chief Carpenter, who told the apprentice: "The bed must be three feet wide and six feet long to be big enough to fit the Queen." (Including the crown which the Queen sometimes liked to wear to sleep.) The apprentice said "thank you" and took off his shoes, and with his little feet, he measured six feet long and three feet wide and made a bed for the Queen.

When the King saw the bed, he thought it was beautiful. He could not wait for the Queen's birthday. Instead, he called the Queen at once and told her to put on her new pajamas. Then he brought out the bed and told the Queen to try it. BUT the bed was much too small for the Queen.

The King was so angry that he immediately called the Prime Minister who called the Chief Carpenter who called the jailer who threw the apprentice into jail.

The apprentice was unhappy. WHY WAS THE BED TOO SMALL FOR THE QUEEN? He thought and he thought and he thought. Until suddenly he had an idea! A bed that was three king's feet wide and six king's feet long was naturally

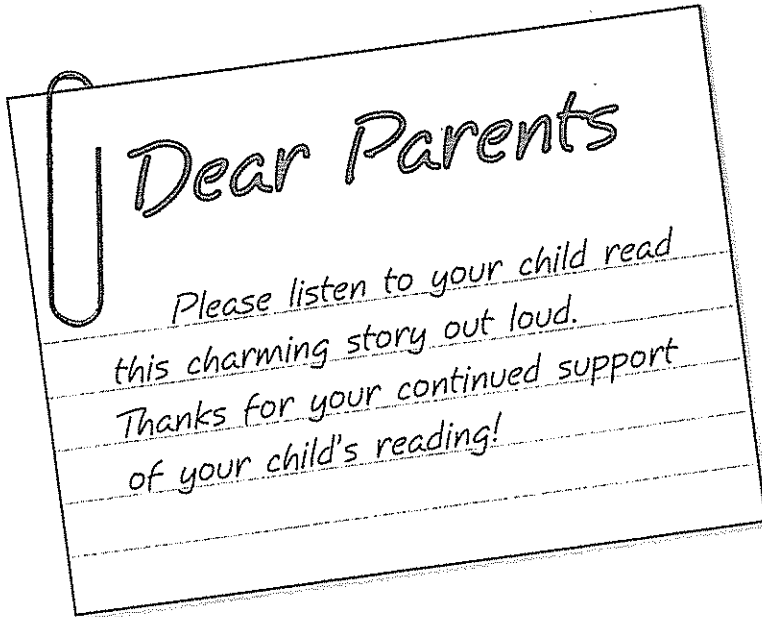


bigger than a bed that was three apprentice feet wide and six apprentice feet long. "I CAN MAKE A BED TO FIT THE QUEEN IF I KNOW THE SIZE OF THE KING'S FOOT," he cried. He explained this to the jailer, who explained it to the Chief Carpenter, who explained it to the Prime Minister, who explained it to the King, who was much too busy to go to the jail. Instead, the King took off one shoe and called a famous sculptor. The sculptor made an exact copy of the King's foot. This was sent to the jail. The apprentice took the marble copy of the King's foot, and with it he measured three feet wide and six feet long and built a bed to fit the Queen! The bed was ready just in time for the Queen's birthday.

The King called the Queen and told her to put on her new pajamas. Then he brought out the New Bed and told the Queen to try it. THE BED FIT THE QUEEN PERFECTLY. (Including the crown which the Queen sometimes liked to wear to sleep.) It was without doubt the nicest gift that the Queen had ever received. The King was very happy. He immediately called the apprentice from jail and made him a royal prince.

He ordered a big parade, and all the people came out to cheer the little apprentice prince. And forever after, anyone who wanted to measure anything used a copy of the King's foot. And when someone said, "My bed is three feet wide," everyone knew exactly how big it was.

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TIP OF THE WEEK

Many children's stories contain a pattern of sayings or events that contribute to the charm of the tale. "How Big Is A Foot?" contains both repetitive phrases and repetitive events. This is referred to as "story structure." Recognizing the structure of a story is often a key to understanding the events being described.

The Questions



List two repetitive phrases that are found in this story:

1. _____

2. _____

Use your own words to describe two repetitive events from the story:

1. _____

2. _____

We have completed this assignment together.

Child's Signature

Parent's Signature