

**Level 5-10**  
**The Gift of the Magi**

**Workbook**

**Teacher's Guide and Answer Key**

# Teacher's Guide

## A. Summary

### 1. Book Summary

Della and Jim are poor. Tomorrow is Christmas, and Della only has \$1.87 to buy a gift for Jim. She takes the money and goes shopping. She can't find a gift for so little money, but she finds a woman who buys hair. Della has long, beautiful hair, and she sells it to the woman for twenty dollars. Della then buys a platinum chain for Jim's gold watch. The watch is very important to Jim, just as her long hair was to Della.

When Jim comes home, he looks at Della in a strange way. Then he takes out her Christmas present. It is some expensive combs for her hair. Della is moved. She gives Jim the chain for his watch. Jim smiles and tells Della that he sold his watch to buy the combs for her. Then Della and Jim laugh. Della and Jim gave the best things they had. They are wise like the magi, the wise men who gave gifts to Jesus when he was born.

### 2. Chapter Summary

#### ► Chapter 1

Della is counting her money. All she has is \$1.87. Della always tries to save money, but it's hard. She and her husband are poor, and her husband doesn't make enough to pay for the things they need. Christmas is coming, and she doesn't have enough money to buy a present for her husband. Della takes off her hat in front of the mirror, and her long hair falls down. She has very long hair.

#### ► Chapter 2

Della's husband, Jim, works very hard. Della wants to buy him a present that he will like very much. She looks at her long hair. Jim and Della have two things that are very important to them: her long hair, which Jim loves, and his gold watch, which was passed down from his grandfather. Della puts her hair up and puts on her hat again. A tear falls on the carpet. She takes the \$1.87 from the table and puts it in her purse.

#### ► Chapter 3

Della goes out. She walks along the street looking in shops for something to buy with only \$1.87. Tomorrow is Christmas Day, and people are out shopping. Everything she sees is too expensive. Then she notices a sign that says, "I buy hair." Della runs into the building. She goes to see a woman named Mrs. Sofronie. Della lets down her hair to show it to the woman.

Mrs. Sofronie offers her twenty dollars for it, and then she cuts it off. Della is happy. She goes to all the big shops to buy a present for Jim.

#### ► Chapter 4

Della goes into a watch shop. There, she finds a platinum chain that is perfect for Jim's gold watch. The chain costs twenty-one dollars. Della runs home smiling. She knows Jim will like the chain.

#### ► Chapter 5

Della goes to the mirror and does her best to make her short hair look nice. She then makes coffee and pork chops, which Jim likes, for dinner. Della waits nervously for Jim to come home. She prays that he will think she is still pretty. When Jim comes in, he looks at Della. He is not angry or sad. Della runs to him, and they hug each other. She tells him that she sold her hair to buy him a special present.

#### ► Chapter 6

Jim knows that Della's hair is important to her. He tells her that he loves her, long hair or short hair. Then he gives her a small package. Inside it are expensive combs for the long hair she no longer has. Tears come to her eyes, and she tells Jim that her hair grows very fast. Della then gives Jim the platinum chain. She wants to see how the chain looks on the watch, but Jim just goes and sits down on the couch. He puts his hands behind his head and smiles. Then he tells Della that he sold his watch to buy her the combs. Jim and Della both laugh. Jim and Della gave the best things they had. They are wise like the magi, the three wise men who brought presents to Jesus when he was born.

## **B. Background and Themes**

★ **Love:** Jim and Della loved each other so much that they wanted to buy gifts beyond their means for each other.

★ **Sacrifice:** Jim and Della both sacrificed material things that were very dear to them.

★ **Wisdom:** Both Jim and Della were wise in choosing to make a sacrifice because it shows the depth of their love. Also, they were able to laugh because they had only given up material things as a display of real love.

# Answer Key

## Part A Story Focus

### Before You Read

*(Answers may vary.)*

#### ► Introduction

1. O. Henry wrote it.
2. It was William Sydney Porter.
3. They had surprise endings.

#### ► Characters

1. Della	2. Jim
young	young
poor	poor
pretty	hardworking
thoughtful	thoughtful
loving	loving
giving	giving
wise	wise

## **While You Read**

*(Answer may vary.)*

### **► Chapter 1**

#### **A. Preview Questions**

1. She is counting money.
2. She looks sad.
3. I think she wants to buy something but doesn't have enough money.

#### **B. Review Questions**

1. She has \$1.87.
2. She wants to buy a Christmas present, but she doesn't have enough money.
3. She has very long hair.

### **► Chapter 2**

#### **A. Preview Questions**

1. I think one of them is her hair.
2. I think it is because her hair is long and beautiful.
3. I think she will try to find some money.

#### **B. Review Questions**

1. It is special because Jim loves her long hair.
2. Della has her hair, and Jim has a gold watch.
3. His father gave it to him.

### **► Chapter 3**

#### **A. Preview Questions**

1. She is having her hair cut off.
2. I think she wants to sell it.
3. I think she will buy something for his watch.

#### **B. Review Questions**

1. She can't buy a lot for \$1.87.
2. She sees a sign that says, "I buy hair."
3. She gives Della twenty dollars.

### **► Chapter 4**

#### **A. Preview Questions**

1. She finds the perfect gift.

2. I think she buys a chain for his watch.
3. I think it costs \$21.87.

### **B. Review Questions**

1. She goes to a shop that sells watches.
2. She buys a platinum chain for Jim's gold watch.
3. It costs twenty-one dollars.

## **► Chapter 5**

### **A. Preview Questions**

1. I think she is worried that Jim won't be angry about her hair.
2. I think he will be sad.
3. I think he will like it.

### **B. Review Questions**

1. She makes her hair look nice, and then she makes coffee and cooks pork chops for dinner.
2. She prays that Jim will still think she is pretty.
3. He looks at Della and stops.

## **► Chapter 6**

### **A. Preview Questions**

1. They are looking at their gifts and laughing.
2. They are laughing because Della doesn't have long hair for the combs anymore.
3. I think he sold his gold watch.

### **B. Review Questions**

1. He got her some expensive combs for her hair.
2. He does nothing but just looks at Della.
3. They gave gifts that were the best things they had.

### **Mini Quiz**

a. It is better to give than to receive.

→ When we receive something, it only makes us feel good. When we give something, it makes us better people.

b. A stitch in time saves nine.

→ You should try to correct a problem before it comes worse because then it will be harder to fix.

c. A fool and his money are soon parted.

→ It is foolish to waste money on unnecessary things.

## After you read

*(Answers may vary.)*

### ► Pattern Practice

4. A: My mother used to work as a nurse.  
B: Really? My mom was once a nurse, too.
5. A: They used to live next door to us, but they moved.  
B: Do you miss them?

### ► Challenge

1. Tomorrow is Christmas Day, and Della is counting her money.
2. Mrs. Sofronie cuts Della's lovely hair.
3. The combs are for the hair which she doesn't have anymore.
4. The magi were the three wise men. / Della and Jim are wise like the magi.

## **Part B Skill Focus**

### **Vocabulary Preview**

#### **A.**

Across

2. excited      5. apartment      8. gloves      9. doorbell

Down

1. floor      3. chain      4. mail box      6. present      7. mirror      10. lovely

#### **B.**

1. cost less than
2. think we are poor
3. touches the ground
4. more expensive than
5. The watch chain
6. She cooks dinner
7. some expensive combs



## Reading Comprehension

### ► Beginning: Chapters 1–2

#### A.

1. T   2. T   3. F   4. T   5. F

#### B.

1. Jim
2. Della
3. Della
4. Jim

#### C.

1. b   2. b   3. c   4. a   5. b   6. d

### ► Middle: Chapters 3–4

#### A.

1. T   2. F   3. T   4. F   5. F

#### B.

1. She is Mrs. Sofronie.
2. She cuts hair.
3. She wants hair.
4. She gives Della money.

#### C.

1. b   2. a   3. c   4. b   5. d   6. c

### ► End: Chapters 5–6

#### A.

1. T   2. F   3. T   4. T   5. F

#### B.

c → d → a → b

#### C.

1. a   2. c   3. b   4. d   5. c   6. b

## **Think and Write**

Cause 1: Della needs money for a present.

Cause 2: Della sells her hair.

Event 1: Della buys a watch chain.

Consequence 1: Jim is surprised by Della's gift.

Cause 3: Jim needs money for a present.

Cause 4: Jim sells his watch.

Event 2: Jim buys expensive combs.

Consequence 2: Della is surprised by Jim's gift.

## **Vocabulary Review**

1. She tries to buy things from the butcher that cost less.
2. By the front door of the building, there is a mailbox.
3. She is sad and looks at the gray backyard behind the apartment.
4. Della puts on her old brown coat and old gloves.
5. Then Mrs. Sofronie gives Della twenty dollars.
6. Della walks to the mirror and looks at her hair.
7. Della cooks pork chops for dinner.
8. When Della sees what is in the package, tears come to her eyes.
9. Then Jim goes to the couch and sits down.
10. The magi brought presents for Jesus when he was born.

## Summary

A.

4	1
2	3

B.

*(Answers may vary.)*

1. There are two important things which Della and Jim have.
2. Mrs. Sofronie gives Della twenty dollars for her hair.
3. The chain is perfect for Jim's gold watch.
4. When Della sees what is in the package, tears come to her eyes.

## Book Report

**Story** 1. enough    2. purse    3. dollars    4. platinum    5. magi