O. Henry's
The Gift of the Magi

and other stories

Student Learning Materials

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STORY TWO: TWO THANKSGIVING DAY GENTLEMAN

"Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen" is a short story about two men and their special Thanksgiving meal. Thanksgiving is celebrated every November in the United States. On this holiday, American families celebrate with a large meal to give thanks for the good things in their lives. In this activity, you will learn some new vocabulary words related to Thanksgiving. These words will help you understand the story.

Directions:

1. Read the vocabulary words from the story in the first column of the chart below, then find them in the text. Underline the word in the text.
2. In the third column, labeled "Before Reading the Definitions," write one of the symbols shown below to show how well you know each vocabulary word.
3. Look up in a dictionary the meanings of the words marked **"–"** or **"?"**.
4. After you read the definitions, complete the fourth column labeled "After Reading the Definitions". Use the same symbols to show how well you know the words now.
5. After you read the story, complete the last column labeled "After Reading the Story". Use the same symbols. If there are still words that you do not understand, check a dictionary again as you reread those words in the story.

+ I know it   **? I'm not sure**   **– I don't know it**

Vocabulary Word	Page Number	Before Reading the Definition	After Reading the Definition	After Reading the Story
Thanksgiving	7			
turkey	7			
tradition	7			
dinner	7			
restaurant	9			
blessing	10			
thankful	10			
happiness	11			

In the story "Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen," Stuffy Pete has a tradition. He meets the old gentleman on Thanksgiving Day every year. This activity will help you predict what will happen in the story. After you finish reading, come back and check your predictions.

Directions:

1. Before reading the story, review the statements listed in the third column ***Statement***.
2. In the first column ***Before You Read***, write "T" if you think the statement will be true. Write "F" if you think the statement will be false.
3. If possible, compare your answers with a partner. If you have different predictions, tell your partner why you chose true or false. For example, you can say, *"I chose true because _____ "*.
4. After reading the story, fill in the second column ***After You Read***.

Before You Read	After You Read	Statement
		On Thanksgiving Day, many Americans eat a big dinner with their families. It is a very old tradition.
		Stuffy Pete is very rich. He gives free turkey dinners to poor people on Thanksgiving Day.
		This year two old women invite Stuffy Pete to Thanksgiving dinner.
		Stuffy Pete does not eat dinner with the old women. He waits for the Old Gentleman so they can eat together in a restaurant.
		The waiter in the restaurant knows both Stuffy Pete and the Old Gentleman because they eat there on Thanksgiving Day every year.
		The Old Gentleman has had nothing to eat for three days.
		Stuffy Pete and the Old Gentleman eat too much food at the restaurant.
		After Stuffy Pete pays for dinner, there is a look of happiness on the Old Gentleman's face. He is thankful for the food that Stuffy Pete has given him.

In the story "Two Thanksgiving Gentlemen," the narrator uses many phrases to describe the two characters. Complete this activity while reading pages seven through nine. This activity will help you to visualize the main characters.

Directions:

1. Read the descriptive phrases listed below.
2. As you read pages eight and nine, decide whether each phrase below describes Stuffy Pete or the Old Gentleman.
3. If the phrase describes stuffy Pete, write it in the Stuffy Pete box. If the phrase describes the old gentleman, write it in the old gentleman box. The first phrase has been completed as an example.

Descriptive Phrases:

▪ ~~60 years old~~	▪ white hair	▪ light green eyes	▪ eye-glasses	▪ short legs
▪ tall and thin	▪ wearing black	▪ torn shoes	▪ gray face	▪ blond hair

Stuffy Pete	Old Gentleman
	60 years old

To understand a story, it is important to be able to summarize what you have read. It is also helpful to think about what will happen next in the story. This activity checks your reading comprehension, your understanding of this story, and helps you make predictions.

Directions:

1. As you read the story, follow the directions provided.
2. When you see the red stop sign, stop reading and mark the correct summary.
3. Next mark the sentence that is the best predictor of what will happen next in the story.

STOP *Stop reading at the end of **page 9**.*

Summary #1*:* After you read the first three pages of "Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen" (pp. 7-9), pause and recap what has happened in the story. Which statement best summarizes what has happened so far? Write an "X" next to your choice.

_____ Even though he is already full, Stuffy Pete is waiting in the park for the old gentleman. Each year, the Old Gentleman takes Stuffy Pete to a restaurant and watches him eat a big meal. This is their tradition.

_____ Stuffy Pete is hungry and waits in the park. He hopes that someone will come and offer him food. Each year he gets food from a different person.

Prediction #1*:* Predict what Stuffy Pete will say and do when the Old Gentleman comes and invites him for dinner this year. Select your answer below.

____ He accepts the dinner invitation as usual because it is their tradition.

____ He turns down the dinner invitation because he is full.

GO *Continue reading.*

STOP *Stop reading in the middle of **page 11** when you see:*

> *They said goodbye, as they did each year, at the door. The Old Gentleman went south, and Stuffy went north.*

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Prediction Check #1*:* Did your prediction #1 match what happened in the story?

___   Yes, my prediction matched the story.

___   No, my prediction didn't match the story.

Prediction #2*:* What do you think will happen next after the Old Gentleman and Stuffy Pete say goodbye to each other?

___   They will meet again next Thanksgiving.

___   They will be in the same place only a few hours later.

GO *Continue reading to the end of the story.*

Prediction Check #2*:* Did your prediction #2 match what happened in the story?

___ Yes, my prediction matched the story.

___ No, my prediction didn't match the story.

Summary #2*:* After you finish reading the story, complete the sentence below.

Stuffy Pete and the Old Gentleman both end up at

___ a restaurant.

___ the same hospital.

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To understand "Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen" it is important to remember the order of the events in the story. In this activity, put the major events of the story in the order in which they occur.

Directions:

1. In the chart below, the major events are listed in the column on the left, ***Event from the Story,*** but not in the correct order.
2. Read the events of the story.
3. Reorder the events to match what you read in the story. The first event has been completed for you as an example. Find the second event of the story in the left column and write "2" next to it in the column on the right, ***Order***. Continue ordering all the events.

Event from the Story	Order
The old gentleman got sick because he had not eaten for three days. He was taken to the same hospital as Stuffy Pete.	
Stuffy Pete, with tears in his eyes, looked at the old gentleman.	
Stuffy Pete sat on a bench in the park feeling very full after the unexpected dinner.	
After he said goodbye to the old gentleman at the restaurant, Stuffy Pete walked away and fell on the ground. He was taken to the hospital.	
Stuffy Pete accepted a surprise invitation from two women. He ate a large dinner with them.	*1*
The old gentleman took Stuffy Pete to a restaurant and watched him eat a big dinner. Then they said goodbye.	
The old gentleman met Stuff Pete on the bench, just like they have done for the past nine Thanksgiving Days.	

"Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen" is a story that links the spirit of giving, the observing of traditions, and the holiday of Thanksgiving. But the unexpected ending shows us that good intentions may have bad consequences. In this story we learn that the old gentleman's generosity toward the poor man, Stuffy Pete, does not have good results. In this activity, you "Choose a New Path" for Stuffy Pete at each of the turning points.

Directions:

1. In the table below, different words are provided. Use these words to fill in each blank in in the chart below.
2. Use the questions in the chart to help you find the best word for each blank.
3. The first blank has been completed for you as an example.

sad	~~hungry~~	delicious	lonely	full	thankful

Stuffy Pete

↓

Stuffy Pete goes to Thanksgiving dinner at the home of the two old women.

Does he eat too much?

No ← → **Yes**

Stuffy Pete is still __*hungry*___.
Does he go with the old gentleman?

Stuffy Pete is very _____.
Does he go with the old gentleman?
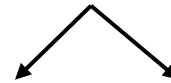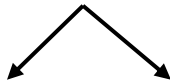
No   **Yes**   **No**   **Yes**

↓   ↓   ↓   ↓

Stuffy Pete is _____ because he is alone and he sleeps on the bench.

Stuffy Pete enjoys a lot of _____ food at a restaurant with the old gentleman.

Stuffy Pete is _____ when the old gentleman leaves.

Stuffy Pete shares his dinner with the Old Gentleman and both are _____.

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Directions:

1. Download the chapter "Thanksgiving Day" from the online book *Celebrate! Holidays in the U.S.A.* This chapter is available at http://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/celebrate-holidays-usa#child-377.

2. Read the description of the Thanksgiving holiday in that chapter. See how many of the nine words from "Pre-reading Activity 1: Rate the Vocabulary" you can find while reading. Then find **five** new words related to Thanksgiving Day that you do not know.

3. Find out their meanings by reading the text and using a dictionary, if needed.

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Answer Key | Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen

Pre-reading Activity 2: Prediction Guide

Before You Read	After You Read	Statement
	T	On Thanksgiving Day, many Americans eat a big dinner with their families. It is a very old tradition.
	F	Stuffy Pete is very rich. He gives free turkey dinners to poor people on Thanksgiving Day. *Stuffy Pete is poor. He gets a free meal from rich people each year on Thanksgiving.*
	T	This year, two old women invite Stuffy Pete to Thanksgiving dinner.
	F	Stuffy Pete does not eat dinner with the old women. He waits for the Old Gentleman so they can eat together in a restaurant. *Stuffy Pete eats a large dinner with the old women. He is very full, but eats again with the Old Gentleman.*
	T	The waiter in the restaurant knows both Stuffy Pete and the Old Gentleman because they eat there on Thanksgiving Day every year.
	T	The Old Gentleman has had nothing to eat for three days.
	F	Stuffy Pete and the Old Gentleman eat too much food at the restaurant. *Only Stuffy Pete eats at the restaurant.*
	F	After Stuffy Pete pays for dinner, there is a look of happiness on the Old Gentleman's face. He is thankful for the food that Stuffy Pete has given him. *The Old Gentleman pays for dinner. He is happy because he likes helping Stuffy Pete.*

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While-reading Activity 1: Character Description

Stuffy Pete	Old Gentleman
light green eyes gray face torn shoes short legs	60 years old thin and tall dressed in black white hair eye-glasses

While-reading Activity 2: What's Next?

Answers for predictions may vary.

Summary #1:
_**X**__   Even though he is already full, Stuffy Pete is waiting in the park for the Old Gentleman. Each year, the Old Gentleman takes Stuffy Pete to a restaurant and watches him eat a big meal. This is their tradition.
_____   Stuffy Pete is hungry and waits in the park. He hopes that someone will come and offer him food. Each year he gets food from a different person.

Summary #2:
Stuffy Pete and the Old Gentleman both end up at
_____   a restaurant.
_**X**__   the same hospital.

Post-reading Activity 2: Sequence of Events

Event from the Story	Order
The Old Gentleman got sick because he had not eaten for three days. He was taken to the same hospital as Stuffy Pete.	7
Stuffy Pete, with tears in his eyes, looked at the Old Gentleman.	4
Stuffy Pete sat on a bench in the park feeling very full after the unexpected dinner.	2
After he said goodbye to the Old Gentleman at the restaurant, Stuffy Pete walked away and fell on the ground. He was taken to the hospital.	6
Stuffy Pete accepted a surprise invitation from two women. He ate a large dinner with them.	1
The Old Gentleman took Stuffy Pete to a restaurant and watched him eat a big dinner. Then they said goodbye.	5
The Old Gentleman met Stuff Pete on the bench, just like they had done for the past nine Thanksgiving Days.	3

Post-reading Activity 2: Choose a New Path for the Main Character

Stuffy Pete

↓

Stuffy Pete goes to Thanksgiving dinner at the home of the two old women.
Does he eat too much?

No ←   → Yes

Stuffy Pete is still *hungry*.
Does he go with the Old
Gentleman?

Stuffy Pete is very *full*. Does
he go with the Old Gentleman?

No   Yes   No   Yes

↓   ↓   ↓   ↓

Stuffy Pete is *lonely or sad* because he is alone and he sleeps on the bench.

Stuffy Pete enjoys a lot of *delicious* food at a restaurant with the Old Gentleman.

Stuffy Pete is *sad or lonely* when the Old Gentleman leaves.

Stuffy Pete shares his dinner with the Old Gentleman and both are *thankful*.