

KING MIDAS AND THE GOLDEN TOUCH

by Michèle Dufresne



- 1 King Midas was a wealthy king who lived in luxury in a great castle. He shared his life of abundance with his beautiful daughter, but he often neglected her. Instead, he spent his days counting his gold coins. Occasionally, he covered his body with gold objects, as if he wanted to bathe in them. Money was his obsession.
- 2 One day Midas found a stranger in his rose garden who was lost. He recognized the stranger as a dear friend of the god Dionysus. He invited the stranger into the castle and fed and took care of him for ten days. Then Midas personally took him home to Dionysus.
- 3 Dionysus was very grateful to Midas for his kindness. "What wish can I grant you in return for helping my friend? I will satisfy any wish you make!" he told him.

- 4 Midas thought for a while, and then he said, “I wish that everything I touch becomes gold.”
- 5 “Are you sure this is what you wish for?” Dionysus asked.
- 6 Midas told the god that he was positive: he wanted nothing more than for everything he touched to turn into gold.
- 7 Dionysus frowned but then nodded. “Then it shall be. When you wake tomorrow morning, everything you touch will be gold.”
- 8 The next day, Midas woke up eager to see if his wish had come true. He lifted the lamp next to his bed, and immediately it turned into gold. Midas was elated. He ran around the room touching and turning everything to gold. As he opened the door to leave the room, it also turned to gold. He ran through the corridor, touching every table, column, and rug.
- 9 Midas felt a surge of jubilation as he sat down in the dining room to have breakfast. A perfect rose was in a vase by his plate. Midas picked up the flower, and, of course, it turned to gold. Midas thought he had never seen anything lovelier.
- 10 Hungry, he picked up some grapes. As he put them in his mouth, they too turned to gold. When he touched some bread, the same thing happened. Suddenly, Midas felt a twinge of dismay. He looked at the table filled with delicious food and wondered how he was going to eat. Everything he touched would turn to gold—and that included his breakfast! Tears filled his eyes.
- 11 At that moment, King Midas’s beloved daughter entered the room. Before he could stop her, she ran over to him and hugged him tight. To Midas’s great sorrow, his beautiful daughter turned into a golden statue! Midas now realized that his greatest wish was actually a terrible curse. Weeping in great anguish, he began to pray to Dionysus to undo this terrible fate.
- 12 The god heard Midas and felt sorry for him. He told Midas to go to the river and wash his hands. Midas ran to the river, and when he plunged his hands into the cold water, he was astonished to see gold flowing from them. When the king returned home, he saw that everything he had touched had become normal again. In great relief, Midas hugged his daughter.
- 13 That day, instead of spending his time counting his coins, Midas went for a walk with his daughter through his gardens. As he smelled the fresh, sweet aroma of the roses, he suddenly realized what real treasure was.



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Test Questions

Circle the correct answer.

- 1. What is meant when the author says “he suddenly realized what real treasure was”?**
 - a. King Midas realized that family was the most important thing of all.
 - b. King Midas realized that being able to turn everything into gold was his dream come true.
 - c. King Midas realized that wishes really do come true.
 - d. King Midas realized that greed has many terrible consequences.

- 2. Why did the author describe King Midas as running around the room “touching and turning everything to gold”?**
 - a. to show his panic when he could not undo his wish
 - b. to show his excitement that his wish had come true
 - c. to show his confusion when everything turned to gold
 - d. to show his boredom with his new ability

- 3. What is the theme of “King Midas and the Golden Touch”?**
 - a. Never give up.
 - b. Be careful what you wish for.
 - c. Don't judge a book by its cover.
 - d. Money is power.

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Test Questions (*continued*)

4. What is the best meaning for the word *jubilation* as it is used in paragraph 9?

- a. jealousy
- b. power
- c. horror
- d. delight

5. How did King Midas change from the beginning of the story to the end?

- a. He became a more generous person.
- b. He became a more enthusiastic person.
- c. He became a greedier person.
- d. He became a more appreciative person.