

King Midas and the Golden Touch

There once lived a king named Midas who was the richest king in the world. The King loved gold more than anything else on earth – including his daughter Marigold. His one great wish was for more and more gold.



One day, he was admiring his gold when a beautiful fairy boy appeared before him. The boy's face shone with a dazzling light and his cap, feet and wand all had wings.

"Midas, you are the richest man in the world," said the fairy.

"That may be," said the King, "but I should like much more - for gold is the best and the most wonderful thing in the world. If I could have one wish," said the King, "I would ask that everything touch should turn to shimmering gold."



I



"Your wish shall be granted," said the fairy. "From sunrise tomorrow, your slightest touch will turn everything into gold. But I warn you that your gift will not make you happy."

The next day, Midas woke early and as soon as he saw the rising sun, he reached out and lightly touched his bed. Instantly, it turned to gold. Delighted, the King went to eat breakfast. However, when he raised a glass of clear water to drink, it too became solid gold. The bread and butter turned to gold in his hand and the soft, tender meat became hard, yellow and shiny. Not a thing could pass his lips. All was gold, gold, gold.



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His daughter came running in from the garden. Without thinking, he gently kissed her cheek. At once, the little girl was turned into a golden statue. In his grief, he called upon the fairy for help.

"O fairy," he begged, "take away this horrible golden gift! Take all my gold, only give me back my darling daughter."



The beautiful fairy appeared and, convinced the King had learnt his lesson, told him how to fix what had happened.



Take this pitcher to the spring in the garden and fill it with water. Sprinkle the things you have touched with the water to restore them.



The King did as the fairy said. He first sprinkled the head of his dear little girl. Instantly, she became his darling Marigold and he gave her a kiss. The King sprinkled the golden food and, to his joy, it turned back to real bread and real butter.

Then, he and his daughter sat down to breakfast. How good the cold water tasted! The hungry King ate the bread and butter, the meat and all of the good food. King Midas hated his golden touch so much that he sprinkled water over everything else that the fairy's gift had turned to gold.



Questions

1. What was Midas doing the first time the fairy appeared? Tick one.

- crying
 admiring his gold
 eating breakfast
 shouting

2. How did the fairy warn Midas about his gift?

3. Draw **three** lines and match each character with the adjective that best describes them.

King Midas	powerful
Marigold	innocent
The Fairy	greedy

4. Fill in the missing words.

The next day, Midas _____ early and as soon as he saw the _____ sun, he reached out and lightly touched his bed.

5. Tick below to say whether the sentences are **true** or **false**.

	true	false
The gift would work from sunset the next day.		
King Midas changed his daughter back first.		
The first thing Midas changed to gold was some bread.		
The fairy told Midas how to change everything back.		

6. How did Midas turn Marigold into a statue? Tick one.

- he hugged her
 he kissed her
 he held her hand
 she hugged him

7. Imagine you are the fairy. Would you have granted Midas' wish? Give reasons for your answer.

8. When do you think Midas' attitude towards gold changed in the story? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
