

Context Clues in "The Dishonest Merchant"

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3. Verb Past Tense
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5. Verb Past Tense
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Context Clues in "The Dishonest Merchant"

1 Once upon a time, a prince known for his intolerance of dishonesty ruled in Romania. During his reign, a

_____ Adjective _____ merchant

from another country traveled through the land.

2 During one _____ Noun _____, the merchant lost a bag containing one thousand Romanian coins called lei. Each

time the merchant came to a crossroads, he told everyone that he would give one hundred lei to anyone who

found the money.

3 Not long afterward, a peasant found the bag. He was an honest

man, and he _____ Verb Past Tense _____ to find the merchant.

4 "I found this bag behind the fish market at the crossroads near

my home," the peasant said to the merchant. The merchant trusted no one, so he went aside to count the

money. To his surprise, all one thousand coins were still in the bag.

He was happy to have his money back, but he was also saddened by

the thought of giving some of it away. He wondered how he could get

out of his promise and still appear to be fair.

6 At last he went back to the peasant. "I thank you for returning

my money," he said. "I notice that you have already taken your

reward, for there were only nine hundred coins in the bag."

7 The peasant _____ Verb Past Tense _____. "But I did not even open the bag before I

gave

it to you!"

8 The merchant ignored the peasant's words. "I hope you enjoy your reward," he said. "Thank you again and good-bye." He quickly

_____ *Verb Past Tense* _____.

9 The peasant was upset--not just because he had received no reward but because he had been accused of taking money without permission. He hurried to the palace and requested to see the prince. He told his sad story, and the prince promised that he would uncover the truth.

10 The prince sent word for the merchant and the peasant to appear before him on a certain day. He told the merchant to bring the bag of

_____ *Noun* _____.

11 When the day arrived, the merchant told his side of the story and the peasant told his. As the prince listened, it became obvious to him that the peasant was telling the truth.

12 When they had finished, the prince said to the merchant, "You lost a bag with one thousand coins. Is that correct?"

13 "Yes," said the merchant.

14 The prince took the money bag, which now held only nine hundred

lei. "And when you were handed this bag, it contained only
nine hundred coins?"

15 "That is true," said the merchant, trying to look Adjective.

16 "I am sure that you are telling the truth," said the prince, "for
nothing is punished so Adverb in this court as dishonesty. However,
these facts present me with a problem."

17 The prince held up the bag for all to see. It was an Adjective
leather bag, like thousands of others. He asked the merchant, "If
your bag contained one thousand coins and this bag has only nine
hundred, then how do you know this is your bag?"

18 The merchant had trouble speaking. "I . . . I," he Verb Past Tense.
Then he was silent.

19 The prince continued. "It is obvious that this is not your bag. My
verdict therefore is that you should continue to inquire at crossroads
until you find your bag with one thousand lei. I wish you well in your
Noun."

20 The prince turned to the peasant. "And I Verb Base Form that you take
care of this bag of nine hundred coins until the rightful owner comes
forth. If we do not find the owner within three months, then the
money

will be yours as a reward for your honesty."

21 There was nothing more to say, since there could be no _____ Noun _____

regarding the prince's verdict. The dishonest merchant and the

honest peasant left the prince's chamber, the first very _____ Adjective _____ and the

other very _____ Adjective _____.

22 Thus was dishonesty treated in the days of the prince.