

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Gift of the Magi



1. Della saved up pennies two at the time by *negotiating* with vegetable sellers at the market. What does it mean to *negotiate*?
2. Queen of Sheba (modern day Ethiopia) is an African queen mentioned in the Jewish Bible (the Christian Old Testament). She is supposed to have been very wealthy. What does O. Henry mean by saying that Della's hair would "reduce (lessen) the value of the queen's jewels"?
3. When Della says that the hairs on her head were numbered. She means that as many hairs as she had, they could still be counted (numbered). She is comparing her hair to something that no one could count. What is it?
4. The silver chain for Jim's watch cost \$21. This is more than Jim earned in a whole week at work. Do you think that Della was foolish to have spent so much on a fancy gift when the author tells us that Jim was in need of a new coat and gloves? Explain.

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5. Why does the author say that Della and Jim are the magi (the wise ones)?

Do you agree? \_\_\_\_\_ Why, or why not?

6. **Irony** is when something turns out totally different than what is expected. O. Henry's stories are noted for their irony—the endings have a surprise twist to them. What is the irony in *The Gift of the Magi*?