

THE LEGEND OF KING

King Midas loves his gold more than anything on Earth—until he loses everything else

CHARACTERS

*Narrators 1, 2, 3 (N1, N2, N3)

*King Midas: a greedy king

*Marigold: Midas's daughter

*Bacchus: a god
Servants 1, 2

Members of Midas's Court:

Lady Caroline

Lord Elderberry

Lady Curry

Lord Sage

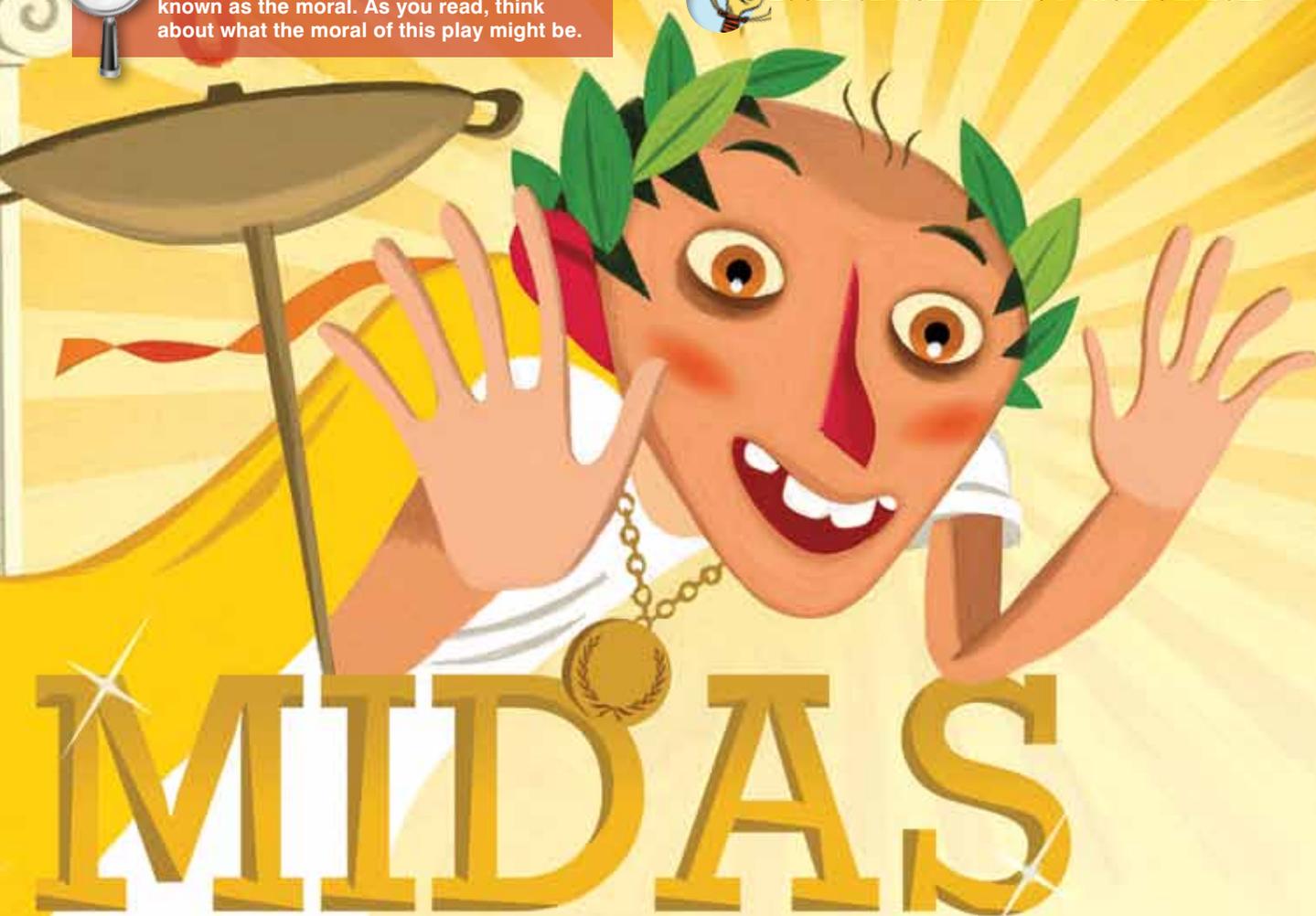
**Indicates large speaking role*



Moral The lesson of a story or myth is known as the moral. As you read, think about what the moral of this play might be.



LOOK FOR WORD NERD'S 10 WORDS IN BOLD



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Illustrations by Sebastià Serra

Scene I

King Midas's Treasure Room

N1: Long, long ago in ancient Gordium . . .

N2: Gordium? Never heard of it.

N3: It's in the country that's now called Turkey.

N1: Back then, there was a king named Midas, who was the richest man in all the land.

N2: But that wasn't enough for him. He wanted to be even richer.

N3: And that's what got him into trouble.

N1: Every day, King Midas sat in his treasure room counting his gold coins.

Midas: One billion four hundred million three

thousand four hundred and seventy-two . . .

N2: He loved gold more than anything.

Midas: One billion four hundred million three thousand four hundred and seventy-three . . .

N3: More than ice cream?

N1: Yes, even more than his own daughter, Marigold, whom he named for the golden flower.

N2: Here she comes now.

Marigold: Father, come see my garden. The roses are blooming.

Midas: One billion four hundred million three—oh, Marigold, you made me lose my count!

Marigold: That's all you care about. You hardly ever leave this room.

Midas: Everything I love is here.

Marigold: Then I'll leave you to your treasure.

N3: Hiding her tears, Marigold runs back to her garden.

N1: And King Midas goes back to his gold.

Midas: Oh, my precious golden treasure, you shine brighter than the sun.

N2: Watching from Mount Olympus, the god Bacchus decides to pay a visit to King Midas.

Bacchus: This greedy king must be taught a lesson.

Scene II

The Treasure Room

N3: That afternoon, as Midas continues counting his treasure, Bacchus appears before him.

Midas: Who are you?

Bacchus: Someone who could offer you enough gold to be happy.

Midas: Enough gold? No one can ever have enough.

Bacchus: What if you could share your gold with everyone in the land and still live the life of a very rich man?

Midas: Share? But then I wouldn't be the richest.

Bacchus: Will nothing satisfy you?

Midas: Yes, something could. If everything I touched turned to gold, then I'd be happy.

Bacchus: It is a wish I will grant you, and one that you truly deserve.

N1: Bacchus places his hand on the king's head and chants:

Bacchus: King Midas, whose heart is cold, I hereby **grant** thee limitless gold.

N2: Bacchus snaps his fingers and vanishes.

Midas: I must be dreaming. I've been in this room too long.

N3: Climbing over piles of gold, King Midas stumbles out of his treasure room, but as he touches the door . . .

Midas: Gold! It turned to gold!

N1: He touches the wall.

Midas: Again, it's gold!

N2: Midas runs through the halls of his castle touching everything in sight.

Midas: And now my torches, my windows, my **tapestries** are all gold—I will be the wealthiest man who ever lived!

Scene III

The Garden

N3: King Midas races to the garden to find his daughter.

Midas: Marigold! Marigold!

Marigold: Father, look at my lovely roses. They're so red, and the scent is **glorious**.

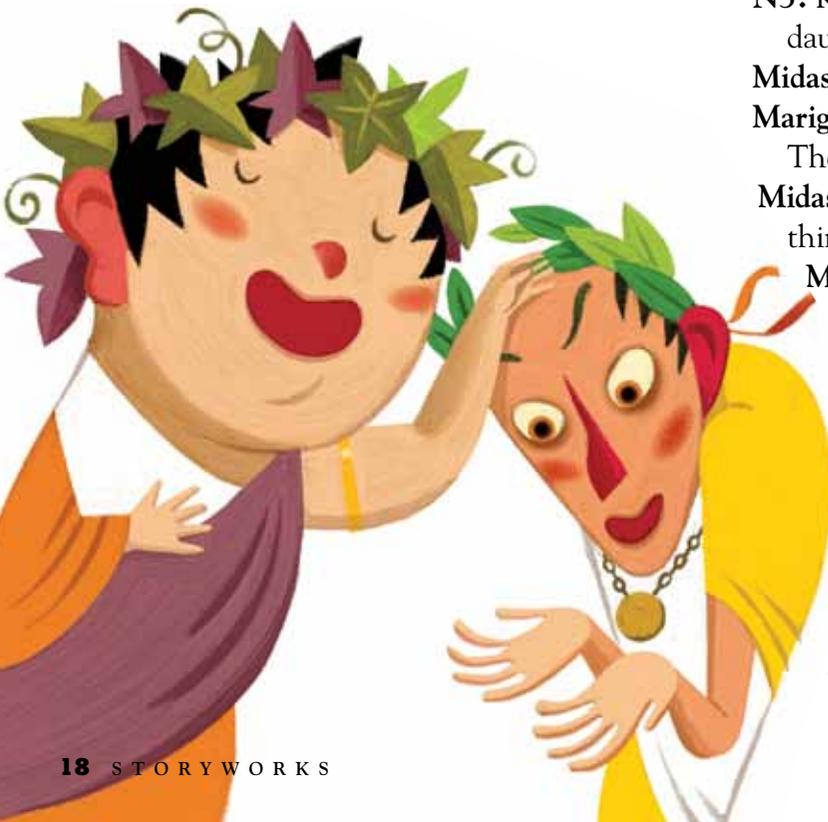
Midas: But I have a surprise for you. If you think your flowers are lovely now, just wait.

Marigold: What could possibly make them more beautiful?

N1: As Marigold watches, Midas touches a rosebush and it immediately turns to gold.

Midas: Now see how beautiful your roses are.

Marigold: Father, how could you? They're horrible. They've lost their color. They smell like metal. Ow! And the petals are so hard.





Midas: But now they're worth a fortune.

Marigold: My roses are ruined. Please don't touch another flower.

Midas: Go fetch my servants. I need to speak to them immediately.

N2: Heedless of his daughter's wishes, Midas races about the garden, touching all the flowers and trees, so that by the time the servants arrive, Marigold's garden is entirely gold.

Servant 1: Your Majesty, can this be real?

Midas: This is only the beginning. There's plenty more to come. I wish to hold a banquet in honor of my new power.

Servant 2: Shall we **summon** all the lords and ladies of Gordium?

Midas: Yes, at once.

Servant 1: Your Highness, could you spare one golden rose?

Servant 2: Or even just a petal that's fallen on the ground?

Midas: Just one. But I'll **deduct** it from your salary.

Scene IV

The Banquet Room

N3: That night, the lords and ladies of ancient Gordium gather at the castle of King Midas.

N1: They are dressed in their finest gowns, **trimmed** with fur and jewels.

Servant 1: My Lady, would you care for some pigeon pie?

Lady Caroline: No, it's too fatty. Do you have any low-fat roasted peacock?

Servant 2: Yes, indeed. And perhaps a bowl of pomegranate seeds?

Lord Elderberry: I, for one, would like some of that hasty pudding with rose water. Did the

petals come from your roses, Marigold?

Marigold: Yes, Lord Elderberry, although I fear it may be the last you will ever taste of them.

Lord Elderberry: Why?

Marigold: Only my father can answer that.

Midas: Yes, I have something to reveal. Lady Caroline, hand me your earthenware dish.

N2: The moment the king touches Lady Caroline's dish, it turns to gold.

Lady Caroline: Gadzooks! Is this solid gold?

Midas: Twenty-four karat.

Lady Curry: Your Majesty, touch my plate!

Lord Elderberry: And mine. And my fork too.

N3: Before their very eyes, King Midas transforms all the dishes and utensils into gold.

N1: Even the flames on the candles harden into gold.

Lord Sage: A toast! A toast to our host!

N2: The servants fill the goblets with the finest wine.

Lady Caroline: Gordium will be the richest country in the world!

Lord Elderberry: Thanks to your golden touch.

Lady Curry: The Midas Touch.

Midas: It's astounding, isn't it?

N3: King Midas swirls the wine in his goblet and puts it to his lips.

N1: At once the liquid hardens into golden ice.

N2: His face turns pale. His hand shakes as he reaches for bread.

N3: As his finger touches the loaf, it becomes a golden brick.

N1: Marigold notices the look of **dread** on her father's face.

Marigold: Father, what's wrong?

N2: She rushes to his arms before he can stop her. The moment she touches him, she turns to solid gold.

Midas: No!!!

Lord Sage: Marigold! She's become a golden statue.





Lady Curry: We must flee before King Midas reaches for one of us.

N3: The guests stuff their bags with golden treasures as they **bolt** from the castle.

N1: King Midas collapses beside the statue of his daughter.

Midas: Bacchus, how wrong I was. This blessing is a curse.

Scene V

From the Palace to the River

N2: Hours later, Midas still kneels beside his daughter trapped in gold.

Midas: Oh, Bacchus, have pity on me.

N3: Finally, Bacchus appears before him.

Bacchus: What will happen if I do show you mercy?

Midas: I will open up my treasure room and share it with the poor. To have my daughter again, and to eat and drink, these are the things that matter to me more than wealth.

Bacchus: I see you've learned your lesson. To reverse the spell, come with me and bathe in the River Pactolus, just beyond the garden.

N1: As Midas steps into the river, flecks of gold wash off him and mingle with the sand.

N2: He races back to the castle.

N3: In the garden, he discovers that the roses

are once again as red and fragrant as before.

Midas: Marigold!

N1: Marigold rushes out to meet him.

Marigold: Father!

N2: Midas **embraces** his daughter.

Midas: You are so precious to me.

Marigold: More than gold?

Midas: More than anything.

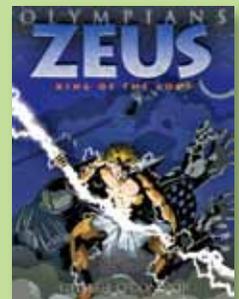
N3: And so, as promised, King Midas shared his gold with his kingdom.

N1: Which wasn't difficult, since he never wanted to touch it ever again. 🍷



WRITE TO WIN!

What lesson does King Midas learn in this play? Write your answer in a paragraph, using details from the play to support your idea. Send your entry to "Midas Contest" by Nov. 15, 2011. We'll send 10 winners one of the books in George O'Connor's Olympians series, such as *Zeus: King of the Gods*. See page 2 for details.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Read. Think. Explain.

In this activity, you'll answer questions about our play *The Legend of King Midas*, focusing on the moral of the story.

Directions: Answer the questions below, using information and details from the play to back up your ideas.

1. How does Midas treat Marigold in the beginning of the play? How does she feel? What can you tell is important to her?

2. When Bacchus grants Midas's wish, he says Midas "truly deserves" it. What does he mean by this?

3. What is Midas's point of view about golden roses? What is Marigold's? What does this tell you?

4. What makes Midas realize that his wish was a mistake?

5. What is the moral of the story?

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Moral of the Story Is ...

Some stories, like fables and certain myths, are told especially to teach a lesson. This lesson is called a *moral*. Complete the activity below to identify the moral of *The Legend of King Midas*.

Directions: Read *The Legend of Kind Midas*. Then complete the chart, providing specific examples to show how King Midas changes from the beginning to the end of the play. Use your answers to determine the moral of the story, based on what King Midas has learned by the end.

Midas's ideas and actions	Beginning of play	End of play
<p>Midas's attitude about gold</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>The way Midas treats Marigold</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>What Midas thinks is important in life</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

Conclusion: The lesson Midas learns is the moral of the story. State the moral in your own words:
