The Two Hammers

A Riptoes Learning Experience

The story comes to life. The adventure begins with you.

The Two Hammers is a learning experience designed to introduce students to the story of Riptoes and bring its characters, history, and imagination to life. Through a short, two-minute animated Riplet and guided written activities, students explore the journey of Elijah and Tommy, two extraordinary cobblers whose story reminds us that we all have the power to mend, create, and make the world around us better.

TIME	GRADES	YOU NEED	CONNECTS TO
45 to 60 minutes	Upper elementary (3 to 5)	Both activity pages per explorer, pencils, the Riplet and Note 1 (page 3)	Text evidence and opinion writing; CCSS RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL.4.4, W.4.1

What students will do

1 PART 1
Discover the Story

Students watch the Riptoes story video, read a short summary, and respond to questions about Elijah and Tommy. They'll demonstrate their understanding through written responses that use evidence from the story.

2 PART 2
Imagine the Adventure

Students become storytellers themselves! They'll imagine where their Riptoes should travel, who they should meet, and what they should learn. They plan their ideas, then share them in a letter to Elijah & Tommy.

The learning value

The Two Hammers builds essential skills through an engaging, creative learning experience:

- ✓ Reading comprehension and retention
- ✓ Listening and visual literacy
- ✓ Written expression and communication
- ✓ Critical thinking and answering questions
- ✓ Creativity, imagination, and storytelling

The lesson, step by step

1. **Preview the Riplet** Before the lesson
   Go to riptoes.com/1917 and watch *The Cobblers of Thunder Bay*, the two-minute animated Riplet featured on the page. It tells the story of Elijah and Tommy.

2. **Open with the note** 5 min
   Read Note 1 from Elijah & Tommy aloud (page 3). Ask: What clues does the note give about who wrote it? What do you predict their hammers can do?

3. **Watch and read closely** 12 min
   Play the Riplet for your class. Then explorers read "The Two Hammers" on their own or with a partner. On the second read, they underline what caused the change and circle words that describe each cobbler's gift.

4. **Part 1: Discover the Story** 15 min
   Model question 1 aloud: restate the question, answer it, cite a detail, then explain it. Explorers finish questions 1 to 4, using the Elijah, Both and Tommy chart for question 2.

5. **Part 2: Imagine the Adventure** 20 min
   Explorers pick at least two questions and fill in the planner: where their Riptoes went, plus two reasons with details. Then they write the letter, using linking words (*because, for example, also*) and a closing that sums up their idea.

6. **Share and revise** 5 min
   Partners trade letters and give each other one glow and one grow. Explorers make one revision, then a few volunteers read their letters aloud.

7. **Hand out the shoes** To close
   Give each explorer their own pair of Riptoes. Then let them explore more Riplets on their own, or watch together as a class using Class Watch Mode.

Make it fit your room

MORE SUPPORT

- Read the story aloud first, then partner-read it before answering.
- Give sentence frames: *Elijah's gift was ___, while Tommy's gift was ___. My Riptoes should ___ because ___. For example, ___.*
- Answer one question in the letter instead of two.

MORE STRETCH

- Answer all three questions in the letter, with a paragraph for each.
- Retell the storm from Elijah's or Tommy's point of view.
- Find a real fact about the place, person or skill you chose and add it to your letter.

Read aloud: Note 1

Well, look at that. You found us.

Back in 1917, a bolt of lightning put a little magic in our hammers. We've been tapping ever since.

We left 1,917 pairs of Riptoes, each one meant for the right kid. Some have already found their way home. The rest are still out there, waiting.

Slip them on. See where they take you.

Elijah & Tommy, The Riptoes Cobblers

Found with the first pairs on Nov 11. The note is also on riptoes.com/1917.

A STORY WORTH SHARING

At the heart of Riptoes is a simple idea: We are all cobblers.

Just as Elijah and Tommy used their hammers to mend and improve the world around them, students have the power to make a difference through their own stories, actions, and ideas.

Take it home

Send the pages home after you snap your photos. A prompt for families: *Ask your explorer where their Riptoes will take them, and why.*

Snap it, send it, see it shared

1. **Snap photos during the lesson and right after.** Capture explorers at work, then each finished page. Phone photos are perfect; lay pages flat in good light.
2. **Email the photos to schools@riptoes.com.** Include your school name and grade, and we'll take it from there.

- [ ] First names only
- [ ] No school address or room number
- [ ] Faces only with a signed media release
- [ ] Your school's media consent checked

1 Read closely and respond

Explorer _____

First name only, or just your initials

The Two Hammers

In the autumn of 1917, the transport ship *Garrison Jack* carried soldiers across the ocean toward the war in Europe. Far below deck, in a cramped workshop that smelled of leather and oil, two soldiers spent their days repairing the army's boots and gear. Corporal Elijah Weston had been a cobbler back home in Mississippi. Private Tommy Wagner was a farm boy from Oklahoma who could fix almost anything with his hands.

One night, a violent storm battered the ship. Waves crashed over the deck. Then a bolt of lightning struck the ship with a deafening CRACK! When Elijah and Tommy awoke, they discovered that something extraordinary had happened. Each of them now had a remarkable gift.

Elijah could bring worn-out objects back to life. A boot with a hole in its sole looked brand new after a few taps of his hammer. Tommy could make ordinary things stronger and brighter than before. Soon the two men were mending more than boots. They helped heal injured soldiers and cheer up homesick ones. Elijah said it felt as if magic would rip through everything they touched.

When the war ended, the cobblers made a promise. They would gather the best stories the world had to offer and share them with children wherever their magic carried them.

Legend says that on stormy nights, you can still hear two hammers tapping, one deep and one bright. If you hear them, an adventure may be close.

☆ **Read the story twice.** Then answer in complete sentences, using details from the text.

1 KEY DETAILS

What caused the change in Elijah and Tommy? Use a detail from the story.

2 COMPARE

How were Elijah's and Tommy's gifts alike and different?

ELIJAH	BOTH	TOMMY

3 WORD WORK

The cobblers were "**mending** more than boots." What does *mending* mean? Which clues helped you?

4 INFER

Why do you think the cobblers promised to share stories with children? Explain using the text.

2 Plan and write a letter

Explorer _____

First name only, or just your initials

☆ **Write a letter to Elijah & Tommy that answers at least two of these questions.** Check the ones you pick, plan your ideas, then write.

- ☐ Where in your community should your Riptoes go?
- ☐ Who should your Riptoes meet?
- ☐ What should your Riptoes learn?

WHERE DID YOUR RIPTOES GO?

REASON 1 + a detail or example

REASON 2 + a detail or example

Dear Elijah & Tommy,

E & T 1917

Sincerely, _____