

Read the short story. Then answer each question.

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

Allison was excited. She had been studying magic for over a year, and today was her first day as an apprentice to the famous sorceress, Ms. Snowdon. As Ms. Snowden's apprentice, Allison would be doing real magic, not just reading about it. However, she would only be allowed to cast spells under Ms. Snowden's direct supervision, not on her own. It was too dangerous to practice magic unless you were a full-fledged sorcerer.

"I wonder what she will teach me today," Allison thought as she knocked on Ms. Snowdon's front door.

"Good morning, Allison," Ms. Snowdon said. "Follow me."

Allison stepped into a room filled with bubbling beakers of all different colors. Books of spells lined the walls. The scent of herbs filled the air. Allison smiled. This was what she had been waiting for. She was going to become a sorceress! She would finally be able to practice her magic for real!

"Do you see that bucket in the corner?" Ms. Snowdon asked.

Allison looked around the table. A small, wooden bucket sat between two bookcases. "Yes, ma'am."



Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

“Grab that bucket.”

Allison grabbed the bucket.

“See that barrel in the other corner?”

Allison peered around the table. A barrel as high as her chest sat in the dark corner.

“Follow me.”

Ms. Snowdon led the way back up the hallway and through the living room. They passed through a dining room and kitchen and out the back door. “See that well?”

Allison nodded.

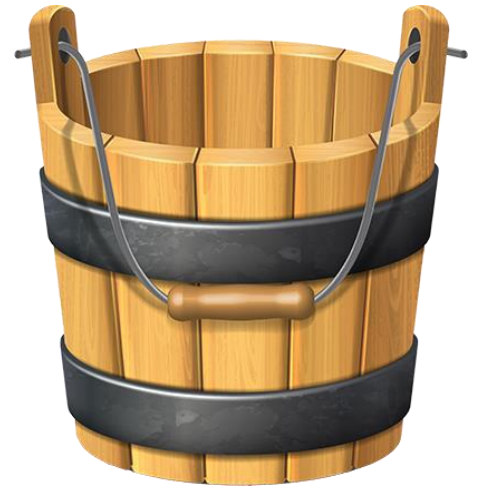
“Fill the bucket at the well and carry it back to the workroom. Pour the water into the barrel until the barrel is full.”

“Yes, ma’am,” Allison said with a smile. She would show Ms. Snowdon that she could be a great sorcerer.

“Okay. I have some errands to run. I will be back in a little while. You fill the barrel while I’m gone.”

Allison skipped to the well and cranked the handle to pull up the water. She filled the bucket and carried it back to the workroom. Over and over and over, Allison carried the buckets of water. She poured each one into the barrel.

Finally, Allison stood on her tiptoes and looked into the barrel. Surely, it was almost full.



Nope.

The barrel had very little water in it.

Allison wiped the sweat from her forehead and looked around the workroom. Her arms ached from carrying the buckets. Maybe there was an easier way to fill the barrel.

There had to be a spell that could help with filling the barrel. Surely, it wouldn't hurt for her to do a little magic. That's why she was here, after all.



Allison peeked out the door. There was no sign of Ms. Snowdon.

She tiptoed up the hall to the living room. There was no sign of Ms. Snowdon. Her teacher was nowhere to be seen.

Allison hurried back to the workroom. She looked through a book called *Household Spells* on the worktable. "Ah-ha!" she said after several minutes. "Here's what I need."

Allison ran down the hallway and looked into the closet. She needed a broom.

"Mop, vacuum cleaner, duster," Allison muttered. "No broom."

Allison thought quickly. She didn't have much time until Ms. Snowdon returned. "I'll use the vacuum cleaner," Allison said at last.

Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Allison pulled the vacuum cleaner back to the workroom. She said the spell quickly and stood back. After a moment, the vacuum cleaner groaned to life. It sputtered for a moment, then the sound settled into a soft purr. It grew arms.

Allison whooped with joy. "Vacuum cleaner, take the bucket and fill it with water. Pour the water into the barrel."

The vacuum cleaner whirred into action. It picked up the bucket and headed out of the room. Allison ran behind the vacuum cleaner and watched as it filled the bucket at the well and carried it back to the barrel. Over and over and over, the vacuum cleaner filled the bucket. Soon, the barrel was full of water.

"Okay, vacuum cleaner. That's enough," Allison said.

The vacuum cleaner didn't stop. It kept filling the bucket and pouring it into the barrel. Water sloshed over the top of the barrel and ran into the floor. More and more water filled the room. Allison ran out of the room. She had to stop the vacuum cleaner!

Allison grabbed the vacuum cleaner and tried to stop it. It wouldn't stop.

She pulled on the cord. The cord came out. The vacuum cleaner wouldn't stop.

She pulled off the attachments. Allison screamed as each attachment turned into a new vacuum cleaner. The new vacuums all kept fetching water from the well!



Grade 4 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

More and more water filled the workroom. The beakers washed away. The books floated on the water. The water ran out the door and down the hallway. Allison kept trying to stop the vacuum cleaners, but nothing helped.

“What’s going on?” Ms. Snowdon asked.

Allison stopped. She hadn’t seen Ms. Snowdon come home.

Without another word, Ms. Snowdon waved her hands. The vacuum cleaners stopped. The water drained away. The beakers and books returned to their places.

Ms. Snowdon looked down at Allison with amusement in her eyes. “What do you think today’s lesson was?”

Allison looked down at her feet and shrugged.

“The lesson was learning to follow instructions.” Ms. Snowdon placed her hand on Allison’s shoulder.

“Apprentices shouldn’t use magic that they don’t know how to control.”

Allison nodded, but she didn’t know what to say.

“That’s enough for today. Come back tomorrow.”

Allison looked up with a smile. “Yes, ma’am. Tomorrow, I’ll do just what you say.”

Ms. Snowdon smiled.



Questions:

1. What was Allison asked to do?
 - a. Allison was asked to clean the toilet.
 - b. Allison was asked to make dinner.
 - c. Allison was asked to fill a barrel with water.
 - d. Allison was asked to sweep the floor.

2. What did Allison use to help fill the barrel?
 - a. Allison used a vacuum cleaner.
 - b. Allison used a mop.
 - c. Allison used a dustpan.
 - d. Allison used a frying pan.

3. What rule did Allison break?

4. There is no such thing as sorcerers, but you could be an apprentice to another type of job. What sort of apprentice would you like to be? Why?

Answers:

1. What was Allison asked to do?

c. Allison was asked to fill a barrel with water.

2. What did Allison use to help fill the barrel?

a. Allison used a vacuum cleaner.

3. What rule did Allison break?

Allison used magic on her own, while the rule was that apprentices are only supposed to use magic when supervised by a sorcerer.

4. There is no such thing as sorcerers, but you could be an apprentice to another type of job. What sort of apprentice would you like to be? Why?

Answers will vary.