



From Dirt to Gold

Part 1

Teacher Reads This is a folktale told in Myanmar, a country in Asia. It is about a man who was determined to make his dream come true. We will see how an impossible dream was achieved in a surprising manner.

Long ago, a husband and a wife cared very much for each other. Their lives could not have been better, except for one thing. The husband spent all his time and gold coins on his dream project. He was trying to turn dirt into gold, but his plan was not working. Soon there were very few coins left for bread and other things. The woman urged her husband to find a job, but he said no.

“I am getting closer to my goal,” explained her husband.

“I just need more time to work out the final step.”

Part 2

Teacher Reads Perhaps the husband is about to turn dirt into gold—or maybe not. Read on to see what kind of progress he makes.

The frustrated woman went to her father, seeking his advice. When her father heard the husband’s plan, he asked to meet with her husband.

When the husband met with his wife’s father, he bowed his head low in respect. The husband dreaded being made fun of for his dream. But what a surprise! The wife’s father told the husband something he did not expect. “When I was your age, I also did my best to turn dirt into gold. And I almost did it. I was very close, but I needed just one more thing.”

The husband said in an eager voice, “I am very close, too. What is the one thing you needed?”

The wife’s father sighed, “I needed **banana** powder. But that would take too much work for me now.”



Part 2 continued

229 “But I can do it,” said the husband. “Tell me how.”
240 The wife’s father explained what to do. “To change dirt
250 into gold, you will need banana powder. This is how you
261 make it. First, you must grow your own banana plants.
271 When the plants reach full size, collect the leaves from the
282 banana trees. Then, crush the banana leaves into powder.”

Part 3

Teacher Reads Maybe the husband will take the idea from his wife’s father seriously, and maybe not. Find out what happens at the end of this folktale and see if a lesson is learned.

291 The husband knew that it would take many banana plants
301 to get enough leaves to make the banana powder. So he went
313 to work, planting and tending the banana plants. When
322 the plants reached full size, he picked the banana leaves,
332 crushed them, and saved the powder. It took a long time to
344 get enough banana powder because not much powder came
353 from each plant.

356 After a few years, the husband thought he had enough
366 banana leaf powder. He rushed with his wife to her father’s
377 house. The husband showed his wife’s father the powder.
386 But instead of asking the husband about the powder,
395 the wife’s father asked her, “What did you do with all
406 the bananas?”

408 “I sold them at the market,” she said. “This is what I
420 saved.” She set down a sack of gold coins. Her father set
432 down a handful of dirt next to the coins. Her father said to
445 the husband, “Do you see? You have turned the dirt of your
457 banana farm into gold!”

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