

All that glitters is not
gold essay sample



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All that glitters is not gold is a well-known saying, meaning that not everything that looks precious or true turns out to be so. This can apply to people, places, or things that promise to be more than they really are. The expression, in various forms, originated in or before the 12th century[1] and may date back to Aesop.[2] Chaucer gave two early versions in English: “ But all thing which that schyneth as the gold / Ne is no gold, as I have herd it told,” and “ Hyt is not al golde that glareth.” The popular form of the expression is a derivative of a line in William Shakespeare’s play *The Merchant of Venice*, which employs the word “ glisters,” a 17th-century synonym for “ glitters.” The line comes from a secondary plot of the play, the puzzle of Portia’s boxes (Act II – Scene VI – Prince of Morocco): All that glisters is not gold;

Often have you heard that told:

Many a man his life hath sold

But my outside to behold:

Gilded tombs do worms enfold.

Had you been as wise as bold,

Young in limbs, in judgement old

Your answer had not been inscroll’d

Fare you well, your suit is cold.

Panning for gold often results in finding pyrite, nicknamed fool’s gold, which reflects substantially more light than authentic gold does. Gold in its raw form appears dull and does not glitter. In pop culture, this phrase shows up in Bob Marley’s “ Get Up, Stand Up”.[3][4] It is also used as lyrics in the song “ A Guided Masquerade” by Alesana. “ Not all that glitters is gold” is an

alternative formulation.[5][6][7] Gold is a bright and shining metal. There are other metals which are equally shining and bright. But they have no quality. Similarly, there are many things in the world which are not what they seem. This is true of human beings also.

There are many persons who seem to be good persons but they do many evil things. So, we cannot judge a man from his appearance. An innocent looking man may be a cheat. A man with a smile on his face may do some harm to us. A man, who says that he is our best friend, may stab us in the back. We should not be misled by the outward show. "All that glitters is not gold" is a common expression in the English language, but many people say it without exactly knowing where it came from or what it means. This phrase was introduced as far back as the 12th century. The first record of this phrase is from French theologian Alain de Lille who said "Do not hold everything gold that shines like gold." So, what is the meaning of this phrase? To say "All that glitters is not gold" is to say that all may not be as it appears to be. Literally, it means that just because something sparkles or glitters, that does not mean it is gold. It could be some other metal or something that sparkles similarly to gold.

In real life, it is easier to apply the saying to situations rather than items. For example, if someone appears to be your friend as they treat you nicely and act favorably to you, this does not necessarily mean that they are really your friend and hold your best interests at heart. You can, of course, also apply it to items or products. There are many situations where you have some sort of product that seems to be identical to something else you have, but in reality, the new product you have is useless. For example, let's say you have a white

pill. Your doctor may have told you this was some kind of antibiotic, but in reality, it could be some kind of placebo to convince you that you are taking medicine when you are not. The adage “ All that glitters is not gold” cautions us against forming our opinion about objects on the basis of superficial impressions. It also implies that one should try to ascertain the true nature of things and to understand the reality hidden behind their glittering facade.

However, love for glamour is deeply embedded in human nature. Taking advantage of this inherent vulnerability of man to glamour, cash rich companies rope in glamorous film and sports personalities to advertise their goods and services.

Soap and tooth paste used by charming actresses and dashing sportsmen sell like hot cakes. Companies’ sales are boosted and consumers, particularly those of the lower middle classes, forego many necessities of life to have a taste of goodies recommended by their favourite stars. Folk tales the world over are replete with stories of princesses lured away from their gardens by evil spirits in the guise of fairies. The brave and the earnest princes pursue these witches through all sorts of hardships and trials, put their lives at grave risks and ultimately succeed in killing the evil ones and restore the princesses to freedom. These stories forcefully bring home to us the truth contained in the adage ‘ All that glitters is not gold’. One would expect that our reading of such stories would make us wise and prevent us from falling prey to temptations of outward beauty. But man, weak as he is, never learns from others’ experience. He often courts disaster by giving into temptations.

We are repeatedly warned and alerted by the wise and the experienced not to take persons and things on their face value. The most innocent masks may hide behind them the most cunning of cheats. But very often even the wise fall prey to tricksters. Even Sita, the consort of Lord Rama, was tempted by the glitter of the golden deer she saw bounding around her forest cottage and requested Rama to bring it for her. Rama earnestly expostulated Sita to forget the deer as it might be a trap of some villain, but she was so charmed by the guiles of the deer that she pressed him to leave the Ashram in search of it. A few minutes later, Sita heard a distress call for help in Rama's voice. She, thereupon, requested Lakshman to go and relieve Rama from distress. Lakshman tried to convince Sita that nobody was brave enough to harm the invincible Rama, but Sita was so nervous that she forced Lakshman to leave the Ashram. In his absence, the Rakshasa king Ravana abducted Sita. It later turned out that the golden deer was actually the demon Marichi in disguise sent by Ravana to tempt Sita.

Sita's temptation demonstrates the validity of the old saying "All that glitters is not gold". False simplicity can be as deceptive as false glamour. Indians have honoured saffron-clad sadhus from times immemorial. Saffron dress stands for renunciation and selflessness of the man who wears it. It is expected that such a god-man would tender correct advice and guidance to the householder and help him solve his pressing problems. But the exposure of many godmen in recent times has shaken common man's faith in them. They have turned out to be hoax and cheats who have amassed wealth and cornered immovable property from the unsuspecting and credulous men. Some god men have been hauled up in courts of law for

forging documents to discredit some genuine and reputed persons. Their conduct has administered a grievous blow to the belief of common man in saffron-clad sadhus. Consumerism has caught the burgeoning lower middle classes in a vice like grip.

Even a low income individual wants to obtain consumer goods incessantly advertised in electronic and print media. As he cannot afford to buy the prestigious brands of cosmetics and electronic goods, he is easily tricked in to buy fake and imitation goods which flood the markets in most towns and cities of India. The cheap imitation goods sell briskly duping the credulous consumers and swelling the coffers of the unscrupulous manufacturers and traders. Spread of education and knowledge has improved the consumer's awareness and he is insistently demanding quality goods. Most enlightened manufacturers have responded to consumer's demands by initiating comprehensive quality testing measures. Quality control has become an important and integral part of manufacturing process of all consumer and industrial goods. Government has also set up a number of institutions which have developed standards against which quality of products can be judged and certification of quality can be given. Adherence to quality has promoted the sales of good brands.

Quality consciousness of people has edged out many spurious goods from the market. Consumer movements of recent times have underscored the need for statutory protection of consumers against sub-standard goods and services. The Union and state government have enacted legislation and set up consumer courts to redress consumer's grievances. While these courts have given relief and compensation to many consumers, instances of delay

in deciding cases by some courts have also been reported. The growing public concern with quality goods and services is bound to improve matters and keep the manufacturers of goods and providers of services on their toes. Appearance are often deceptive. Many things may superficially appear very attractive. When they are examined from close quarters, they prove to be disappointing. One cannot judge the quality of a thing by seeing its exterior portion only.

Every shining metal is not gold. Very often, things are not what they seem to be. We often form our opinion about objects on the basis of superficial impression. One should always try to find out the true nature of things. We should try to find out the reality hidden behind their glittering facade. A book with a beautiful cover has no guarantee of its being interesting. A beautiful packaged product launched in the market after massive advertising campaign may attract the consumer. He may buy that product once but if the product is of poor quality, he would not buy it again. A wise discerning person does not accept things at face value. He gets suspicious of a person or thing which appears too good to be true. His trained eyes can see beyond the superficial appearance of an object. The quality of anything can be judged only if we come to know the reality of a thing. Gold is gold if the inner metal is also gold. Many things are made of inferior metal and to hide their defect, they are given a shine.

They look beautiful and attract many a person who loves beautiful objects. An object with a glittering shine of gold cannot be gold unless the whole object itself is gold. All that glitters is not gold. All people wearing saffron clothes cannot be saints. A foolish man can never be wise by pretending to be wise. A

person may pretend to be noble, hiding his defects. One cannot judge a person from his smiling face or cheerful appearance. The wearing of a gown cannot make an idiot a lawyer. One often tempted towards external beauty. Sometimes, even the wise fall prey to such temptations. The most innocent masks may hide behind them the most cunning of cheats. Simplicity can be deceptive too. One may pretend to be simple though one may not be. The saffron colored dress stands for renunciation and selflessness. The person wearing it is considered to be a saint.

He is expected to give correct advice and guidance to whoever seeks his aid. But it is noticed that, in the name of sainthood, many people have accumulated wealth and property by exploiting the innocent faith of the disciples. Consumerism has become the order of the day. One often gets tempted towards buying consumer goods advertised in electronic and print media. One who cannot afford to buy most of the goods is easily tricked in to buying fake and imitation goods. These goods flood the markets in most towns and cities in India. People get easily duped by these products. Education and knowledge can improve awareness among the masses. A layman can be misled. But if he has knowledge about a particular thing, he cannot be cheated. One should use one's discretion to judge persons and things. One should not be misled by external appearance. STORIES

All That Glitters Is Not Gold (Short Story)

by Arielle Ditterich, Spotswood Primary School – Australia

“ Give it to me! I'll give it back!” Wombat pleaded with Wise Owl. “ I just want to touch that wonderful golden coin!” Wombat wanted that one-dollar coin more than anything else in the whole wide world. If only Wise Owl would

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give it to him, if only, if only... " Please give it to me!" squealed Wombat. Then, Wise Owl talked softly, " No, sorry. Remember what I told you? All that glitters is not gold!" " Sure it is, JUST GIVE ME THE GOLD COIN!" Suddenly, Wombat saw the glittering moon suspended in the starry night sky. " I want that super enormous round coin in the sky! It shines beautifully, it shines!" Wombat trilled feverishly. " That is the moon, not a coin, nor gold or cheese. You will not take the moon from its rightful place in the sky.

It is the guardian of the dead. See their eyes - the stars - watching you. See them laughing, scowling, smiling. They are watching you Wombat. You will not take the moon from the dead." Wise owl said calmly. " Nonsense, I will get that marvellous coin!" Wombat walked to his bushland home, eyeing the sparkly moon. He would get that coin. As he ambled slowly past the monster trees and the moon he saw an old rusty barbecue. " Gold!" squealed Wombat. " I will build a golden rocket and fly to the golden coin in the sky!" Wombat spent all night building his ' golden' rocket from the rusty barbecue and it was finished by the morning dawn light. He dragged the heavy rocket to Wise Owl and bragged: " Look at my wonderful rocket. I will fly to the coin and bring it back. All living creatures in this miserable bushland will want to know me!" Wombat declared.

He started his rusty rocket by pulling a purple painted lever. The rocket went and started to climb the cloudy sky, up, up and away! He soared past the stars and Mars' funny aliens. Then he found the moon. He scrambled down his purple rocket steps and reached out slowly for the moon... " OUCH!" The moon had burnt Wombat's paw. He climbed into his rocket as fast as he could and soared back to his bush home, crying. He ran to Wise Owl " It

burnt me! I'm sorry! I won't be like a horrible, thieving magpie that loves sparkly things anymore." Wombat hung his head ashamedly. " All that glitters is not gold," said Wise Owl calmly.