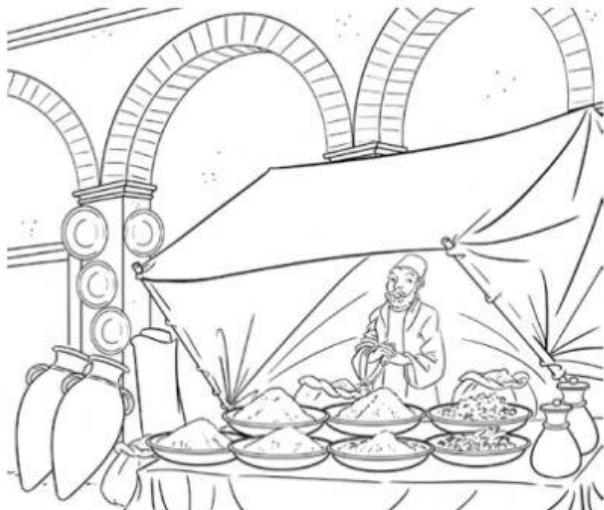


### The Spice Merchant

The merchant took a deep breath. The air around his stall was full of the smell of spices. There were big bags of peppercorns and cinnamon. There were jars of nutmeg and cloves. The merchant even had a small, silver box of rich saffron—the little red threads taken from the Crocus flower, which many people wanted but few could actually buy.

Yes, the spice crops had been good this year, thought the merchant. He felt the gold necklace around his neck, and he gave a little smile. He ran his hands along his silk robe. He used to be a poor man, but soon, he would be the richest in the village. All he needed was for his ship to dock.

Then Ahmed ran through the marketplace calling out. "Word from the port, Master. Our ship is lost!"



#### A Read and choose.

- 1 Saffron comes from the Crocus / cinnamon / nutmeg.
- 2 The merchant only has a small box of saffron because it is very tiny / it is very expensive / the crops weren't good that year.
- 3 The story is told from the point of view of Ahmed / the captain of the ship / the merchant.
- 4 The merchant is happy at the beginning of the story because Ahmed just told him a joke / he loves eating spices / he thinks he's going to make lots of money.
- 5 The merchant's view changes by the end of the story because he hears that his ship is lost / he is angry with Ahmed / he has lost his box of saffron.
- 6 In the story, dock means the same as arriving at the port / spice / sail.