“Midas and the Golden Touch”
Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Book 11.100-105, 119-126

Blessed and cursed with the infamous “touch of gold,” Midas is one of the more memorable characters to be found in Ovid’s motley collection of myths entitled *The Metamorphoses* (“The Changes”).

**Section I. 100-105.** After Midas, the king of Phrygia, took in Silenus, the god of wine, Bacchus is delighted to be reunited with his foster-father (*altor*) and offers to grant any favor Midas might choose. Unfortunately, the mortal king is driven by avarice and asks that everything he touch turn to gold.

**Section II. 119-126.** As he goes about touching everything within reach, ecstatic over his newly-granted power, Midas discovers there is a drawback to his new power.

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**Section I**

_Huic deus optandi gratum — sed inutile! — fecit_  
To this man the god gave (lit. “made”) the pleasing — but useless! —

_muneris arbitrium, gaudens altore recepto._  
power of choosing a gift, rejoicing in (his) foster-father returned.

_Ille, male usurus donis, ait “Effice, quicquid corpore contigero, fulvum vertatur in aurum.”_  
That man, about to use the gifts poorly, said, “Make (it that) whatever I will have touched with my body, might be turned into tawny gold.”

_Adnuit optatis nocituraque munera solvit_  
Liber granted (the things) desired and (though they were) going to harm paid

_Liber et indoluit quod non meliora petisset. . ._  
the gift(s) and grieved because he had not sought better things.
Section II

. . . Gaudenti mensas posuēre ministri
To (him) rejoicing, (his) servants set tables

exstructas dapibus nec tostae frugis egentes:
heaped up with meals and not lacking in (lit. “of”) baked bread:

tum, vero, sive ille suā Cerealia dextrā
then, truly, whether that man had touched with his own

munera contigerat, Cerealia dona rigebant,
right hand (the gifts) of Ceres, the gifts of Ceres became stiff,

sive dapes avido convellere dente parabat,
or if he was preparing to tear apart a meal with a greedy tooth,

lammina fulva dapes admoto dente premebat;
he was pressing golden sheets of metal (for) food when (his) tooth was applied;

miscuerat puris auctorem muneris undis:
had he mixed the giver of the gift with pure water(s):

fusile per rictūs aurum fluitare videres.
you would see liquid gold flow over his open mouth.
Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Midas -Worksheet

a. The questions below pertain to the forms underlined in the passage

b. When you’re asked to change a word from one form to another, change only that form of the word. For instance, if you’re asked to change habet to the passive voice, make habet passive but leave it in the 3rd person singular, present indicative.

**Section I**

1. Make **huic** plural. _____________________________________________________________

2. What case is **inutile** and why? __________________________________________________

3. Make **inutile** plural. __________________________________________________________

4. Change **fecit** to present imperative. ______________________________________________

5. Change **recepto** to future active. ________________________________________________

6. Make **corpore** nominative. ___________________________________________________

7. Make **contigero** passive. ______________________________________________________

8. Change **adnuit** to imperfect subjunctive. __________________________________________

9. Make **munera** vocative. _________________________________________________________

10. Change **solvit** to a future active infinitive (modifying **liber**). __________________________

11. Make **indoluit** subjunctive. _____________________________________________________

12. Make **meliora** singular. _________________________________________________________

[Continued on the next page]
Section II

13. Make **gaudenti** perfect (passive). ____________________________________________

14. Make **mensas…egentes** genitive. ____________________________________________

15. Make **exstructas** modify **frugis**. ____________________________________________

16. What case is **dextrā** and why? _______________________________________________

17. Change **rigebant** into a passive infinitive (present). _____________________________

18. Make **avido…dente** (line 123) plural. _________________________________________

19. What mood is **convellere** and why? ___________________________________________

20. What case is **dapes** and why? _______________________________________________

21. What case is **dente** (line 124) and why? _______________________________________

22. Change **premebat** to pluperfect subjunctive first person. _______________________

23. Change **muneris** to ablative plural. __________________________________________

24. What case is **ričtūs** and why? ______________________________________________

25. What mood is **fluitare** and why? ____________________________________________
## Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Midas - Notes and Vocabulary

### Section 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Note/ Vocabulary</th>
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</table>
| 100. | **optandi:** *opto* (1): choose; genitive gerundive (“of choosing”) agreeing with *muneris* (line 102)  
**gratum:** *gratus, -a, -um*: pleasing  
**inutile:** *inutilis, -e*: useless |
| 101. | **muneris:** *munus,-eris, n*: gift  
**arbitrium:** *arbitrium, -i, n.:* power  
**gaudens:** *gaudeo, -re, gavisus sum*: rejoice  
**altore:** *altor,-oris, m*: foster-father |
| 102. | **male:** poorly  
**usurus:** *utor, -i, usus* (deponent verb; + abl. object): “(he) about to use”  
**office:** *efficio,-ere, feci, fectum*: make it (that . . .)  
**quicquid:** (indefinite pronoun) whatever |
| 103. | **contigero:** *contingo,-ere, -tigi,-tactum*: touch  
**fulvum:** *fulvus,-a, -um*: tawny  
**aurum:** *aurum,-i, n.:* gold |
| 104. | **adnuit:** *adnuo, -ere, adnui,adnutum*: grant (the subject is Liber)  
**optatis:** *optatum, -i, n.:* wish  
**nocitura:** *noceo,-ere, nocui, nocitum*: harm  
**munera:** *munus, muneris, n.:* gift; here, plural for singular  
**solvit:** *solvo, -ere, solvi, solutum*: pay |
| 105. | **Liber:** *Liber, -eri, m.:* another name for the god Bacchus  
**indoluit:** *indolesco, -ere, indolui*: grieve  
**petisset:** = *petivisset* |

### Section 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Note/ Vocabulary</th>
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| 119. | **gaudenti:** see line 101  
**mensas:** *mensa, -ae, f.:* table  
**posu_re:** = *posuerunt*  
**ministri:** *minister, -tri, m.:* servant |
Section 2 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Note/ Vocabulary</th>
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</table>
| 120. | **exstructas:** *exstruo, -ere, exstruxi, exstructum:* heap up  
      | **dapibus:** *daps, dapis, f.:* meal  
      | **tostae:** *tostus, -a, -um:* baked  
      | **frugis:** *frux, frugis, f.:* grain; here, bread  
      | **egentes:** *ego, -_re, egui:* lack; with genitive (literally, “lacking of...”) |
| 121. | **vero:** (adverb) truly  
      | **sive...sive:** (conj.) whether... or if  
      | **Cerealia:** *Cerealis, -e:* belonging to Ceres, the goddess of grain; here, “of Ceres”  
      | **dextr__ (man__):** *dexter, -tra, -trum:* right (hand) |
| 122. | **rigebant:** *rigeo, -_re:* become stiff |
| 123. | **aviddo:** *avidus, -a, -um:* greedy  
      | **convellere:** *convello, -ere, -vellī, -vulsum:* tear apart  
      | **dente:** *dens, dentis, m.:* tooth |
| 124 | **lammina:** *lammina, -ae, f.:* sheet of metal  
     | **admoto:** *admoveo, -_re, -movi, -motum:* apply |
| 125. | **miscuerat:** *misceo, -_re, miscui, mixtum:* mix  
      | **puris:** *purus, -a, -um:* pure  
      | **auctorem:** here, giver  
      | **undis:** *unda, -ae, f.:* water |
| 126. | **fusile:** *fusilis, -e:* liquid  
      | **per:** here, over  
      | **riect_s:** *riactus, -_s, m.:* open mouth; here, plural for singular  
      | **fluitare:** *fluito (1):* flow |