

If By Rudyard Kipling

Answer in full sentences.

1. Who is the poem written for? How do you know this?

2. What is the meaning of the phrase '...keep your head...'?

- a. Don't let your head fall off ☐
- b. Stay calm ☐
- c. Don't lose important possessions ☐
- d. Keep yourself safe ☐

3. Which two nouns are personified in verse 2?

4. What does the poet go on to describe them as?

5. Write down any direct speech within the poem.

6. What are the opposite of 'loving friends'?

7. How would you describe the poet? Explain your answer.

If By Rudyard Kipling **Answers**

1. Who is the poem written for? How do you know this?

The poem is written for the poet's son because the last line says 'And-which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!'

2. What is the meaning of the phrase '...keep your head...'?

b. Stay calm

3. Which two nouns are personified in verse 2?

The two nouns which are personified in verse 2 are 'Triumph' and 'Disaster'.

4. What does the poet go on to describe them as?

The poet describes them as 'imposters' in the following line.

5. Write down any direct speech within the poem.

'Hold on!' on line 24 is the only speech within the poem.

6. What are the opposite of 'loving friends'?

The opposite of 'loving friends' are foes (line 27).

7. How would you describe the poet? Explain your answer.

Own answers.

If By Rudyard Kipling

Answer in full sentences.

1. Who is the poem written for? Give evidence for your answer.

2. Why did Kipling write this poem?

3. Explain the phrase '...keep your head...'.

4. What does the poet mean here? 'And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:'

5. Which poetic device is used in lines 11 and 12? Explain your answer.

6. Explain the phrase '...breathe a word...'.

7. Which do you think is the best piece of advice? Why?

8. How do you feel having read the poem? Why did it make you feel that way?

If By Rudyard Kipling **Answers**

1. Who is the poem written for? How do you know this?

The poem is written for the poet's son because the last line says 'And-which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!'

2. Why did Kipling write this poem?

Kipling wrote this poem to give his son important words of advice.

3. Explain the phrase '...keep your head...'.
The phrase means to keep calm/level-headed.

4. What does the poet mean here? 'And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:'

The poet could mean that we mustn't place too much importance on our looks or speak as if we know best all the time.

5. Which poetic device is used in lines 11 and 12? Explain your answer.

Personification is used in lines 11 and 12. The words 'Triumph' and 'Disaster' are given capital letters which suggests that they are names. They are also referred to as being 'imposters' on the next line.

6. Explain the phrase '...breathe a word...'

This phrase is another way of expressing the word 'say'.

7. Which do you think is the best piece of advice? Why?

Own answers.

8. How do you feel having read the poem? Why did it make you feel that way?

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Answer in full sentences.

1. Who is the poem written for? Give evidence for your answer.

2. Why did Kipling write this poem?

3. Explain the phrase '...keep your head...'.

4. Which quality is the poet writing about in line 5?

5. Explain the phrase '...don't deal in lies,'.

6. Which poetic device is used in lines 11 and 12? Explain your answer.

7. What might the word 'knaves' mean?

8. Summarise the meaning behind lines 21-24.

9. Explain your understanding of the following line: 'Or walk with Kings – nor lose the common touch,'.

10. What did the poet mean when he wrote the following lines? Explain your reasoning.

‘If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds’ worth of distance run,’

11. Which do you think is the best piece of advice? Explain your reasoning.

12. Write a new piece of advice which would be appropriate to add to the poem.

If By Rudyard Kipling **Answers**

1. Who is the poem written for? How do you know this?

The poem is written for the poet's son because the last line says 'And-which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!'

2. Why did Kipling write this poem?

Kipling wrote this poem to give his son important words of advice.

3. Explain the phrase '...keep your head...'.
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4. Which quality is the poet writing about in line 5?

The poet is writing about having patience.

5. Explain the phrase '...don't deal in lies,'.

This phrase expresses the importance of not telling lies.

6. Which poetic device is used in lines 11 and 12? Explain your answer.

Personification is used in lines 11 and 12. The words 'Triumph' and 'Disaster' are given capital letters which suggests that they are names. They are also referred to as being 'imposters' on the next line.

7. What might the word 'knave' mean?

The word knave means a dishonest man.

8. Summarise the meaning behind lines 21-24.

The poet is saying that when you feel as if you can't go on, you must tell yourself to 'Hold on!' and not give up.

9. Explain your understanding of the following line:

'Or walk with Kings - nor lose the common touch,'

The poet could be saying that if his son was to spend time with people as important as royalty, then he mustn't start believing that he is better than ordinary people.

10. What did the poet mean when he wrote the following lines? Explain your reasoning.

'If you can fill the unforgiving minute

With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,'

The poet is saying that you must make the most of every minute of your life. The poet describes the minute as 'unforgiving' as time isn't ever given back to you.

11. Which do you think is the best piece of advice? Explain your reasoning.

Own answers.

12. Write a new piece of advice which would be appropriate to add to the poem.

Own answers.