



For this text, we've provided example annotation and analysis. Here are the questions we kept in mind as we read the poem:

1. Which **literary devices** are used in the poem? Name them, with examples, and explain their meaning.
2. What is the **theme** of the poem? Explain and connect it to the human experience.
3. Identify 3 **new words** that you have learned, along with their definitions. Use the words in a sentence to confirm understanding of each word's meaning.
4. Why do you think the author wrote this poem? Explain.

"My Shadow" by Robert Louis Stevenson, 1885

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india-rubber ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

SAMPLE ANSWERS:

1. Which **literary devices** are used in the poem? Name them, with examples, and explain their meaning.

Simile: “For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india-rubber ball”

Rhymes: “He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play, And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.”

2. What is the **theme** of the poem? Explain and connect it to the human experience.

The theme of the story is the protagonist's friendship with his shadow, who seems to be alive. We have at some point in our lives, especially as children, played with our own shadows as if they were our very alive friends, just like an imaginary friend.

3. Identify 3 **new words** that you have learned, along with their definitions. Use the words in a sentence to confirm understanding of each word's meaning.

- Notion: a conception of or belief about something.
- Coward: a person who lacks the courage to do or endure dangerous or unpleasant things
- Arrant: complete, utter

4. Why do you think the author wrote this poem? Explain.

I think the author wrote this poem to remind himself of the “magic” of childhood when we could easily play and entertain ourselves with our shadow.