

# If By Rudyard Kipling

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream - and not make dreams your  
master;  
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
And treat those two imposters just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breathe a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with Kings - nor lose the common touch,  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,  
If all men count with you, but none too much;  
If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And-which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!

1. Who is the poet talking to through the poem?



2. Can you list **two** messages the poet is giving through the poem?



3. How does the poem make you feel, and why?



4. '...If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue...'  
In this line, the word 'virtue' is closest in meaning to... (circle one.)

popularity

voice

honesty

temper



# Answers:

1. Who is the poet talking to through the poem?

**Accept any reference to a parent talking to their child.**

2. Can you list two messages the poet is giving through the poem?

**Accept reference to two relevant messages in the poem, for example:**

- **believe in yourself;**
- **be patient;**
- **always be honest and kind;**
- **it's what is inside that counts;**
- **you don't always know best – listen to and learn from others;**
- **Life is short – make the most of every minute;**
- **take responsibility – life is what you make it;**
- **never give up – learn from your mistakes.**

3. How does the poem make you feel, and why?

**Pupil's own response with a supporting reason linked to the poem, e.g.**

**'The poem makes me feel inspired to do my best at school because the poem tells me to never give up even if I find things difficult.'**

4. '...If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue...'

In this line, the word 'virtue' is closest in meaning to... (circle one.)

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