Name: _____ Date: _____

My Shadow

Reading level 9 (5th grade) · 204 words

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.

My Shadow was written by Robert Louis Stevenson. A Child's Garden of Verses was published in 1885.

Questions

1. What does the shadow do when the child jumps into bed?

A. It jumps before the child
B. It stays home
C. It falls asleep

2. Why does the child call the shadow a coward?

A. It sticks too close to the child
B. It runs far away
C. It is afraid of the dark

3. In this poem, what does "notion" mean?

A. A kind of ball
B. An idea
C. A morning meal

4. Which two words rhyme at the end of the first two lines?

A. me and see
B. out and about
C. go and slow

5. Where was the shadow in the early morning?

A. Up on the roof
B. Next to the child
C. Behind, fast asleep in bed

Words to know

notion: an idea
arrant: complete
coward: easily scared
dew: morning water drops
rubber: stretchy stuff

Answer key: My Shadow

1. A. It jumps before the child
2. A. It sticks too close to the child
3. B. An idea
4. A. me and see
5. C. Behind, fast asleep in bed