

7th Grade Language Arts Distance Learning Assignment
Week 2

A Note to Parents

This week, your student should read "If" by Rudyard Kipling. (<https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/if>)

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1939) was an English short story writer, poet, and novelist. He is best known for his novel *The Jungle Book*. Kipling wrote in Victorian England, and "If" (published in 1910) represents some of the ideal qualities of a "proper Englishman" during that time. Utilizing a fatherly tone, the narrator sets out a list of rules by which his son should live.

This poem deals with the themes of Friendship & Family, Growing Up, Honor & Courage, and Morality (as in last week's reading) as they relate to the text. Consider discussing some of the following questions:

"What does it mean to be grown up?", "What does it mean to be brave?", "What makes a family?", and "How does this parental advice seem similar/different to the advice in 'Tuesday of the Other June'?"

Ways to support your child:

- Ask your child about this poem:
 - What was "If" About
 - What did you learn about? About Growing Up? About Honor & Courage?
- Watch "[If" by Rudyard Kipling \(Audio Recording\)](https://archive.org/details/if_kipling_librivox) at home with your child. (https://archive.org/details/if_kipling_librivox)

Day 1, Activity 1: Vocabulary in Context

Step 1: Review the vocabulary word, context sentence, picture, and definition.

Step 2: Describe how the context sentence and photograph give hints toward the meaning of the word. Be specific; you must include either specific words from the context sentence or details from the photograph in your answer.

1. **Doubt**

I stood and watched the most beautiful sunset, doubtful that I would ever see something so beautiful ever again.

Definition: to not be certain or confident about something; to think that something might not be true

Explanation of Context: _____



1 Nate doubted his friend's claim that he had been an Olympic track star at the age of twelve.

2. **Allow**

The strict teacher gave no allowances for playing around in her class.

Definition: to say that someone may do something; let; permit

Explanation of Context: _____



2 Nadeem was very polite and would allow others to pass through doors before he would enter or exit.

3. **Impostor**

The girl with the green and black hair, baggy neon clothes, and big sunglasses looked like Billie Eilish but ended up being an impostor.

Definition: a person who cheats or tricks others by pretending to be another person.

Explanation of Context: _____



3 Liam acted cheerful in large crowds, but he always felt like such an impostor.

Day 1, Activity 2: Journal Response

What is the best piece of advice that has ever been given to you? How could this advice be applied to the real world?

Day 2: Active Reading

Use the following steps excerpted from *Teach For America* to read and analyze this poem.

1. **Read** the poem all the way through, at LEAST twice. Consider using the link in the parent’s guide for one of these times to listen to a recording of someone else reading the poem aloud. *At the end of the poem, write your first impressions or immediate thoughts—positive or negative.
2. Determine who the **speaker** of the poem is. *Annotate any lines that give this away in the passage with your thoughts. *Hint: Look at the last line!*
3. Go through the poem again *line-by-line* and translate or **paraphrase** what the speaker is saying in “real talk.” *Jot notes in the margins.
4. Get to the core of what the poem is about by identifying its **theme**. The theme of the poem relates to a universal truth or issue. Consider the following questions when thinking about the theme:
 - a. What is the subject?
 - b. What does the speaker feel about the subject?
 - c. What is the mood of the poem?

*Write a sentence about the theme somewhere toward the end of the poem.

Name: _____ Class: _____

If

By Rudyard Kipling
1910

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1939) was an English short story writer, poet, and novelist, perhaps best known for The Jungle Book (1894). Kipling wrote in Victorian England,¹ and the following poem is considered representative of the ideal qualities of a proper Englishman during that time. As you read, take notes on the structural form of the poem and how it contributes to the tone and message.

- [1] 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;
- [5] 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:



"Father and Son" by Nicolas is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

- If you can dream—and not make dreams your
master;
- [10] If you can think—and not make thoughts your
aim;
- If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves² to make a trap for fools,
- [15] 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
- [20] And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew³
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!'

1. The Victorian era took place during the English Queen Victoria's rule (1837-1901). It was an era of relative peace and prosperity, considered the height of the British empire. Victorian culture, especially in the later years, consisted notably of strict moral and social conduct.

2. Dishonest men

3. Tissue connecting muscle to bone; something that binds together

- [25] If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue⁴,
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
- [30] 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!

If by Rudyard Kipling is in the public domain.

4. **Virtue** (*noun*): Morally good behavior or character

Day 3, Activity 1: Vocabulary Practice

Step 1: Fill in the blanks using the correct vocabulary word to complete each scenario. *You may have to change the form of the word (ex: go, going, gone).*

Step 2: Explain why the vocabulary word best fits based on context clues provided in the scenario.

Example: Every single day, Bryan wakes up at 5 o'clock in the morning to take a 10-mile jog. Then, he goes to the gym to lift weights. Afterwards, he does 20 laps in the pool. And this is before he goes to practice with the team every afternoon! Bryan is *relentless* about training because **he is extremely dedicated and exercises all of the time.**

Doubt Allow Impostor

1. Many years ago in England, a woman named Mary Baker spoke a made-up language and convinced an entire town that she was "Princess Caraboo" from a made-up island in the Indian ocean.
Mary was a/an _____ because _____

2. As a serious athlete, Shameice was very careful about her diet before any tournament or match. She ate only complex carbs and protein. However, once a week Shameice would give herself permission to have one chocolate dessert.
Shameice gaver herself a/an _____ because _____

3. My mom did not believe I made a 100% on my math test. I had to get the test to show her that the 100% was in my teacher's handwriting.
My mom was originally _____ because _____

Day 3, Activity 2: Personification

Personification is when a writer gives *non-human* things or ideas human-like traits. In "If," Kipling capitalizes "Triumph" and "Disaster" as if they are names and calls them both "impostors" (lines 11 & 12). Consider the message Kipling is sending about these two ideas by giving them very specific human characteristics.

1. Why do you think Triumph would be considered an impostor by the speaker? _____

2. Why do you think Disaster would be considered an impostor by the speaker? _____

3. Why do you think the speaker says that both Triumph and Disaster should be treated the same? What similarity is he implying? _____

Complete the following Text-Dependent Questions for Day 4, Activity 1.

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following best summarizes a central theme of the text? [RL.2]
 - A. Friendship is an important support system to young adults.
 - B. Identity must come from within a person, not from what others tell you to be.
 - C. Growing up is complicated and challenging, but is ultimately worth it for what can be accomplished.
 - D. People, especially young people, should resist the social pressure to obey other people's rules.

 2. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
 - A. "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;" (Lines 1-4)
 - B. "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!'" (Lines 21-24)
 - C. "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;" (Lines 25-28)
 - D. "Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, / And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!" (Lines 31-32)

 3. PART A: Which of the following best describes the structural pattern of the poem? [RL.5]
 - A. It is organized through the repetition of "if... then" statements.
 - B. It is organized with increasingly longer statements and increasingly difficult guidelines.
 - C. It is organized into four stanzas, each with eight lines of iambic pentameter (5 feet per line/meter).
 - D. It is organized mainly through the repetition of "if" statements, building upon each other until the final assertion of the poem.

 4. PART B: How does the structure of the poem, as indicated in Part A, contribute to the poem's tone? [RL.5] [RL.4]
 - A. The form creates a tone of redundancy, or unnecessary repetition.
 - B. This form creates a tone of authority and discipline, as the repetition emphasizes instructions for how to live one's life.
 - C. This form mimics the tone of a boy becoming a man: through many trials and errors.
 - D. This form creates a know-it-all tone, describing difficult rules like they are seemingly easy steps.
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5. What do the details of this poem reveal about the poet's point of view towards being a grown man? Cite evidence to support your answer. [RL.6]

Day 4, Activity 2: Application of Vocabulary

Answer each question in 1-2 complete sentences. Make sure that you use the underlined vocabulary word in your answer.

1. What's the best way to convince someone you are telling the truth if that person doubts you?

2. What is one allowance that you wish was given in your school's rules? Why?

3. Why would anyone want to be an impostor?
