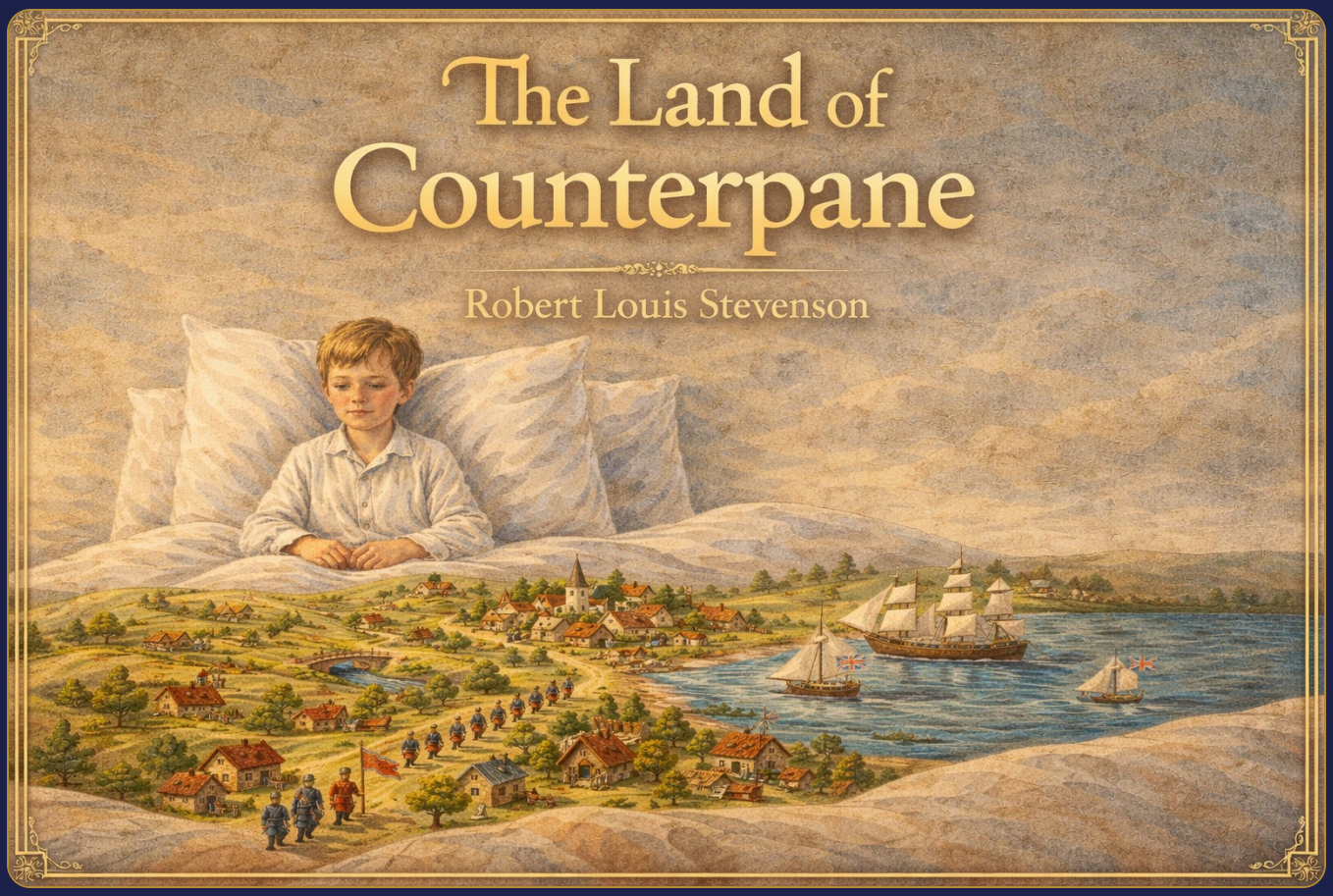
Storyland Classics

FREE POEM GUIDE

From A Child's Garden of Verses (1885)



- ✦ The Poem
- ✦ Try It
- ✦ Missing Words
- ✦ Put It in Order
- ✦ Handwriting
- ✦ Meet the Poet
- ✦ Word Match & Sort
- ✦ Yes or No & ABC Order
- ✦ Read It With Voices
- ✦ Answer Key
- ✦ Let's Talk
- ✦ Word Search
- ✦ Rhyme Hunt & Syllables
- ✦ Learn It by Heart
- ✦ Standards

Ages 4–8 ✦ Pre-K to Grade 2 ✦ Aligned to Common Core

This cover is for your screen. Print from page 2 to save ink.

FOR GROWN-UPS

How to Use This Guide

This free guide goes with the Storyland Classics read-aloud of “The Land of Counterpane” by Robert Louis Stevenson. Every page is ready to print, and no sign-up is needed. Pick the pages that suit your child or class.

ABOUT THE POEM

A child is sick in bed but turns the bed into a whole world. Toy soldiers march over the hills of the blankets, ships sail in fleets among the sheets, and toy trees and houses become cities. Sitting up on the pillow, the child is a giant looking out over the pleasant land of counterpane.

SKILL FOCUS

Imagination and perspective

A simple routine

1. **Day 1.** Watch the read-aloud together (scan the QR code on the poem page), then read the poem aloud.
2. **Day 2.** Read it again. Meet the poet, then use Let’s Talk and Try It.
3. **Day 3.** Learn the words with the word match, word sort, word search and missing words.
4. **Day 4.** Listen for rhymes and syllables, put the poem in order, and perform it with voices.

What’s inside

The Poem	3
Meet the Poet	4
Let’s Talk	5
Try It	6
Word Match & Sort	7
Word Search	8
Missing Words	9
Yes or No & ABC Order	10
Rhyme Hunt & Syllables	11
Put It in Order	12
Read It With Voices	13
Learn It by Heart	14
Handwriting	15
Answer Key	16
Standards	17

Standards

Every activity is aligned to the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten to grade 2. Codes appear at the bottom of each page, and the full table is on the last page.

Younger children

Children who aren’t writing yet can answer out loud or tell a grown-up what to write.

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

THE POEM

The Land of Counterpane



When I was sick and lay a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay,
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes, through the hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.

I was the giant great and still
That sits upon the pillow-hill,
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of counterpane.

▸ Watch the read-aloud

Scan the code to watch "The Land of Counterpane" read aloud, or visit storylandclassics.com/counterpane.

Robert Louis Stevenson, A Child's Garden of Verses (1885). Public domain.

Name _____ Date _____

MEET THE POET

Robert Louis Stevenson

1850–1894 ✦ The poet of A Child's Garden of Verses

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1850. His family built lighthouses all around Scotland's coast. Louis was often sick as a boy and spent long days in bed, where his nurse, Alison Cunningham (he called her "Cummy"), cared for him and told him stories. When he grew up he wrote *Treasure Island* and remembered his own childhood in *A Child's Garden of Verses* (1885), which he dedicated to Cummy. He later lived on the island of Samoa, where people called him Tusitala, "teller of tales."

Questions About the Poet

1. In what country was Robert Louis Stevenson born?

2. Why did he spend long days in bed when he was a boy? Who looked after him?

3. Name a famous book he wrote. What did the people of Samoa call him?

Who Is Talking?

This poem is told by one person. Read it again, then answer.

1. Who is telling this poem? Why is the child in bed?

2. Who is the giant in the last verse?

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

Name _____ Date _____

LET'S TALK

The Land of Counterpane

Young children can answer out loud. Older children can write their answers.

REMEMBER

1. What toys did the child have in bed?

2. Where did the soldiers march?

3. Where does the giant sit?

THINK

4. How did the child keep from being bored?

5. Why does the child call the bed a "land"?

CONNECT

6. What do you like to do when you have to stay in bed?

NARRATION

Close the book and tell the poem back in your own words. How did the child play while sick in bed?

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com
CCSS RL.K.1 · RL.1.1 · RL.K.3 · SL.K.1

Name _____ Date _____

TRY IT

The Land of Counterpane

SKILL FOCUS

Imagination and perspective

Draw your own Land of Counterpane as the giant on the pillow-hill would see it.

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

Name _____ Date _____

WORDS TO KNOW

Word Match

Draw a line from each word to what it means.

counterpane	marching practice
leaden	flat land
uniforms	a bedspread, the top cover on a bed
drills	a valley
fleets	matching clothes for soldiers
dale	a very big person
plain	made of lead, a heavy metal
giant	groups of ships

Word Sort: Toys or Bed Things?

Write each word in the right box.

soldiers · pillows · ships · sheets · trees · bed-clothes · houses · counterpane

Toys

Bed things

Name _____ Date _____

WORD SEARCH

The Land of Counterpane

Find the words from the poem. Words go across (left to right) and down (top to bottom). Circle each word, then check it off.

A	F	S	H	I	P	S	H	S	G
P	B	P	H	I	L	L	S	O	M
G	P	C	I	T	I	E	S	L	D
I	R	S	H	E	E	T	S	D	B
A	I	F	K	V	H	J	K	I	N
N	M	Y	B	J	K	H	G	E	M
T	F	C	T	T	O	Y	S	R	S
V	E	U	M	L	W	S	L	S	H
U	C	P	I	L	L	O	W	S	T
C	B	U	B	R	K	E	N	V	D

WORD BANK

- ☐ PILLOWS
- ☐ TOYS
- ☐ SOLDIERS
- ☐ SHIPS
- ☐ SHEETS
- ☐ HILLS
- ☐ GIANT
- ☐ CITIES

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

Name _____ Date _____

MISSING WORDS

The Land of Counterpane

Read each line from the poem. Choose the missing word from the word bank and write it on the line. Then read the whole line aloud.

about · day · head · hills · sheets

1. I had two pillows at my _____ ,
2. To keep me happy all the _____ .
3. Among the bed-clothes, through the _____ ;
4. All up and down among the _____ ;
5. And planted cities all _____ .

Make New Rhymes

Write a new word that rhymes with each word from the poem. Silly words count too!

head _____ _____ day _____ _____

hills _____ _____ sheets _____ _____

DID YOU NOTICE?

Every missing word comes at the end of a line, and each one rhymes with another line in the poem. Find its rhyming partner!

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

Name _____ Date _____

CHECK YOUR READING

Yes or No?

Read each sentence about the poem. Circle **Yes** if it is true. Circle **No** if it is not.

1. The child is sick in bed. Yes No
2. The child plays with toy soldiers. Yes No
3. The child is outside in the garden. Yes No
4. Ships sail among the sheets. Yes No
5. The child pretends to be a giant. Yes No
6. The child is bored all day. Yes No

ABC Order

Write these words from the poem in ABC order. Look at the first letter of each word.

pillows toys soldiers hills giant

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

Name _____ Date _____

SOUNDS OF THE POEM

Rhyme Hunt

Find each word's rhyming partner in the word bank and write it on the line.

about · day · go · head · hills · sheets

a-bed _____ lay _____

so _____ drills _____

fleets _____ out _____

LISTEN

Every two lines rhyme, like a march. Tap your knees in time as you read: left, right, left, right.

Clap the Syllables

Say each word and clap for every part. Write the number of claps.

pillow claps: ___	soldiers claps: ___	counterpane claps: ___
uniforms claps: ___	bed claps: ___	cities claps: ___

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

Name _____ Date _____

PUT IT IN ORDER

What Happens First?

Read each sentence. Write 1 in the circle next to what happens first, 2 next to what happens next, and so on up to 6.

- ◯ The child sends ships in fleets among the sheets.
- ◯ The child is sick and lies in bed.
- ◯ The child is a giant on the pillow-hill.
- ◯ The toys lie beside the child all day.
- ◯ The soldiers march through the hills.
- ◯ The child plants cities all about.

Retell the Poem

Use the order words to tell the poem in your own words. Say it out loud, or write it.

First, _____

Next, _____

Then, _____

Last, _____

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com
CCSS RL.K.2 · RL.1.2 · RL.2.5

Name _____ Date _____

PERFORM IT

Read It With Voices

Reader | Everyone (acts it out)

Read it under a blanket! One **reader** reads, and **everyone** makes their knees into hills. March fingers like soldiers, sail hands like ships, and sit up tall like the giant in the last verse.

TIPS FOR READING ALOUD

Read slowly and cozily. Make the last verse big and grand: you are the giant!

Read It Three Times

Read the poem aloud three times. Color a star each time. Your reading gets smoother every time!



My Favorite Part

Write about your favorite part of the poem.

My favorite part is _____

_____

_____

because _____

_____

_____

_____

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

LEARN IT BY HEART

Say It From Memory

Learn this verse by heart. Check off each step as you go.

When I was sick and lay a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay,
To keep me happy all the day.

- [ ] Listen to the verse on the read-aloud video.
- [ ] Read it aloud three times with the book.
- [ ] Say it with a grown-up, one line at a time.
- [ ] Say it with the book closed. Peek if you need to!
- [ ] Say it to someone at home or in class.

✦ CERTIFICATE ✦

I can say “The Land of Counterpane” by heart!

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Name _____ Date _____

Heard by _____

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

Name _____ Date _____

HANDWRITING PRACTICE

The Land of Counterpane

Trace the gray words, then write them on your own on the empty lines. Tall letters touch the top line; small letters reach the dotted line.

The pleasant land of counterpane.

The pleasant land
of counterpane.

When I was sick and lay a-bed,

When I was sick
and lay a-bed,

☐ I started with a capital letter. ☐ I left spaces between words. ☐ I copied the end mark.

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

FOR GROWN-UPS

Answer Key & Ideas

Who Is Talking?

A child who is sick in bed is telling it. The child is the giant, sitting on the pillow-hill.

Let's Talk

1. Soldiers, ships, trees and houses. 2. Among the bed-clothes, through the hills. 3. Upon the pillow-hill. 4–6. Answers will vary.

Word Sort

Toys: soldiers, ships, trees, houses. Bed things: pillows, sheets, bed-clothes, counterpane.

Word Search

A	F	**S**	**H**	**I**	**P**	**S**	H	**S**	G
P	B	P	**H**	**I**	**L**	**L**	**S**	**O**	M
G	P	**C**	**I**	**T**	**I**	**E**	**S**	**L**	D
I	R	**S**	**H**	**E**	**E**	**T**	**S**	**D**	B
A	I	F	K	V	H	J	K	**I**	N
N	M	Y	B	J	K	H	G	**E**	M
T	F	C	T	**T**	**O**	**Y**	**S**	**R**	S
V	E	U	M	L	W	S	L	**S**	H
U	C	**P**	**I**	**L**	**L**	**O**	**W**	**S**	T
C	B	U	B	R	K	E	N	V	D

Word Match

counterpane: a bedspread, the top cover on a bed · leaden: made of lead, a heavy metal · uniforms: matching clothes for soldiers · drills: marching practice · fleets: groups of ships · dale: a valley · plain: flat land · giant: a very big person

Yes or No? & ABC Order

1. Yes · 2. Yes · 3. No · 4. Yes · 5. Yes · 6. No. ABC order: giant, hills, pillows, soldiers, toys.

Missing Words

head, day, hills, sheets, about

Rhyme Hunt & Syllables

a-bed: head · lay: day · so: go · drills: hills · fleets: sheets · out: about. Claps: pillow 2, soldiers 2, counterpane 3, uniforms 3, bed 1, cities 2.

Put It in Order

sick in bed → the toys lie beside the child → soldiers march through the hills → ships sail among the sheets → cities are planted all about → the giant on the pillow-hill.

Ideas to extend the lesson

- Make your own counterpane land: lay a blanket over your knees and set out toys on the hills and valleys.
- Draw a bird's-eye map of your bed as a country, with names for every hill.
- Read it with "My Shadow" and "The Land of Nod," more poems about a child's bedtime world.

MORE FROM STORYLAND CLASSICS

Find more Robert Louis Stevenson poems with free guides at storylandclassics.com and on YouTube at @StorylandClassics.

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com

FOR TEACHERS

Standards Alignment

The Land of Counterpane ✦ Common Core State Standards, kindergarten to grade 2

STANDARDS	WHAT CHILDREN PRACTICE	WHERE IN THIS GUIDE
RL.K.1 RL.1.1 RL.2.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	Let's Talk and Yes or No?; Let's Talk
RL.K.2 RL.1.2	Retell stories and poems, including key details, and show understanding of their message.	Put It in Order and Retell
RL.K.3 RL.1.3	Identify and describe characters, settings and major events.	Let's Talk and Put It in Order
RL.K.4 RL.2.4	Understand words and phrases, including rhyme, rhythm and words that appeal to the senses.	Word Match; Rhyme Hunt (rhyme and repeated lines)
RL.2.5	Recognize types of texts and describe the overall structure (beginning, middle and end).	Put It in Order: beginning, middle and end
RL.1.6 RL.2.6	Identify who is speaking and use a different voice for each character when reading aloud.	Who Is Talking?; Read It With Voices
RL.K.10 RL.1.10	Engage in group reading of poems and stories with purpose and understanding.	The Poem and Missing Words; The Poem (reading together)
RF.K.1b RF.K.1d	Understand the organization of print (left to right, top to bottom).	Word Search; ABC Order (letters of the alphabet)
RF.K.2a RF.K.2b	Hear and work with spoken words, rhymes and syllables.	Rhyme Hunt and Make New Rhymes; Clap the Syllables
RF.K.3c RF.1.3	Read common high-frequency words by sight.	Word Search and Missing Words; Word Search
RF.1.4a RF.1.4b RF.2.4b	Read aloud with accuracy, appropriate rate and expression.	Missing Words (read with purpose); Read It With Voices and Read It Three Times
SL.K.1 SL.1.1	Take part in conversations about the text with classmates and adults.	Let's Talk and Meet the Poet (discussion); Let's Talk (discussion)
SL.K.2	Ask and answer questions about a text read aloud or presented through media.	Read-aloud video (QR code)
SL.K.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.	Try It (drawing to add detail)
SL.K.6 SL.1.6	Speak audibly and express ideas clearly.	Read It With Voices and Learn It by Heart; Learn It by Heart (recite)
L.K.1a L.1.1 L.1.1a	Print upper- and lowercase letters and use common position words.	Handwriting Practice; ABC Order (alphabetize words)
L.K.2a L.1.2b	Use capital letters and end punctuation.	Handwriting checklist
L.K.4 L.1.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown words and phrases.	Word Match
L.K.5a	Sort words into categories, connect words to real life and act out shades of meaning.	Word Sort
W.K.1 W.1.1	Use drawing and writing to share an opinion and give a reason.	My Favorite Part
W.K.2	Use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to compose informative texts.	Try It
W.1.8	With guidance and support, recall information from experiences or gather information to answer a question.	Try It

Codes are Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. Find free read-alouds and guides at storylandclassics.com.

© Storyland Classics · storylandclassics.com