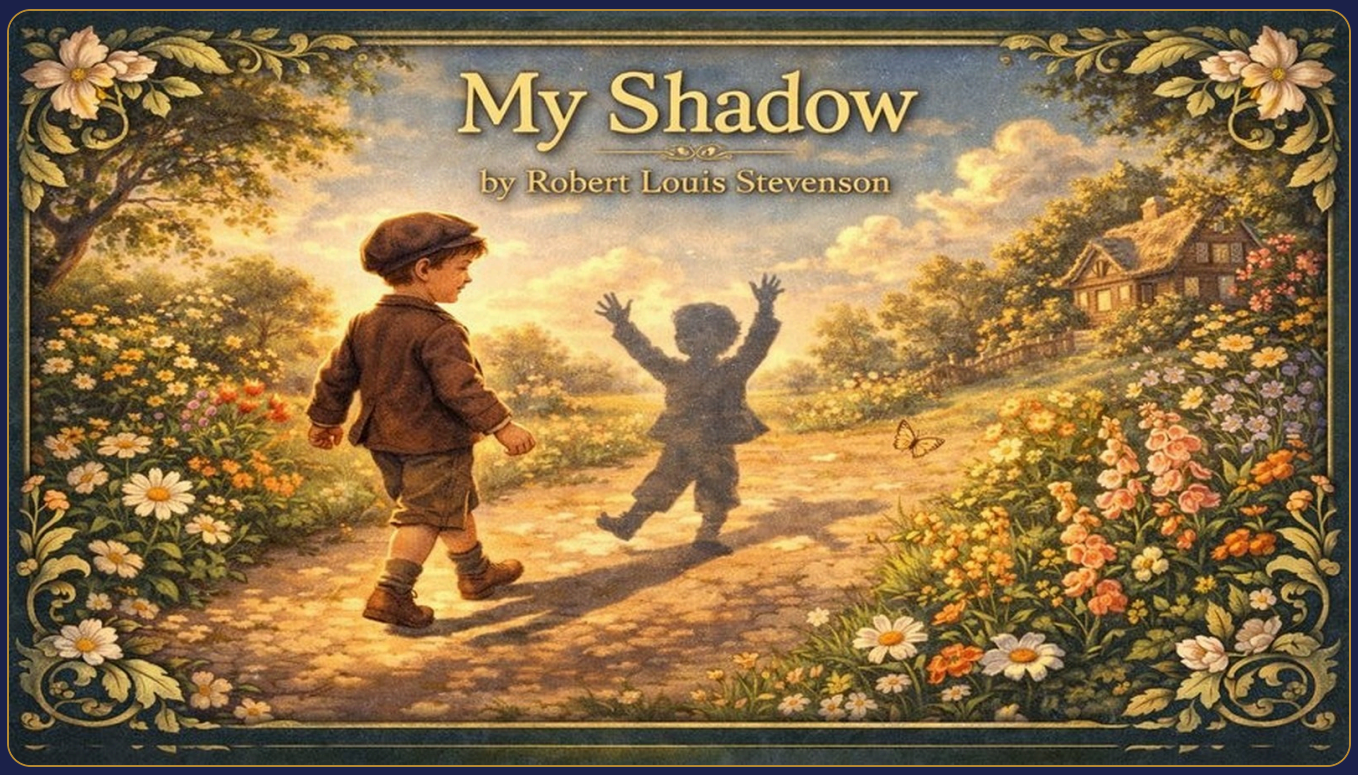
Storyland Classics

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 “My Shadow” 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 has a little shadow that follows everywhere. It looks just like the child, but it grows tall and shrinks small in the funniest way, and it sticks so close that the child calls it a coward. Then one very early morning, before the sun is up, the child goes outside and finds the lazy shadow has stayed at home in bed!

SKILL FOCUS

Personification, plus a science link to light and shadows

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.

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THE POEM

My Shadow



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.

▸ Watch the read-aloud

Scan the code to watch "My Shadow" read aloud, or visit storylandclassics.com/shadow.

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, and what is the child talking about?

2. Why does the child say the shadow stayed in bed?

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Name _____ Date _____

LET'S TALK

My Shadow

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

REMEMBER

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

2. How does the shadow change size?

3. What happened one morning before the sun was up?

THINK

4. Why does a shadow grow tall and short?

5. The child calls the shadow lazy and a coward. Is that fair?

CONNECT

6. Have you ever played with your shadow? What did you do?

NARRATION

Close the book and tell the poem back in your own words. What is funny about the shadow, and what happened early one morning?

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Name _____ Date _____

TRY IT

My Shadow

SKILL FOCUS

Personification, plus a science link to light and shadows

See the Shadow Science page: trace a partner's shadow in the morning and afternoon, then compare.

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Name _____ Date _____

WORDS TO KNOW

Word Match

Draw a line from each word to what it means.

shadow	bouncy rubber
heels	complete, total
notion	the dark shape made when you block the light
india-rubber	a child's nanny
coward	an idea
nursie	a small yellow flower
arrant	the backs of your feet
buttercup	someone who is easily scared

Word Sort: Big or Small?

Write each word in the right box.

taller · little · shoots up · none at all · grow · small · giant · tiny

Big words

Small words

Name _____ Date _____

WORD SEARCH

My Shadow

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

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

WORD BANK

- ☐ SHADOW
- ☐ JUMP
- ☐ BED
- ☐ BALL
- ☐ BUTTERCUP
- ☐ DEW
- ☐ SUN
- ☐ PLAY

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Name _____ Date _____

MISSING WORDS

My Shadow

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.

all | bed | buttercup | see | slow | way

1. And what can be the use of him is more than I can _____ .
2. And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my _____ .
3. Not at all like proper children, which is always very _____ ;
4. And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at _____ .
5. And can only make a fool of me in every sort of _____ .
6. I rose and found the shining dew on every _____ ;

Make New Rhymes

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

see _____ _____ bed _____ _____

slow _____ _____ all _____ _____

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!

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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's shadow looks just like the child. Yes No
2. The shadow always stays the same size. Yes No
3. The shadow jumps into bed before the child. Yes No
4. The shadow sticks close to the child. Yes No
5. The child got up after the sun one morning. Yes No
6. Early one morning the shadow stayed in bed. Yes No

ABC Order

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

shadow jump bed dew play

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

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Name _____ Date _____

SOUNDS OF THE POEM

Rhyme Hunt

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

all · bed · buttercup · see · slow · way

me _____ head _____

grow _____ ball _____

play _____ up _____

LISTEN

This is a long poem with long lines. Each pair of lines ends with a rhyme. Find them all and underline each pair in the same color.

Clap the Syllables

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

shadow claps: ___	buttercup claps: ___	children claps: ___
little claps: ___	sun claps: ___	sleepy claps: ___

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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 shadow shoots up taller like a ball.
- ◯ The shadow goes in and out with the child.
- ◯ The shadow stays asleep in bed.
- ◯ The shadow jumps into bed before the child.
- ◯ The child calls the shadow a coward.
- ◯ The child gets up early and finds dew on the buttercups.

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, _____

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Name _____ Date _____

PERFORM IT

Read It With Voices

The child (reader) The shadow (copies every move)

Work in pairs. One **reader** is the child and reads the poem. The partner is the **shadow** and copies every move the reader makes: jumping, growing tall, shrinking small. In the last verse the shadow lies down and "sleeps"!

TIPS FOR READING ALOUD

Read in a puzzled, chatty voice, as if you are telling a friend about your silly shadow. Make your voice tall and tiny to match the shadow.

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 _____

_____

_____

_____

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LEARN IT BY HEART

Say It From Memory

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

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.

- [ ] 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 “My Shadow” by heart!

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Name _____ Date _____

Heard by _____

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CCSS RF.1.4b · SL.K.6 · SL.1.6

Name _____ Date _____

HANDWRITING PRACTICE

My Shadow

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.

I have a little shadow that goes in and out

I have a little shadow

that goes in and out

with me,

with me,

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

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FOR GROWN-UPS

Answer Key & Ideas

Who Is Talking?

A child is telling it, about his own shadow. Before sunrise there was no sunlight to make a shadow, so it seemed to have stayed asleep in bed.

Let's Talk

1. It jumps into bed before the child. 2. It shoots up taller like an india-rubber ball, and sometimes gets so little there's none of him at all. 3. The shadow had stayed at home asleep in bed. 4–6. Answers will vary (a shadow changes as the sun moves; with no sunlight there is no shadow).

Word Sort

Big words: taller, shoots up, grow, giant. Small words: little, none at all, small, tiny.

Word Search

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

Word Match

shadow: the dark shape made when you block the light · heels: the backs of your feet · notion: an idea · india-rubber: bouncy rubber · coward: someone who is easily scared · nursie: a child's nanny · arrant: complete, total · buttercup: a small yellow flower

Yes or No? & ABC Order

1. Yes · 2. No · 3. Yes · 4. Yes · 5. No · 6. Yes. ABC order: bed, dew, jump, play, shadow.

Missing Words

see, bed, slow, all, way, buttercup

Rhyme Hunt & Syllables

me: see · head: bed · grow: slow · ball: all · play: way · up: buttercup. Claps: shadow 2, buttercup 3, children 2, little 2, sun 1, sleepy 2.

Put It in Order

goes in and out with the child → jumps into bed first → shoots up taller like a ball → the child calls it a coward → the child gets up early and finds dew → the shadow is still asleep in bed.

Ideas to extend the lesson

- Go outside in the morning, at noon and in the afternoon, and trace your shadow with chalk. When is it tallest?
- Make shadow puppets with your hands and a flashlight.
- Read it with "The Land of Counterpane" and "The Swing."

MORE FROM STORYLAND CLASSICS

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

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FOR TEACHERS

Standards Alignment

My Shadow ✦ 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.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.5b	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.

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