



'If' by Rudyard Kipling

Summarise what the poem is about in full sentences:

Annotate the poem with points you remember from your initial study:

If –

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!

What is the background to the writing of 'If'?

What is Kipling's intention in writing this poem?

When was this poem written?

to advise

Who was the poem inspired by?

to criticise

Why was it inspired by these men?

to illustrate

to celebrate

Language		Structure and form	
	Example and effect		Example and effect
Personal pronoun		Dramatic monologue	
Nouns		One long sentence	
Verbs		Rhyme	
Conjunctions		Conditional tense	
Personification		Antithesis	
Metaphor		Polyptoton	

What other poems in the anthology can we link to this poem to and why?

In what ways does Kipling offer advice in the poem 'If'?