

RTC Worksheet – The Ball

*What is the boy now, who has lost his ball,
What, what is he to do? I saw it go
Merrily bouncing, down the street, and then
Merrily over – there it is in the water!*

Answer the questions that follow:

1. The repetition of the word 'what' mainly conveys:
 - a) Anger
 - b) Confusion and helplessness
 - c) Excitement
 - d) Indifference
2. The poet's description of the ball moving 'merrily' suggests:
 - a) The boy's joy
 - b) Carelessness of fate
 - c) Playfulness of nature
 - d) Speed of movement
3. Why does the poet focus on the moment of loss rather than recovery?
4. How do these lines reflect the boy's first confrontation with loss?
5. Explain the philosophical idea implied by the ball going into the water.

*No use to say 'O there are other balls':
An ultimate shaking grief fixes the boy
As he stands rigid, trembling, staring down
All his young days into the harbour where
His ball went.*

Answer the questions that follow:

1. The phrase 'ultimate shaking grief' highlights:
 - a) Temporary sadness
 - b) Physical weakness

c) Deep emotional shock

d) Anger

2. The boy staring into the harbour symbolises:

a) Hope

b) Reflection on loss

c) Fear of water

d) Curiosity

3. Why does the poet reject the idea of replacing the lost ball?

4. How does the boy's reaction indicate emotional maturity?

5. What does the harbour symbolise in the context of the poem?

*The boy is learning, though the loss of ball,
What it is to lose a thing, to know what loss is,
What it is to lose money, or a watch, or a name,
Or a world of one's own, and to learn how to stand up.*

Answer the questions that follow:

1. The loss of the ball is used as a metaphor for:

a) Childhood games

b) Emotional pain

c) Life's inevitable losses

d) Financial loss

2. The phrase 'learn how to stand up' suggests:

a) Physical strength

b) Emotional resilience

c) Rebellion

d) Independence from parents

3. How does the poet connect childhood loss with adult experiences?

4. What philosophical message do these lines convey about life?

5. Why is the process of learning emphasised more than consolation?