

1. Who or what is Batman? Who is his side-kick? What sort of impression do you have of this character? Even if you've never seen or read any of the stories you should have some knowledge of the characters.
2. After reading the poem, find the phrase that implies Batman was in charge at one time.
3. What does the word 'wander' suggest about the direction a person takes? What, therefore, does it imply that the speaker was 'let ... loose to wander'?
4. Why do you think the speaker refers to, 'the wild blue yonder / you liked to say, or ditched me, rather, / in the gutter'? What is the difference between the two statements when they are referring to the same thing?
5. What does, 'turning a corner' mean? Think about what you can see ahead and behind you when you walk round the corner of a building, for example; is it the same view? In what way does the speaker turn a corner?
6. Why does the speaker use three phrases ('I'd watched that ... rumour, sacked it, blown the cover,') to describe telling the truth about how Batman was viewed by others?
7. Why is the affair described as a 'caper'? Look up a definition if you are not sure what it means.
8. Why is the phrase, 'how you took her / downtown on expenses in the motor,' written across two lines? Think about what 'taking' someone can mean and whether it sounds like a caring, loving thing to do or not. How does 'on expenses' add to the image?
9. What is a 'nest-egg'? What might be the, 'nest-egg shocker'?
10. What does a ball-bow do? Find out if you're not sure. Why is it an appropriate image for the poem?
11. On lines 15-17, how does the speaker show he has changed from a child to an adult? Do you find anything particularly effective in the image?
12. Why is there a list of the ways the speaker has changed, 'I'm taller, harder, stronger, older,

13. Why is Batman, in the poem, 'without a shadow,'? Think about how it is possible to not have a shadow.
14. Why does Armitage have Batman cooking, 'chicken giblets in the pressure cooker'? Do you think it is a cheap or expensive meal? What are giblets? Why would someone cook something in a pressure cooker? Are pressure cookers popular now? Were they ever popular?
15. Who do you think the speaker is in the poem? Do you think it could be an adult looking back at their childhood? Find evidence for your decision.
16. Find all references to the characters of Batman and Robin in the poem. Why is it effective that the speaker describes himself as Robin?
17. What do you consider to be the main themes of this poem? Do you think it is a poem about childhood, for example? Find evidence to support your ideas.
18. Which poems could you compare this one too and how could you compare them?