

'Kid'

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Kapow!!



Splat!



Boom!

Batman and Robin

Batman and Robin were originally DC comic book heroes. Later the comic strip was turned into a TV series and a number of films. Bruce Wayne saw his parents killed by muggers and vowed to spend the rest of his life fighting crime. This was made easier by being a millionaire and being waited on by a butler, Alfred. Wayne was assisted by Dick Grayson, an orphan with circus training. They lived in Wayne mansion on the outskirts of Gotham City. Below them was the Batcave with the Batmobile and an array of Bat crime-fighting devices. In times of stress or enlightenment, batman would punch his left palm with his right hand. Robin's response to stress or danger was to say 'Holy ..., Batman!'. Batman's language was more pompous.

Kid

- What might the title suggest?

The alliteration here emphasises a sarcastic tone.

Batman, big shot, when you gave the order to grow up, then let me loose to wander leeward, freely through the wild blue yonder as you liked to say, or ditched me, rather, in the gutter ...

This 'you' says that Batman gave the order for Robin to 'grow up'. Batman claimed he was giving Robin his freedom.

...what is Robin's opinion on the matter?

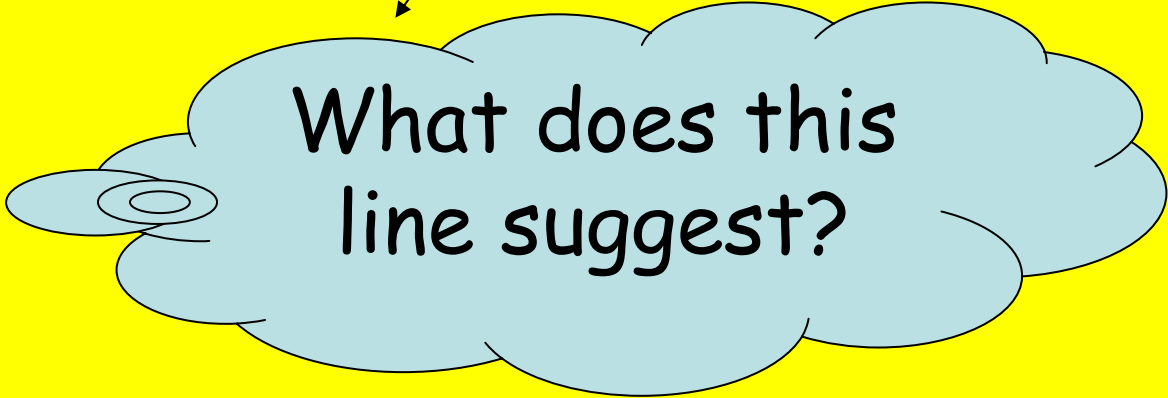
.....well, I turned the corner.
Now I've scotched that 'he was like a father
to me' rumour, sacked it, blown the cover
on that 'he was like an elder brother'
story, let the cat out on that caper
with the married woman, how you took her
downtown on expenses in the motor.

True or false?

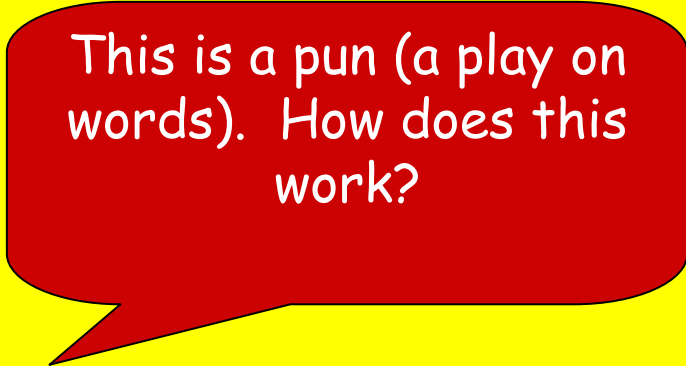
**Batman was like an older brother to Robin.
(find textual evidence)**

False – Robin talks of the 'he was like an older brother story' saying he has 'blown the cover' on it, proving it was just a story.

-**well, I turned the corner.**
Now I've scotched that 'he was like a father to me' rumour, sacked it, blown the cover on that 'he was like an elder brother' story, let the cat out on that caper with the married woman, how you took her downtown on expenses in the motor.



What does this line suggest?



This is a pun (a play on words). How does this work?

- Holy robin-redbreast-nest-egg-shocker!
Holy roll-me-over-in the-clover,



Armitage uses the Batman and Robin catchphrase here but what else do these lines remind you of?

Thwump!!!

- I'm not playing ball boy any longer
Batman, now I've doffed that off-the-shoulder
Sherwood-Forest-green and scarlet number
for a pair of jeans and crew-neck jumper;
now I'm taller, harder, stronger, older.

I'm not playing ball boy any longer - suggests?

Robin is now wearing normal clothes. What does this show?

Taller, harder, stronger, older

- Batman, it makes a marvellous picture:
you without a shadow, stewing over
chicken giblets in the pressure cooker,
next to nothing in the walk-in larder,
punching the palm of your hand all winter,
you baby, now I'm the real boy wonder.

What two interpretations can you make of Armitage's use of 'you without a shadow'

What does Robin hope will happen to Batman?

What does Robin hope his own future will be like?

What do you think about the line 'punching the palm of your hand all winter'?

What tone is created by 'you baby'?

- **What does each line of the poem end with?**
- **What does this mimic?**

What do you think?

- Is he using fictional characters to show what can happen when a famous double act breaks up?
- Is he using a fictional character to explore how young people grow up and become independent?
- Do you admire anything about Robin?

PEEL

In this exam we must consider:

- structure;
- language;
- attitudes (the voice and/or the poet);
- my personal response to the poem(s).

PEEL

Example (language and attitudes):

Just like in 'Havisham', 'Kid' opens with an angry verbal insult to someone close. The plosive alliteration of 'Batman big shot' is spat out and establishes the mood immediately. Calling someone a 'big shot' usually implies jealousy or dislike and this enables Armitage to show the reader that the 'Kid' of the title is on the attack.

PEEL

Example (My Response Comparison):

I feel much more sympathy for the voice in 'Havisham' than in 'Kid'. She has been abandoned by the man she loved who is never coming back, leaving her broken and 'cawing at the wall'. The voice in 'Kid' however appears to have a real chip on his shoulder, he accuses the father-figure of ditching him 'in the gutter'. He is obviously feeling abandoned and therefore very bitter. I think he is simply an ungrateful young man who is afraid to stand on his own two feet and is playing up in order to try and hide his fears.

'Kid'		'The Laboratory'
Young man, feels abandoned	Intro – bitter, revenge	Young woman, feels cheated on
Bitter, wants revenge, feels superior. Wants to hurt long term by hurting him. pride. In self.	attitudes	Bitter, wants revenge, feels inferior. Wants to hurt long term by hurting another. More extreme – resorts to murder. Lack of pride in self.
Alliteration – anger Name calling Exclamations	language	Violent verbs – anger Insults Curious. Excited – questions and exclamations
One long stanza, angry thoughts flood out. Positive ending. Title – feels bitter. Commas and full stops. Enjambment – flow of ideas.	structure	Lots of stanzas, mind wanders. Lack of focus. Positive end – off to kill. She's happy. Title – not about her.
Angry with him, ungrateful brat. Could slap.	My response	Angry with her for not confronting but remember this is more than 100 years. Pity. Get a life.