

Keep On Keeping On

We've all had times when the
going gets tough
The smooth ride suddenly feels
bumpy and rough
The good times are gone, it's all
rather gruff
You let out a sigh and exclaim—
"I've had enough"

We are all entitled at times, to
gripe and to moan
What's happened to my life, you
say with a groan?
My backpack seems weighed
down by a very big stone
How do I move away from this
miserable zone?

When a curved ball hits you,
through a trick or a con
Remember the good days, when
the sun always shone
Go forward with the belief that
you already have won
The best advice I can give is to
keep on—keeping on

Michael Sage

Questions about Keep On Keeping On

1. What does *gruff* (line 3) mean?
2. There is no sentence-end punctuation at the finish of the line in verse 1 which closes, ...*I've had enough*. Which sentence-end punctuation do you think might work best here? Why do you think that?
3. Quote the line in the poem that suggests that, from time to time, everybody has the right to moan about things that are frustrating them.
4. In verse 2 the poet talks of a backpack *weighed down by a very big stone*. What do you think the poet means by this?
5. Can you give an example of the kind of thing that the poet might be suggesting is *a very big stone*?
6. Would you say the overall mood of the poem is optimistic or pessimistic? Why do you think that?
7. In your own words, say what you think Michael Sage's main message in the poem is.

Don't Quit

When things go wrong, as they
sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging
seems all uphill,
When the funds are low and
debts are high,
And you want to smile but have
to sigh,
When care is pressing you down
a bit,
Rest, if you must, but don't you
quit.

Life is queer with its twists and
turns,
As everyone of us sometimes
learns,
And many a failure turns about,
When he might have won if he'd
stuck it out,
Don't give up though the pace
seems slow,
You might succeed with another
blow.

Often the struggler has given up,
When he might have captured
the victor's cup.
And he learned too late, when
the night slipped down,
How close he was to the golden

crown,

Success is failure turned inside
out,
The silver tint of clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close
you are,
It may be near when it seems
afar,
So stick to the fight when you're
hardest hit,
It's when things seem worst that
you mustn't quit.

Anon,

Questions about Don't Quit

1. The poet uses the verb *trudging* on line 2: can you suggest a synonym for this verb?

means by the lines: *Often the struggler has given up, When he might have captured the victor's cup.*

2. Quote the two lines in verse 2 which suggest that, when faced with a problem, you should never give up just because nothing seems to be happening, as you may find that with your very next try, things completely change.

5. Imagine a person or a group of people to whom this poem would be really good advice and say why you think it might help them.

3. Judging from the poem, which of these words best sums up the way the poet thinks we should be in the face of problems—*reckless, undaunted* or *despondent*? What in the poem tells you this?

6. No-one is sure who wrote *Don't Quit*. What kind of person do you think they would have been and why?

4. Explain in your own words what the poet

