



## If: A Father's Advice to His Son

*By Rudyard Kipling*

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What makes a boy into a man?

**Courage.**

**Confidence.**

**Patience.**

**Integrity...**

For more than one hundred years, this classic poem has inspired readers to reach for the best in themselves.

In pictures and words, here's what every boy needs to know most.

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### Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 4–6—Kipling's powerful poem comes to life for a contemporary audience in atmospheric photographs that use the metaphor of sports. A lovely shot of a boy heading a soccer ball accompanies the opening couplet: "If you can keep your head/when all about you/are losing theirs/and blaming it on you...." The mood and actions in most of the illustrations clearly invoke the verse, although two are murky and enigmatic. Shadows and dispersed light are used artfully and, interestingly, all of the people have their backs to the camera or appear in profile; their anonymity confirms the sense of universality found in the poem. The attractive presentation includes an eye-catching cover, a blend of font sizes in alternating black or white print, and a judicious use of white space that gives the eye some rest between the many action-filled images. In a thoughtful afterword, Smith explains why he chose to interpret this particular poem. Teachers and parents will enjoy sharing this book with kids; it is a good vehicle to promote discussion.—*Kirsten Cutler, Sonoma County Library, CA*

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About the Author

**Charles R. Smith, Jr.** is an acclaimed poet and the Coretta Scott King Award-winning illustrator of *My People*, a picture book based on the poem by Langston Hughes. He is also the illustrator of *If*, the author and photographer of *I Am the World*, and he won the Coretta Scott King Author Honor for his book *Twelve Rounds To Glory*. He grew up in California and attended the Brooks Institute of Photography. A magazine and book cover photographer in addition to a picture book creator, Charles lives with his wife and kids in Poughkeepsie, New York. Visit him at [CharlesRSmithJr.com](http://CharlesRSmithJr.com).

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