

## The Base Stealer

Robert Francis

Poised between going on and back, pulled (1)  
Both ways taut like a tightrope-walker,  
Fingertips pointing the opposites, (3)  
Now bouncing tiptoe like a dropped ball  
Or a kid skipping rope, come on, come on,  
Running a scattering of steps sidewise, (6)  
How he teeters, skitters, tingles, teases,  
Taunts them, hovers like an ecstatic bird,  
He's only flirting, crowd him, crowd him,  
Delicate, delicate, delicate, delicate --now! (10)

*taut – to be pulled tight; tense*

*taunt – to challenge; provoke*

1. How many lines in the poem? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many run-on lines? \_\_\_\_\_ How many end-stopped lines? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the subject of the poem? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Identify the **simile** on lines 1-2. What two things are being compared? \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_
5. Identify the simile on lines 3--5. What two things are being compared? \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_
6. Identify (2) lines which have good examples of alliteration. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
7. Give two (2) examples of repetition found in the poem. Lines: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
8. What does the use of the repetition contribute to in the poem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What is the poem's rhythm? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Keeping in mind the subject of the poem, why is it just one verse? \_\_\_\_\_  
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