

# Father William by Lewis Carroll

“You are old, Father William,” the young man said,  
“And your hair has become very white;  
And yet you incessantly stand on your head –  
Do you think, at your age, it is right?”  
“In my youth,” Father William replied to his son,  
“I feared it might injure the brain;  
But, now that I’m perfectly sure I have none,  
Why, I do it again and again.”



1. Why did the young man think that Father William might injure his brain?

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2. ‘You are old, Father William...’  
List two other ways the poet has shown that Father William is an old man.

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3. Tick true or false in the following table:

	True	False
Father William’s hair wasn’t always white.		
Father William occasionally stands on his head.		
The young man is Father William’s son.		



4. Looking through the extract of the poem, do you think Father William should continue to stand on his head? Why/why not?

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# Father William Answers

1. Why did the young man think that Father William might injure his brain?

**He thought that him standing on his head all the time might be damaging his head.**

2. 'You are old, Father William...'

List two other ways the poet has shown that father William is an old man.

**Accept any two of the following:**

- **his hair has become whiter;**
- **he says '...in my youth', meaning when he was younger;**
- **the young man says '...at your age...', meaning he is too old to be doing it.**

3. Tick true or false in the following table:

	True	False
Father William's hair wasn't always white.	✓	
Father William occasionally stands on his head.		✓
The young man is Father William's son.	✓	

4. Looking through the extract of the poem, do you think Father William should continue to stand on his head? Why/why not?

**Accept reasonable answers, such as**

- **Yes – he should carry on doing what makes him happy while he still can.**
- **No – it could be dangerous and he might hurt himself at his old age.**