Ethan groaned as Kyle stepped off the bus and hurried to catch up with him. Having Kyle for a neighbor was like having a permanent shadow.

“What are you doing this afternoon?” Kyle asked.

“I’m skateboarding with Mason.” Ethan picked up his pace, hoping Kyle would take the hint and stop following him.


Before Ethan could protest, Kyle took off across his lawn and inside his house. Ethan shook his head, trying to come up with a plan to ditch Kyle.

“What’s up, little bro?” Spencer said, when Ethan got home.

“Kyle won’t leave me alone. Everywhere I look, there he is. He just invited himself to go skateboarding with Mason and me. Can you believe that?”

“Hmm,” Spencer said. “Come here. I want to show you something.” Spencer led Ethan into the living room and to the photo album their mother kept on the coffee table. He opened it and pointed to a picture. “See this?”

Ethan nodded. “Yeah, that’s from when we went bowling with your friend Brian.”

“And this picture of us at the water park,” Spencer said. “Remember that?”

“Yeah, you won tickets at the summer carnival.”

“Right. Check out the rest of the page,” Spencer said. “Do you notice anything about all the pictures?”
Ethan scanned the photos. “Yeah, we had a lot of fun that summer.”

Spencer sighed. “That was the summer before Mason moved to town. You tagged along with me and my friends everywhere we went.”

“I did?” Ethan furrowed his brow as he thought back to that summer. “Wait, so you didn’t really want me around?”

“No, it’s just that you invited yourself because you didn’t have a good buddy of your own.” Spencer raised an eyebrow at Ethan. “Sound familiar?”

“Oh.” Ethan sighed. “So you think Kyle follows me around because he doesn’t have a best friend like I do.”

“Exactly. Do you know anyone who you think might get along well with Kyle?”

Ethan thought for a moment. “Tim’s kind of quiet at school. I bet he’d love a new friend.”

“Then call Tim and invite him along. He and Kyle might hit it off.”

“Yeah, and if they don’t, you can never have too many friends, right?” Ethan asked. “Right, little bro.”

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About the Author

Kelly Hashway's picture book, Melinda's Museum Magic, is now available!

Melinda is taking her first trip to the museum, and her mother promises it will be magical. But when the exhibits start coming to life in ways that only Melinda can see, she’ll learn the real magic of the museum.

1. What did Ethan mean when he said:

"Having Kyle for a neighbor was like having a permanent shadow."

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________

2. What were Kyle's plans for the afternoon?
   a. skateboarding with Mason
   b. going to the water park with his brother
   c. bowling with Brian
   d. looking through old pictures

3. What did Spencer help Ethan to realize? How did he do this?

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________

4. In the end, how did Ethan try to solve his problem?

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________

Super Teacher Worksheets - www.superteacherworksheets.com
Match each vocabulary word on the left with the correct definition on the right. Write the letter on the line provided.

1. _____ groaned  a. a rate of movement
2. _____ protest  b. let out a long, loud breath
3. _____ moment  c. a short period in time
4. _____ permanent  d. made a deep, low sound of disapproval
5. _____ pace  e. moved the head up and down
6. _____ nodded  f. to complain or object
7. _____ sighed  g. never-ending; everlasting

💡 Now try this: Find all of the words above in the story and highlight them.
In the story, “Shadow,” Ethan was upset that Kyle always followed him around. However, with the help of his brother, Ethan learned an important lesson about showing compassion, or kindness to others. Sometimes, people just need a friend.

Have you ever had a shadow? Maybe it was a sister, brother, or friend. Or, have you ever been the shadow? Tell about a time in your life, when you felt like either Ethan or Kyle. Be sure to tell how you felt and what happened.

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1. What did Ethan mean when he said:

   "Having Kyle for a neighbor was like having a permanent shadow."

2. What were Kyle's plans for the afternoon?

   a. skateboarding with Mason
   b. going to the water park with his brother
   c. bowling with Brian
   d. looking through old pictures

3. What did Spencer help Ethan to realize? How did he do this?

   Spencer helped Ethan to realize that maybe the reason Kyle is following Ethan around is because Kyle doesn't have any friends of his own. He aided Ethan in realizing this when they looked over picture from a few summers ago. He pointed out that over the course of that summer, Ethan was his brother's shadow too. Then, once Ethan found a friend, he stopped following Spencer around.

4. In the end, how did Ethan try to solve his problem?

   In the end, Ethan decided he would solve his problem by finding someone who could possibly become best friends with Kyle. Ethan though he would call Tim, another boy from school who's quiet, but might get along really well with Kyle. Ethan also learned that you can never have too many friends.
Match each vocabulary word on the left with the correct definition on the right. Write the letter on the line provided.

1. d  groaned  a. a rate of movement
2. f  protest  b. let out a long, loud breath
3. c  moment  c. a short period in time
4. g  permanent  d. made a deep, low sound of disapproval
5. a  pace  e. moved the head up and down
6. e  nodded  f. to complain or object
7. b  sighed  g. never-ending; everlasting

Now try this: Find all of the words above in the story and highlight them.