

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TAKE-HOME

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. “It Couldn’t Be Done”

by Edgar A. Guest

Somebody said that it couldn’t be done,  
But he with a chuckle replied  
That “maybe it couldn’t,” but he would be one  
Who wouldn’t say so till he’d tried.  
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin  
On his face. If he worried he hid it.  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn’t be done, and he did it.

Somebody scoffed: “Oh, you’ll never do that;  
At least no one ever has done it’;  
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,  
And the first thing we knew he’d begun it.  
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,  
Without any doubting or quiddit,  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn’t be done, and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,  
There are thousands to prophesy failure;  
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,  
The dangers that wait to assail you.

But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,  
Just take off your coat and go to it;  
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing  
That “cannot be done,” and you’ll do it.

**Word Count: 206**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTIONS

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Comprehension Questions

### “It Couldn’t Be Done”

*Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:*

1. **Inferential** Why did the first person state he had to try it before saying it couldn’t be done?
  - » He thought it would be wrong to say that something couldn’t be done until he tried it out to see whether or not it could actually be done. If he tried it and he couldn’t do it, then he could truthfully say it couldn’t be done because he would know from experience.
2. **Literal** What did the second person do?
  - » something that someone said no one has ever done and he did it
3. **Evaluative** What is the message of this poem?
  - » Don’t listen to people who warn you something can’t be done. Try it for yourself. Once you get started and work to do it, you’ll find that it can likely be done.