

Don't step on my shadow.

Advanced.

Have you ever noticed just how bright the sun can be in Autumn. The angle of the sun, or perhaps its proximity to the earth, seems to make the sunlight intense, in a way that is different from Summer. As we were walking home today from the mailbox, my son, Robert, said, "Don't step on my shadow, mum!" I looked at the shadow that he and his bicycle cast on the ground, and I realised that, at least for a few weeks, I had been missing the clearly defined, dark shadows all around. Children pick up on these things, of course. They are more likely, than us adults, to notice anything that is close to the ground. At school they play games with shadows during recess. One in particular is 'Shadow tag'. The person who is 'it' has to chase the rest of the group and 'tag' someone's shadow; that person then becomes the tagger. Then, as the day draws to a close, the shadows lengthen and take on a slightly sinister look, which, again, gives children an opportunity to play and imagine.

Grammar notes.

Mailbox (americanism) = post box; to realize (americanism) = to realise; recess = playtime; tag = catch.

To cast used in 'to cast a shadow', and also in 'to cast doubt on something.'

To pick up on something = to realise or notice something.

To take on a look = to become in appearance.

Beginners.

Shadows are interesting things. They can be fun to play with, especially for children. In Autumn, the bright sun helps to create strong looking shadows everywhere. Children often play games with shadows. In films and books we find shadows mentioned; they stir up our imaginations. As the sun goes down, and it starts to get darker, the shadows stretch and stretch, and become very long. It looks a little scary and odd. To see a long shadow of a person move can be quite spooky. Children are very creative and playful, and shadows are things that they can use to have fun.

Grammar notes.

Scary, frightening, spooky.

Useful expressions: especially, often, quite.

To stir up imagination = to excite imagination.