# Lesson 2: ‘A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London

### Task 1

With your partner, look again at the title and Stanza 1. Then answer the following questions.

### Stanza 1

**Never** until the mankind making

Bird beast and flower

Fathering and all humbling **darkness**

**Tells** with silence the last light breaking

And the still hour

Is come of the sea tumbling in harness

1. Is the word **Never** at the beginning of the poem effective? Why?/Why not? Complete either sentence i) or sentence ii)
2. The word **Never** at the beginning of the poem **is effective** because:
3. The word **Never** at the beginning of the poem **is not effective** because:
4. Which adjectives are linked to **darkness**?
5. What or who **tells**?

1. What does Dylan Thomas say will happen **when the world comes to an end** in Stanza 1?

### Task 2

With your partner, look again at the Stanza 2 and the first line of Stanza 3 to complete the first whole sentence. Remember that ‘Never, until…’ is the first part of the sentence:

### Stanza 2

And I must **enter** again **the round**

**Zion of the water bead**

And the synagogue of the ear of corn

Shall I let pray the shadow of a sound

Or **sow my salt seed**

In the least **valley of sackcloth** to mourn

### Stanza 3

The **majesty** and **burning** of the child’s death.

Then answer the following questions:

1. When is **the child** first mentioned in the poem?
2. Who has **dominated** the poem up until now? Write down evidence of this.
3. Why does the poet use the words **majesty** and **burning** in connection with the child’s death?
4. Explain the meaning of the following in concise terms:
5. ‘enter.. the round Zion of the water bead’
6. ‘sow my salt seed’
7. ‘valley of sackcloth’

### Task 3 – Think – Pair – Share

Consider the answers to following questions individually, then discuss with a partner before sharing your thoughts with the rest of the class.

1. What **must happen** before the poet is prepared to mourn the death of the child?
2. **Why** do you think he says this?