# A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London

## Lesson 1

### Overview

* Provide background information on Dylan Thomas and World War 2
* Discussing the title and general content of the poem
* Listen to the poem being read

### Resources

* Word document: KS4 ARTM Teacher Notes
* Word document: KS4 ARTM Learner Resource Sheets
* PowerPoint presentation: KS4 ARTM L1 Presentation
* Dylan Thomas reading poem: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6B2c4b23r3k>
* Background information on Dylan Thomas

### Suggested procedure

* Explain to learners, **without mentioning the title of the poem**, that you are going to study a poem about Dylan Thomas.
* **A presentation on** Dylan Thomas’s background can be found on this website in the section on ‘The Hunchback in the Park’.
* **Introduction and Objectives:** Slides 1 and 2, KS4 ARTM L1 Presentation
* **Starter**: Use Slide 3, KS4 ARTM L1 Presentation) for learners to discuss in pairs/groups:

Look at these words from the poem.

* Can you work out what the poem is about?
* Which words provide the best clues?

darkness

silence

the last light

the still hour

the shadow of a sound

mourn

majesty and burning

a grave truth

innocence and youth

deep

London’s daughter

unmourning water

* Having discussed the possible answer, explain that the poem deals with the death of a child, (a young girl, as ‘London’s daughter’ suggests).
* Introduce Task 1 on the resource Sheet/presentation
* What title would you give the poem?

Discuss the titles suggested by learners.

* Introduce the title of the poem and ask learners to write it out on their resource sheet (Task 2 on Resource sheet/Presentation):
* How do you respond to the title?
* Is the title of the poem unexpected? Why?/Why not?
* Tell learners that this poem was written in 1945. As a class, discuss the following question:
* Does the date 1945 help with our understanding of the background of the poem?
* Present **background information** **on London and World War 2** from the Teacher Notes and L1 Presentation.
* **Without** providing learners with a copy of the poem, **listen to the poem being read** by Dylan Thomas from the link on the Powerpoint presentation: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6B2c4b23r3k>

Ask for their impressions of the reading and the poem itself. The Teacher Notes refers to the background of the recording.

* Now listen to the reading again with a copy of the poem provided (either a hard copy each or poem on whiteboard.
* Ask learners, in pairs, to scan the poem in order to answer these questions (Task 3):
* How many sentences does the poem contain?
* How many lines of the poem does each sentence cover?
* To conclude the lesson, recap what has been discussed so far in regards to the poem.