



## Lesson 3: 'A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London

### Task 1

With your partner, look again at the Stanza 3, from line 2.

### Stanza 3

**I shall not murder**

The mankind of her going with a **grave truth**

Nor blaspheme down the **stations of the breath**

With any further

**Elegy** of innocence and youth.

Then answer the following questions:

1. Why does the poet use the phrase **I shall not murder...**?

2. Which word from Stanza 1 is repeated in Stanza 3?

Do you think this is important? If so - why/ If not – why not?



3. What two meanings does **a grave truth** have?

i.

ii.

4. What are **the stations of the breath**?

5. What is an **elegy**?

## Task 2

With your partner, look again at the Stanza 4.

### Stanza 4

Deep with the first dead lies London's daughter,  
Robed in the long friends,  
The grains beyond age, the dark veins of her mother,  
Secret by the unmourning water  
Of the riding Thames.  
After the first death, there is no other.

Then, answer the following questions:

1. Why is the child referred to as **London's daughter**?



2. Where has the child been buried?

3. What or who are the **long friends**?

4. What do the Thames and Dylan Thomas have in common?

5. What does **the riding Thames** suggest to you?

6. What does the final sentence mean?



### Task 3

You will need a full copy of the poem when you discuss the following questions as a class.

Then, make a note of the answers so that you have a record.

1. What is 'A Refusal to Mourn . . .' about?

2. What does Dylan Thomas say in the first full sentence of the poem?

3. What does he say in Stanza 3 about his refusal to mourn?

4. What does the poet describe in the first five lines of Stanza 4?



5. What does the poet say in the final sentence?