



Ark Pioneer Learning at Home Core Curriculum English Literature 10 – Additional Support Booklet

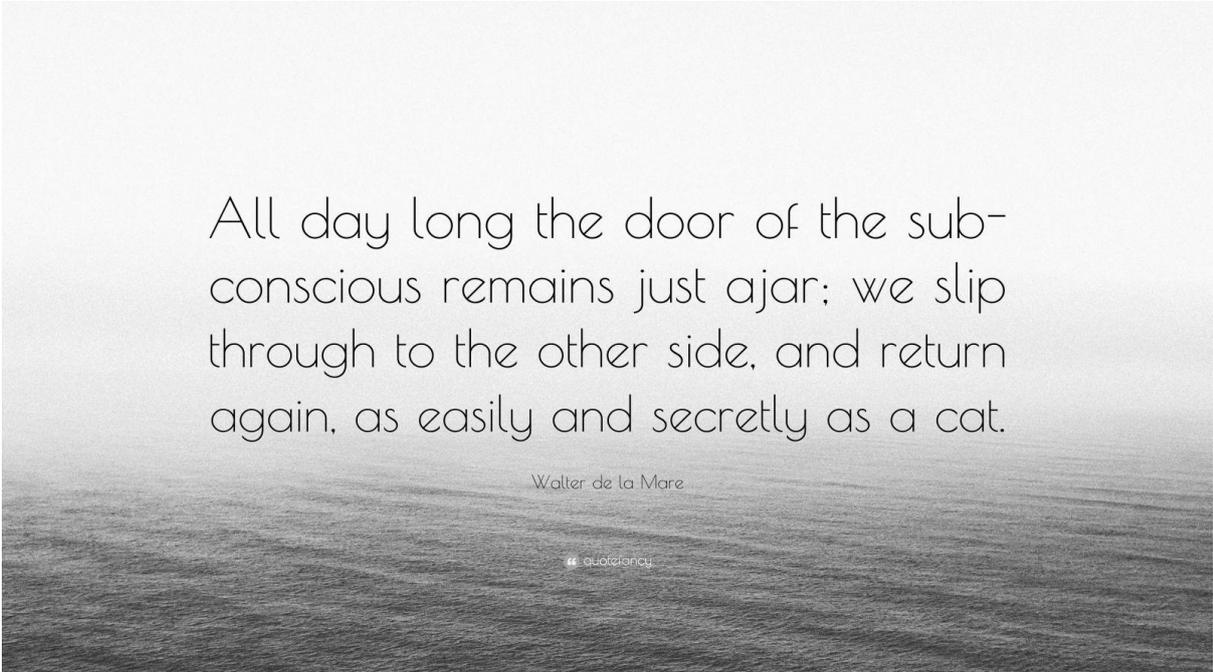
Work to be completed

This booklet is designed as an alternative to the main English Department booklet. This booklet explores an unsettling poem by Walter de la Mare: 'The Listeners'.

Once you have completed the work in *this* booklet you can return to the *main* English booklet and attempt the other poems if you want to. One option would be to attempt the 'Do Nows' on each poem.

Resources/Links to help with this work:

- <https://poetryarchive.org/poet/walter-de-la-mare/>
- <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/walter-de-la-mare>
- <https://allpoetry.com/Walter-de-la-Mare>
- <http://www.walterdelamare.co.uk/4.html>
- <https://poemanalysis.com/walter-de-la-mare/the-listeners/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_de_la_Mare



All day long the door of the sub-
conscious remains just ajar; we slip
through to the other side, and return
again, as easily and secretly as a cat.

Walter de la Mare

quotation

NB – Our subconscious is a part of our mind that we are not fully aware of, and yet it is there, always has been, and influences our thoughts, feelings and actions.

The Listeners, by Walter de la Mare

Do Now:

Look at the images on this page.

What do you see?

What adjectives would you use to describe them?

(You can use the word bank to help you if you want. Some of the words included might not be helpful!)



ghostly ominous creepy friendly spooky

frightening noisy unnerving gentle innocent

unsuspecting threatening colourful gloomy

terrifying cheery dangerous dark windswept

misty looming silent moonlit shadowy

Who was Walter de la Mare?



Search



Find some images of Walter de la Mare online. Look for two – one when he was an old man, and one when he was a younger man.

Image 1:

Image 2:

Watch:



Watch the first 3 ½ minutes of this [video](#) and answer the questions below in full sentences. Remember capitals and full-stops. If you can't access the video, all the answers can be found with a simple 'Walter de la Mare' google search.

Answer:



1. When was Walter de la Mare born?

2. Where was de la Mare born?

3. What job did his father have?

4. How many siblings did de la Mare have?

5. What school did de la Mare attend?

6. Did he attend a university?

7. What job did he go onto do?

8. What did de la Mare write?

9. What was de la Mare particularly fascinated by?



Think

The images on the first task are the results in a [Google](#) search for Walter de la Mare's poem 'The Listeners'.

- What do you think the poem might be about?
- Try to create three sentences in your head.



Listen



Now listen to this [poem](#) while looking at the images. You only need to listen to the first part, which is the poem.

Do any other words jump out at you – including words from the poem? Write them down:

Reading 'The Listeners' by Walter de la Mare

Read and listen to the poem below at least twice.

<https://poetryarchive.org/poet/walter-de-la-mare/>

At the bottom of this link is a reading of the poem by Maurice Riordan which you could play and follow along.

You could also listen to [this](#) version of the poem:



As you listen to the poem for the second time ask yourself these questions: ○

- What do I think this poem is about? ○
- What feelings does the poem evoke (create) in the traveller? ○

The Listeners

4	"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller, Knocking on the moonlit door; And his horse in the silence champed the grass Of the forest's ferny floor; And a bird flew up out of the turret, 8 Above the Traveller's head: And he smote upon the door again a second time; "Is there anybody there?" he said. But no one descended to the Traveller; No head from the leaf-fringed sill 12 Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes, Where he stood perplexed and still. But only a host of phantom listeners That dwelt in the lone house then 16 Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight To that voice from the world of men: Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair, That goes down to the empty hall, Harkening in an air stirred and shaken By the lonely Traveller's call. And he felt in his heart their strangeness, Their stillness answering his cry, While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf, 'Neath the starred and leafy sky; For he suddenly smote on the door, even Louder, and lifted his head:— "Tell them I came, and no one answered, That I kept my word," he said. Never the least stir made the listeners, Though every word he spake Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house From the one man left awake: Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup, And the sound of iron on stone, And how the silence surged softly backward, When the plunging hoofs were gone.	champed – chewed ferny - leafy turret – small tower smote - hit sill – shelf at a window perplexed – puzzled phantom – ghost dwelt – lived thronging – crowding harkening – listening turf – grass smote – hit spake – spoke stirrup – foot part of a horse's saddle surged – moved forward powerfully
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What do you think the poem is about?

If you aren't too sure watch this [video](#) which contains an animation accompanying the poem.

Poem Summary

Use the word bank below to fill the gaps in the paragraph below.

In 'The Listeners' Walter de la Mare introduces the reader to a _____, travelling through an overgrown _____ with his _____. He reaches his destination – a dark and lonely _____, but no one answers his repeated _____ on the door. The reader learns that in fact someone, or _____ is in the house and does hear the man calling and his knocking, but they do not open the door or respond to his calls. At first the man is curious and _____. He then becomes _____ when his knocking is not answered. After feeling a little _____ about his situation and the strange house he then becomes apprehensive and _____, sensing in his heart that something isn't quite right about this house. He then leaves - _____ that he was unable to see whomever he had wanted to see.

horse knocks house fearful forest man angry
questioning disappointed something confused

What feelings are evoked (created) in the poem?

- Match the feeling to the quotation.
- Try and find images online of faces expressing these emotions.

Curious		And he smote upon the door again a second time; "Is there anybody there?" he said.
Angry		But no one descended to the Traveller; No head from the leaf-fringed sill Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes, Where he stood perplexed and still.
Confused		"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller, Knocking on the moonlit door;
Frightened		"Tell them I came, and no one answered, That I kept my word," he said.
Disappointed		And he felt in his heart their strangeness, Their stillness answering his cry,

Stretch

Watch this [video](#) and poem analysis.



This was created by two American students who created their own video version of the poem.

- In their version is the traveller going through a forest?
- What do they use instead of a horse?
- How do they use colour and music to create atmosphere?

Choose one of the activities below:



- Create your own video of the poem
- Create an image inspired by 'The Listeners' that you annotate with quotations from the poem
- Write your own poem about arriving somewhere that is unexpectedly empty



Red Pen Check your answers on the next page.

Red Pen Check your answers

1. When was Walter de la Mare born?
Walter de la Mare was born in 1873.
2. Where was de la Mare born?
Walter de la Mare was born in Charlton, Kent.
3. What job did his father have?
His father was a banker and worked for the Bank of England.
4. How many siblings did de la Mare have?
Walter de la Mare had six siblings.
5. What school did de la Mare attend?
Walter de la Mare attended St Paul's Cathedral School and was a choir boy.
6. Did he attend a university?
Walter de la Mare did not attend university.
7. What job did he go onto do?
He worked in various financial positions until he gave these up and became a full-time writer.
8. What did de la Mare write?
He wrote many novels, children's stories and poetry.
9. What was de la Mare particularly fascinated by?
He was particularly fascinated by childhood.

Poem Summary

In 'The Listeners' Walter de la Mare introduces the reader to a **man** travelling through an overgrown **forest** with his **horse**. He reaches his destination – a dark and lonely **house** but no one answers his repeated **knocks** on the door. The reader learns that in fact someone, or **something** is in the house and does hear the man calling and his knocking, but they do not open the door or respond to his calls. At first the man is curious and **questioning**. He then becomes **angry** when his knocking is not answered. After feeling a little **confused** about his situation and the strange house he then becomes apprehensive and **fearful** sensing in his heart that something isn't quite right about this house. He then leaves - **disappointed** that he was unable to see whomever he had wanted to see.

What feelings are evoked (created) in the poem?

- Match the feeling to the quotation.

Curious		And he smote upon the door again a second time; "Is there anybody there?" he said.
Angry		But no one descended to the Traveller; No head from the leaf-fringed sill Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes, Where he stood perplexed and still.
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