

English

# 'If We Must Die' by Claude McKay

## Lesson 1 of 5

Ms Turner



If **we** must die, let it **not be like hogs**  
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,  
While round us bark the **mad and hungry dogs,**  
Making their mock at **our accursèd lot.**  
If **we** must die, O let **us nobly die,**  
So that **our precious blood** may not be shed  
In vain; then even **the monsters** we defy  
Shall be constrained to **honor us** though dead!  
**O kinsmen!** we must meet the **common foe!**  
Though far outnumbered let **us show us brave,**  
And for **their thousand blows** deal **one death-blow!**  
What though before us lies the open grave?  
**Like men** we'll face the **murderous, cowardly pack,**  
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

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# First impressions (answer these in full sentences)

1. What are your first impressions of the 'we' group in the poem?

***My first impressions of the 'we' group are that ...***

***Words you could use: noble, brave, nervous, human***

2. What are your first impressions of the 'they' group in the poem?

***My first impressions of the 'they' group are that...***

***Words you could use: dangerous, powerful, monsters***



# Answering questions about 'If We Must Die'

1. What were your first impressions of the poem 'If We Must Die'?

***When I first heard the poem, I thought it was...***

2. What do you now think the poem 'If We Must Die' is about?

***Now, I think that the poem describes...***



# Answering questions about 'If We Must Die'

3. What do we find out about the group of people referred to as 'we'?

***The group of people referred to as 'we' seem...***

4. What do we find out about the group of people referred to as 'they'?

***The group of people referred to as 'they' seem...***

