**Dulce Et Decorum Est**

**Wilfred Owen**

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of disappointed shells that dropped behind.  
  
GAS! Gas! Quick, boys!-- An ecstasy of fumbling,  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And floundering like a man in fire or lime.--  
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.  
  
In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.  
  
If in some smothering dreams you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,--  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est  
Pro patria mori.

Student Worksheet:

Why does Owens use the imagery of beggers and hags to describe the soldiers?

Why are the flares haunting?

Can you relate to the line ‘drunk with fatigue’?

Why is the fumbling described as ecstasy?

What is the ‘green sea’? Google the effects of chlorine gas attack and list them:

Why does Owens invite us, the reader, to have the same dream and watch the soldier die of gas poisoning?

The final line translates to ‘How sweet and right it is to die for one's country’. Does Owens’ poem show the glory of war?

What is Owens’ ultimate reason for writing this poem?