

## Hungry Waters by Hugh MacDiarmid

The auld men o the sea  
Wi their daberlack hair  
Hae dackered the coasts  
O the country fell sair.

They gobble owre cas'les,  
Chow mountains to san';  
Or lang they'll eat up  
The hail o the lan'!

Lickin their white lips  
An yowlin for mair,  
The auld men o the sea  
Wi their daberlack hair.

## Learning Resources

### Reading

Read the poem and listen to the audio file.

Discuss the poem, and the following questions, with a partner:

### Understanding

1. What is the poem about?
2. Who or what are the old men of the sea and what are they doing?
3. Which of the following words do you think best describe the poem?

clever, funny, horrific, strange, evil, ugly, powerful, silly, nonsensical, fantastic, mysterious, original, energetic, nightmarish, puzzling, disturbing, grotesque, realistic.

### Analysis

1. List the words that rhyme at the end of lines and explain the pattern used. Which lines rhyme and which don't?
2. Why do you think the poet repeats the first two lines again at the very end? Can you think of a reason for this kind of repetition in a poem about the sea?
3. Look more closely at the images in the poem. Explain how you picture the auld men and which words give you this picture.

### Writing

Write a piece of descriptive prose or a poem about a storm or coastal erosion, suggested by 'Hungry Waters'.

OR

Think more about the 'auld men'. Write about a nightmare or fantasy involving the sea and strange creatures.