



The short hour's halt is ended,
The red gone from the west,
The broken wheel is mended,
And the dead men laid to rest.
Three days have we retreated
The brave old Curse-and-Grin –
Outnumbered and defeated –
Fall in, my men, fall in.

Poor weary, hungry sinners,
Past caring and past fear,
The camp-fires of the winners
Are gleaming in the rear.
Each day their front advances,
Each day the same old din,
But freedom holds the chances –
Fall in, my men, fall in.

Despair's cold finger searches
The sky is black ahead,
We leave in barns and churches
Our wounded and our dead.
Through cold and rain and darkness
And mire that clogs like sin,
In failure in its starkness –
Fall in, my men, fall in.

We go and know not whither,
Nor see the tracks we go –
A horseman gaunt shall tell us,
A rain-veiled light shall show.
By wood and swamp and mountain,
The long dark hours begin –
Before our fresh wounds stiffen –
Fall in, my men, fall in.

With old wounds dully aching –
Fall in, my men, fall in –
See yonder starlight breaking
Through rifts where storm clouds thin!
See yonder clear sky arching
The distant range upon?
I'll plan while we are marching –
Move on, my men - march on!



Fall In, My Men, Fall In *Worksheet 1*



A. VOCABULARY

In your own words, explain the meaning of the following terms as they appear in the context of the poem:

- a. Din
- b. Mire
- c. Starkness
- d. Whither
- e. Gaunt

B. UNDERSTANDING

1. What time of day is it? Provide evidence from the poem to support your answer.
2. Circle the word that best describes the tone at the beginning of the poem. Underline the word that best describes the tone at the end of the poem:

Exhausted *Nostalgic* *Elated* *Patriotic* *Hopeful*
Defeated *Guilty* *Determined* *Angry* *Satisfied*

Explain both your choices with close reference to the language in the poem.

Explain why the tone changes.

3. The poet references weather throughout the piece. Explain the symbolism of the following in the context of the poem:
 - a. Rain
 - b. Cold
 - c. Black sky
 - d. Clear sky
 - e. Starlight
4. Explain the meaning and effect of the following lines and identify the poetic device being used:
 - a. Freedom holds the chances
 - b. Despair's cold finger searches
5. Identify and describe the speaker of the poem.
6. Explain the purpose and effect of the repetition of the line "Fall in, my men, fall in".
7. How would you describe the attitude and character of the men? Explain your answer with reference to the poem.
8. Why are the soldiers described as "sinners"?
9. Highlight all the words and phrases in the poem that relate to one of the five senses (sight, hearing, smell, sound, touch). What do you notice? What is the effect of this sensory language?

Fall In, My Men, Fall In Worksheet 2



C. EXTENSION TASKS

- Write a poem about war using the following structural points:
One noun **Example:** *bombs*
Two adjectives *ebony, sleek*
Two verbs *whistling, diving*
One noun that relates to the noun in the first line *executioners*
- Imagine you are a soldier who has been sent overseas to fight. Write a letter home to your mother outlining your experiences, observations and feelings.
- Rewrite the poem from the point of view of the enemy.
- Use the events in the poem as basis for a propaganda poster.
- Imagine you are the speaker in the poem. Write a speech that you would deliver to your men for the purpose of inspiring and motivating them.
- Complete the following Y chart to explain how war sounds, looks and feels. Use your responses to write an anti-war song.

