

In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep,
Though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

John McCrae



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About the poppy:

The Flanders poppy is also called the 'corn poppy' because of how well it grows. It was common in the trenches during the campaign. The poppy flowers in the northern hemisphere's spring, and was in flower when the Anzac troops landed.

About the poet:

In Flanders Fields was written on a page that was torn from a medical officer's despatch book in 1915 at the 2nd battle of Ypres. The author was Colonel John McCrae and he went to France during First World War as a medical officer with the 1st Canadian contingent.

Questions

1. Who is supposed to be talking in this poem?

2. What can hardly be heard and why?

3. What does the statement “We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow” mean?

4. Who is the foe?

5. “To you from failing hands we throw, The Torch; be yours to hold it high!”. Describe what this line means.

6. Underline the line that appeals most to you and explain why.

Answers

1. Who is supposed to be talking in this poem?
Those who died in the fields of Flanders during the First World War.
2. What can hardly be heard and why?
The larks, a type of bird, because they are being drowned out by the sound of guns.
3. What does the statement “We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow” mean?
It lets the reader know that the soldiers were individuals, just like they are.
4. Who is the foe?
The foe would have been the people that they were fighting, in this case - the German army.
5. “To you from failing hands we throw, The Torch; be yours to hold it high!” Describe what this line means.
The failing hands describes the dying soldiers who are fighting for freedom, which is symbolised by the ‘Torch’. He wants future generations to value the importance of the liberty they are laying down their lives for.
6. Underline the line that appeals most to you and explain why.
Answers will vary.