

The Listeners: Questions for Book 4 Group

1. Although we don't know the Traveller's real name, why might the word traveller have a capital letter in the poem?
2. Find and copy the great triple alliteration in the first ten lines - what is it?
3. 'But only a host of phantom listeners...' - what does this mean?
4. It say they stood '**thronging**... on the stair' - explain what this could mean in this poem(you may need to look up the definition of thronging).
5. Explain in your own words what the Travellers horse was doing after he called into the house; don't just copy the line out.
6. The poem uses a very unusual word - smote- which we rarely see used. Find out what it means and find the present tense of 'smote'..
7. Find and copy the great triple alliteration in the last ten lines - what is it?
8. Is there a pattern in this poem? If there is, how would you describe it?
9. Challenge Question: Lots of people have commented on what they think this poem is actually about. Write a brief summary of what you feel the real story is. Why is the man there? Why does he get no answer? Is there someone in the house or not- and why don't they answer?
10. Challenge Question: It has been said that this poem is a metaphor for man's attempts to contact extra-terrestrial life in the universe. Can you explain how the ideas in this poem could suggest this?
11. Background Research: The search for extra-terrestrial life project on earth is called SETI; can you write a few lines about what this is and what they do?