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| **Before reading** | | | | | | | | | |
| Symbolism and associations   1. What themes or ideas do you associate (a) with **light** and (b) with **darkness**. (For example, you might think light=knowledge.) Brainstorm as many as you can. 2. The 11 words below are taken from the poem you are going to read. Sort them into two lists, depending on whether you think they are associated with **light** or **darkness**. | | | | | | | | | |
| torches | nights | | dark | | black | | bright | | clear |
| match-flare | | star-filled | | candle-lit | | lights | | unlit | |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
| Light | | | | | Darkness | | | | |

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| **After reading** |
| 1. Read straight through the poem once, to get an overview of what it is about. (Don’t worry if there are words you don’t know, or things that you aren't sure of.) 2. Using two different colours (one for light and one for darkness) find and highlight the 11 listed words (including repeated words). 3. Read through the poem again, and highlight in the relevant colour any other words or phrases in the poem that you think could also be associated with these two contrasting themes. 4. With a partner, discuss whether you think any of your ideas from your brainstorm in question one are reflected in this poem. |
| What might the title mean? Think about …   * What is usually being referred to when we talk of ‘the bright lights’ of a city? * If the poem is set at night, and in the dark, is the title appropriate? * Could there be more than one interpretation of ‘bright lights’ here? * Is the poet being ironic? * Who or what do you think is meant by ‘the bright lights’? * Why do you think the poet has chosen this title? |