

**Aim:** How does W.E.B Du Bois use the word *problem* to advance his purpose within the chapter entitled “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” of his seminal compilation of essays entitled, *The Souls of Black Folk*?

**Key Vocabulary Terms:**

Avail (n.) – help toward reaching a goal Delicacy (n.) – refined sensibility in feeling or conduct Epigraph (n.) a highly appropriate and significant quotation at the beginning of a book, chapter, etc. Mournful (adj.) – full of sorrow, very sad O (interjection) – archaic or poetic form of “oh,” used to address someone directly Strivings (n.) – strenuous effort toward a goal Till (preposition) – archaic or poetic form of until, meaning up to (a particular time) Tone (n.) the author or character’s attitude toward a subject Weary (adj.) – lacking strength, energy, or freshness because of a need for rest or sleep
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**Common Core Learning Standards:**

<a href="#">CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1</a>	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
<a href="#">CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4</a>	Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

**Do Now:** Read and annotate the epigraph to *The Souls of Black Folk*,

O water, voice of my heart, crying in the sand,  
 All night long crying with a **mournful** cry,  
 As I lie and listen, and cannot understand  
 The voice of my heart in my side or the voice of the sea,  
 O water, crying for rest, is it I, is it I?  
 All night long the water is crying to me.  
 Unresting water, there shall never be rest  
**Till** the last moon droop and the last tide fail,  
 And the fire of the end begin to burn in the west;  
 And the heart shall be **weary** and wonder and cry like the sea,  
 All life long crying without **avail**,  
 As the water all night long is crying to me.

by Arthur Symons

Highlight the line from the epigraph that is most significant. Next, highlight the phrase, and finally, the word that best portrays the theme. Share out with the class.

**MEA #1: Answer the question 1 AND Question 2 OR 3.**

1. How does this **epigraph** make you feel? Why?

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2. Describe the speaker’s **tone** in this poem. What words or phrases create this tone?

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3. What can you infer about this chapter from Du Bois’s choice of **epigraph**?

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**MEA #2:** After re-reading the following excerpt, provide your Personal Response AND Text-Based Evidence for each question.

[1] Between me and the other world there is ever an unasked question: unasked by some through feelings of delicacy; by others through the difficulty of rightly framing it. All, nevertheless, flutter round it. They approach me in a half-hesitant sort of way, eye me curiously or compassionately, and then, instead of saying directly, How does it feel to be a **problem**? they say, I know an excellent colored man in my town; or, I fought at Mechanicsville; or, Do not these Southern outrages make your blood boil? At these I smile, or am interested, or reduce the boiling to a simmer, as the occasion may require. To the real question, How does it feel to be a **problem**? I answer seldom a word.

**1. What is the “unasked question”? How do you know?**

<b>Answer:</b> What is the “unasked question”?	<b>Evidence:</b> How do you know?

**2. Why is the question “unasked”? How do you know?**

<b>Answer:</b> Why is the question “unasked”?	<b>Evidence:</b> How do you know?

**3. What words or phrases does Du Bois use to describe how “others” approach him? What can you infer from these descriptions about why the question remains “unasked”?**

<b>Answer:</b> What words or phrases does Du Bois use to describe how “others” approach him?	<b>Inference:</b> What can you infer from these descriptions about why the question remains “unasked”?

**4. To whom does the “problem” refer? How do you know?**

<b>Answer:</b> To whom does the “problem” refer?	<b>Evidence:</b> How do you know?

**5. Who or what does Du Bois mean by “the other world”? How do you know?**

<b>Answer:</b> Who or what does Du Bois mean by “the other world”?	<b>Evidence:</b> How do you know?

11.2.1 Lesson 1

6. What purpose does Du Bois have for using the word problem in the text as he does? How do you know?

Answer: What purpose does Du Bois have for using the word problem in the text as he does?	Evidence: How do you know?

**Scaffolded Quick Write Exit Activity (Via WITsi Sentence Expansion)**

**Statement:** He uses this word to advance his purpose.

- ❖ Who (uses this word)? .....
- ❖ What (significant word does he use in paragraph 1)? .....
- ❖ How (does he use this word to advance his purpose)? .....

**Expanded Sentence/s:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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**HW:** First, reread and annotate paragraph 1 of “Our Spiritual Strivings.” Then, preview and annotate the first half of paragraph 2, box any unfamiliar words, and look up their definitions.