

Notes for Thinking Allowed: 'Silence'

Silence: a complete absence of sound.

Silence is golden.

- 1 There are many adjectives to describe the nature of silence: peaceful, companionable, awkward, thoughtful, plus a lot more.
- 2 Places associated with silence: church, libraries, waiting rooms, exam halls.
- 3 Are we afraid of silence? A survey in America suggests that we are. How much do we value it? Does it depend on whether we are an introvert or extrovert.
- 4 Deafness.
- 5 Silence can be used to heighten tension for dramatic effect.

Silence is NOT golden: the verb to silence = suppress, gag, muzzle, quieten.

- 1 Repressive regimes with a silent opposition.
- 2 The power of silent protest.
- 3 We remain silent when we should speak up, as in the face of injustice or wrong doing.
- 4 *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson.

There are hundreds of quotations on the subject if you wanted to look them up, from Petrarch onwards.

I hope this will give us enough to think about.

Margaret Lovatt