



KS3 ASSEMBLY

THEME: THE NATURAL WORLD

PRESENTATION

For this assembly, some 6 speakers will be needed, but the exact number can vary according to how many pupils are available to take part. So, the script is just a suggestion as to how the assembly could be presented – more or fewer speakers could take part, joining or dividing up the passages as required.

MUSICAL ELEMENT

Every school will undoubtedly have its own way of incorporating music into an assembly or morning gathering. If it is customary to select a hymn from a school hymn sheet, then one could be chosen on the theme of nature/creation/creativity. Or a musical item could be presented through performance or recording, according to the teacher or pupils' choice. There is another option within the script if downloading from the internet is a possibility.

- Speaker 1: Since the beginning of this year in Wales and across the world, we have experienced the force of the natural world in different ways – through wild winds, thrashing waves, stormy rain and flooded rivers, as well as sunshine and signs of the earth flourishing. We have been reminded how powerful the world of nature is, and that we as humans are very small in comparison. We have been reminded that our lives are always totally entwined with nature, although we often forget to take proper notice of our world or appreciate it fully.
- Speaker 2: The relationship between man and nature has been a rich theme in the work of artists and makers through all time. Van Gogh painted landscapes of strong paint marks to convey the torment of his mind. Stravinsky wrote a modern piece called 'The Rite of Spring.' Mendelssohn was inspired by the echoing sound of the Scottish seas to write 'Fingal's Cave.' And a poet from Wales, called Dylan Thomas, wrote poems which conveyed how close he felt to nature, especially when on his aunt's farm in Carmarthenshire, or wandering the Taf estuary near Laugharne. He would often pinpoint little details from the world around him to create the atmosphere and setting of his poems.
- Speaker 3: He wrote about being outside in October like this:
'Especially when the October wind
With frosty fingers punishes my hair,
Caught by the crabbing sun I walk on fire
And cast a shadow upon the land.'



Speaker 4: He wrote about how he felt that the cycle of life and death in nature was what drove his life too, and he said:
'The force that through the green fuse drives the flower
Drives my green age; that blasts the roots of trees
Is my destroyer...'

Speaker 5: On his thirtieth birthday, this is how he described how lovely the day was:
'It was my thirtieth year to heaven.
My birthday began with the water-
birds, and the birds of the winged trees flying my name
above the farms and the white houses,
And I rose
In rainy autumn
And walked abroad in a shower of all my days.'

Speaker 6: In his poetry, we can hear how Dylan Thomas used all his senses to notice the details of the world around him. He appreciates nature for its harshness as well as its beauty. He appreciates the feeling of being one with the natural cycle of the world – from the light spring to windswept autumn.

There are probably people in our society who feel the same way in their work – farmers, park wardens, mountaineers and gardeners to name a few. But most of us probably tend to ignore what's around us and we miss wonders because of that.

Speaker 1: It's good to be reminded in the work of artists, musicians and writers of everything which is remarkable and marvellous in our environment. The musician Ron Hilrip was inspired by the poem 'Fern Hill' by Dylan Thomas to compose a new piece of music. It conveys the wonderful feeling the poet experienced being out in the fields on his aunt's farmland in Carmarthenshire. Let's listen to some of it.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZeBypSlj0-A>

(Some 2 minutes of this can be played, to get the feel of the piece, reducing the volume under the Thought for the Day which follows.)

NOTE:	In this section of the assembly, if using the above link is not feasible, it would be possible to have a pause to listen to a few minutes of music inspired by nature – for example, 'Fingal's Cave' by Mendelssohn, 'Vltava' from 'Ma Vlast' by Smetana or 'Lark Ascending' by Vaughan Williams, or a relevant hymn or musical item by a pupil.
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THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Speaker 2: We ask today for a keen eye to notice the world around us in all its beauty. We ask for patience to stand quietly sometimes and wonder at the great natural picture in front of our very eyes. We ask for stillness to notice the tiny details which are so easily ignored. We ask for the sense to respect our environment in its beauty and its dangers. We are a part of the cycle of this natural world, and in looking after the world we look after ourselves and our community too.

We give thanks for the creativity of every artist who has shown us something of the wonders of nature in their work. We share their appreciation this morning, and go out into our day ready to enjoy everything we see.