



The Henry Williamson Society

SCHOOLS' WRITING COMPETITION 2020

Guidelines

Titles/Themes: 'The World is Waking Up' or 'The Trees are Talking'

Henry Williamson (1895–1977) was a soldier, writer, broadcaster, naturalist, farmer and, above all, visionary writer. He served in the First World War, and wrote extensively of his experiences as a young soldier. After the war he settled in North Devon, where he started his writing career. Later he farmed for several years in Norfolk before returning to his beloved Devon. His nature writings are considered some of the best in the English language, with *Tarka the Otter* being his best-known book. *Tarka*, published over 90 years ago, came second in a poll conducted in 2017 to find the nation's best-loved nature book. Many of Williamson's early books paint a portrait of a long-vanished country life in the Devon village of Georgeham.

Judging criteria:

The judges do not want you to copy his style of writing, as we would like you to develop your own unique style. We are looking for a fictitious, imaginative, creative piece of writing based upon the theme of either 'The World is Waking Up' or 'The Trees are Talking'. This year, we are thinking particularly of nature writing within a conservationist environmental viewpoint. There are some examples of Henry Williamson's writings given in the source materials. The examples are there to help you think about his descriptive writing and get your imagination working. They should not be copied. Correct spelling, grammar and punctuation will be taken into consideration.

Your piece of writing might be about wild animals, the countryside, war, the future, nature and the environment – wherever your imagination takes you. Your piece of writing can be illustrated with your own drawings should you be inclined to do so. Henry Williamson's books are often beautifully illustrated.

Let your imagination run wild and tell us what the 'World is Waking Up' or 'The Trees are Talking' means to you.

Writing Task:

Write approximately 500 words in essay form, or as an extended poem, both using the theme of either: **'The World is Waking Up'** or **'The Trees are Talking'**.

Details, rules and source materials are available at our website,
www.henrywilliamson.co.uk
or by post from:

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Henry Williamson as a young soldier in 1915



Outside his cottage in Devon in the early 1920s



Norfolk, 1937



Henry Williamson's writing hut in Devon, where many of his books were written.