



EDITOR'S COMMENT

Welcome to the eighth edition of WJEC's *i.e.* magazine, and what a special one it is! 2014 sees the centenary of Dylan Thomas's birth and the first five months of the year have set the tone for another exciting seven months of deserved celebrations.

We are extremely grateful to those who have volunteered such a diverse range of contributions to help us at WJEC celebrate Thomas's life and work in this edition of *i.e.*, from the personal to the academic; I am sure this edition of *i.e.* will capture your attention.

The BBC has been leading the way with the celebrations and has described its Dylan Thomas season as one of the most ambitious seasons in a decade, as it presents a kaleidoscope of programmes across television, radio and online.

bbc.co.uk/dylanthomas is the digital home of the BBC's Dylan Thomas season, with exclusive clips, interviews, archive and galleries, you can catch up on all Dylan Thomas-related programmes via BBC iPlayer across this centenary year.

Wishing you and your students a successful term and a restful summer holiday,

Kirsten

Editor





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Calling all teachers of English... i.e. Magazine needs you!

WJEC would like to hear from you!

i.e. is WJEC's first subject specific online magazine created for teachers of English using contributions from teachers across England and Wales. WJEC need contributions from teachers just like you to include in future issues of i.e.

- Have you had a unique classroom experience?
- Have you taught in an unusual location or situation?
- Has a WJEC qualification especially inspired you or your students?
- Do you have a humorous or inspiring story from the classroom?
- Or do you even just have a few great classroom tips you would like to share?

If you answered yes to any of the above and are interested in having your article read by thousands of English teachers all over the world then you could be the perfect addition to a future issue of i.e.

You don't have to have any previous writing experience (although if you do that's perfectly fine as well) just send any ideas or even finished articles to english@wjec.co.uk

However if you don't want to write an article, or share some tips don't despair! WJEC is always looking for feedback on the website and you could be a part of making i.e. the best magazine it can be. Email any thoughts on previous issues or ideas for future issues to english@wjec.co.uk.

If you haven't already had a chance to peruse i.e. then you can view previous issues for ideas and inspiration on WJEC's website.

DEVELOPING DYLAN 100

Face it. There's a point in a young person's life when schoolwork gets boring. The work's too hard. The work's too easy. Peers are distracting. Make-up, football, acne, One Direction, parental break up, Grand Theft Auto, weekend jobs, the latest iPhone. It takes a strong character – or an isolated one – to ignore the majority decision to find other things more interesting.

But, too often, the baby goes out with the bath water. Books are associated with school. A lot of kids stop reading.

Who cares, right?

Well, according to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), "In all countries, students who enjoy reading the most perform significantly better than students who enjoy reading the least." This is like saying "students who enjoy running about the most are significantly fitter than those who sit about eating processed foods."

Reading is an exercise of the mind, and without it, we're wasting a muscle.



Our levels of literacy are dropping. The UK has slipped down the PISA rankings, and Wales itself is slipping behind England. (Estyn's annual

report found 40% of pupils arrive in secondary school with reading ages below their actual age.) Most tellingly, young people in the UK are the only ones in the Western world to fare worse than their older peers in tests in the basics. We are told these dropping scores in literacy will have serious implications, and that this lack of reading among young people will hamper the UK's future ability to compete in the global economy. Which – sticking with the theme – is like saying: "if you don't exercise more and eat a balanced diet you'll have health issues which will cost the NHS money."



But we should encourage reading for a far more fundamental benefit: because it helps our imagination and our ability to think; and we should hold on to that as deliberately as we should hold on to our physical fitness. The mind has to be exercised and toned, and the clearest way to ensure that is to read.

Reading is not endangered as such. We all do it. But there is a difference between reading to get on and reading for fun, a difference between walking to your car and walking along a coastal path.

Like exercise and eating well, reading is a habit; and like any habit, it can be kept up or broken. Given that, anything we can do to distance the act from the perceived drudgery of 'learning' and keep children reading is worth a shot.

If we can engage children in acts of writing, providing opportunities to articulate their imagination and see a result of that; if we can use books to fire ideas; if there's a programme that exists which makes the story the ball and allows students to run about with it any way they want... we should give it a try, shouldn't we?

That's where Developing Dylan comes in. In celebration of the writer's 100th birthday, Literature Wales hopes to motivate young people to appreciate and interpret Dylan Thomas' work in new and innovative ways, meanwhile developing literacy and creativity in Wales and beyond.



Through a series of workshops available in both English and Welsh, Developing Dylan aims to deliver over 1000 sessions in schools through Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 in Wales during 2014. All workshops reflect current curriculum requirements in Wales and are tailored to the relevant Key Stage, ensuring proper provision for differentiated learning and allowing children and young people the freedom to explore at their own levels.

Delivered by professional writers, the lively, interactive workshops will encourage students to look at the words, motifs and styles Dylan

Thomas used in his writing so they can bring these to their own work. Pupils will have a chance to start their own creative writing in the session, which they can later develop and submit to an international competition if they wish.

Schools can book workshops directly through the Developing Dylan 100 website where they can also find details of the writers involved in the project, among them Dan Anthony, author of *Rugby Zombies* and CBBC's *Tracey Beaker*; Dylan Thomas Prize short list nominee Jemma L King, and Eurig Salisbury, Chief Bard of Denbighshire Eisteddfod yr Urdd 2006 and Children's Poet Laureate 2009-2011.

There are also details of further activities in support of the project, including the international competition, an online event, and bilingual performances inspired by the writer's life and work, all aimed to show young people that the written word is a universal toy, and one you needn't grow out of.

Being allowed to write your own story, or poem, or song, or anything else, is like being told to 'go outside and play.' You might not like it at first, but in the end you won't want to come in. And when you do, perhaps you'll pick up a book.

As Dylan Thomas himself had it: "My education was the liberty I had to read indiscriminately and all the time, with my eyes hanging out."

Cynan Jones has written four novels and his short stories have appeared in numerous publications including *Granta* and *New Welsh Review*. He has worked as a teacher and as a tutor in a Pupil Referral Unit. His latest novel, *The Dig*, is recently published by Granta Books.

Developing Dylan 100 is being delivered by Literature Wales with funding from Welsh Government. This education programme is part of a high-profile festival to mark the centenary of Dylan Thomas's birth in 2014.

MY LIFE WITH DYLAN THOMAS TALK 2014 CENTENARY TOUR

On the first day of Dylan's centenary year I called in at his regular watering-hole The Boar's Head in Camarthen. There would surely be a plaque, possible details of a Dylan-themed weekend. The bar man stared blankly back at me as I asked about Dylan and what they had planned. Nothing. "It's Felinfoel brewery that owns it," he said. "I think they might be missing a trick," I said. "Can I get you anything?" he said.

I walked out into Lammas Street: Dark Gate to the right and directly across the road the English Baptist Church's four-column Corinthian portico loomed behind its narrow iron-railing gates. Augustus John punched Dylan Thomas right here, between alcoholic oblivion and the bible-bound gaze of the Lord's people. Then, leaving the roaring boy flat on his back in the road, he bundled Caitlin into his car and, having his wicked way with the gear-box, drove off into the sunset towards Laugharne.

From my father's work-shop on our way back home to Pentrefelin Street we'd make our way up Lammas Street towards Brian the Butcher's whose plumped breasts, splayed legs and firm sausages were carefully weighed and wrapped as double entendres. It is a sunny autumn day with candy floss clouds and not a hint of rain from the west. As we pass the Boar's Head Hotel a man emerges, half stumbling, loudly proclaiming in mid-sentence, "...Camarthen, Camarthen, on my pennyfarthen'..." and my mother takes my hand more firmly and pulls me a little too quickly down the street.

Professor Tony Curtis, poet and critic, presents his talk/reading based on his book My Life with Dylan Thomas.

Below is a list of tour dates for Tony Curtis' tour; however he is more than happy to add dates to the tour and to address teachers and students if requested. To learn more and to book the talk, please visit Tony Curtis' website or email him at profcurtis@btinternet.com.

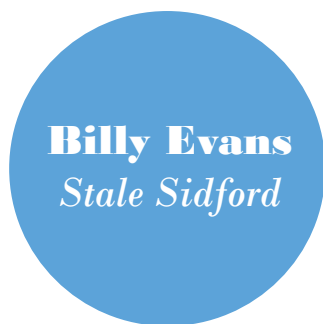
If in Wales, writers may be booked via Literature Wales who may pay 30% of the fee.

23 May - 6pm	Tony's Dylan Thomas Art Exhibition at King Street Gallery, Camarthen
25 June - 4pm	Worcester Literature Festival St. John's Church
4 Sept - 7:30pm	Mulfran's First Thursday at Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff
13 Sept - 2pm	Tony's Dylan Thomas Art Exhibition at Art Central, Barry
4 Oct	London Welsh Festival, London Welsh Centre, London
15 Oct	University of Lincoln
22 Oct - 7:30 pm	Wantage/Betjeman Festival Oxfordshire
29 Oct - 1:15pm	National Library of Wales

WRITING IN THE STYLE OF DYLAN THOMAS

Angela Lucas from Sidmouth College explores Dylan Thomas through *Under Milk Wood* with her year 9 students. Over the course of the unit she introduces them to Thomas' style, gets them to engage with his writing and eventually write their own piece of work in his style.

Angela shares with us one of the best pieces produced last year by one of her students.



It's just before midnight in stale Sidville. Night scrambles up the curved ladder of the sky, leaving behind an inky snail trail. It engulfs the landscape like the biggest, blackest Russian doll pulling the dullest, darkest facial expression.

Night begins when your bedside lamp switches off.

Lakes of fog toll down Peak Hill, veiled in haze. Battleship clouds navigate over bone cold, stone cold waves: wind driven. Granite genies curl up from chimneys into the boundless sky, as high as it is wide.

Downworlders peer from cracks in the earth; fragile foxes and cautious cats slink and skulk across roof ledges and spectral building sites. Nightfall is their saviour, protecting them in a shield of liquorice.

You take two steps towards your window. From your windowsill only you observe streaming streetlights that highlight striking cats' eyes sitting bold on ragged roads. You close your eyes and take a deep, dense breath. Only you can smell the musty mingle of exhaust fumes and chimney smoke shaking sooty hands. You listen closer. Only you can hear the twisted cackle of double-visioned drunkards staggering across reeling footpaths. You crop your head further out into the night. Only you are feeling the meek cloud's sighs against your cheek. It's bitter. Colder than you thought.

But night is just stirring.

The coal world is slumbering while the kohl whirled ether gazes downward. Downward. Down. Down on a figure of restful houses mourning for morning. Curtains closed. But you still watch shadows form in the wolf black, black cracks of alley ways.

Alleys are the darkest: a place where you have to dream of sunny tunes just to feel safe. But that is never quite possible in the world where majors and minors and notes are flat. The ebony trees looked painted against black canvass and the rough cut branches look like bony fingers of the night, rasping the sky as it waves.



There isn't a hiding place on earth that night time hasn't been first.

In your mind's eye you see night, positioned just outside the rays of the street lights. He tugs up his long coat collar and tips his bowler hat forward to disguise his face. Night ambles towards the Spar shop and saunters on by. Just browsing.

He takes vigilant steps towards the church, so not to rouse the sleeping that he keeps in his company. He stares with praying eyes and tips his hat once more. He mustn't stop there. Night dances down fruitful Orchard Close, the houses ripe in colour. He twists through Dyres Meadow, the dreams perfect for picking. Night scuttles down Warren's Mead and finally reaches the end fences.

Night has arrived.

Listen. Most nights motorbikes ride roaring by your window. The stillness is rippled by dancing gardens filled with tipsy party goers. Distressed old ladies stand at the edge of the plot, bawling about The Great War. How should you sleep? Next door you overhear those strangers, screeching at each other. She sobs. You hear her. For night is not for the vulnerable in this boisterous town.

But look. Some nights there is nothing to hear. Some nights you can only see the filthy-black tyre tracks. You can only notice the party mess, scarcely rejected. The uneasy old ladies find ease in photographs and you can't sleep now because you are waiting.

Angela was also kind enough to share her lesson plans for helping to inspire the next generation of acclaimed writers!

Lesson 1 Perform a text using the clues we find in the text

Students look at an extract from *Under Milk Wood* and in groups they decide what the extract means and find interesting features of the extract.

They then prepare and perform a dramatic reading of their extract.

Lesson 2 Identify the techniques that the writer uses

Students identify sentence types and understand that a sentence must contain a subject and a verb – except imperatives.

They then write their own imperatives.

Students are given more extracts to read. They then make a spider diagram or a list of the different techniques Dylan Thomas uses.

Using four ideas from their list they describe night time in a place that they know well.



Lesson 3

Think about the words we use in our writing

Students identify sentence types and understand that a sentence must contain a subject and a verb – except imperatives.

They then write their own imperatives.

Students are given more extracts to read. They then make a spider diagram or a list of the different techniques Dylan Thomas uses.

Using four ideas from their list they describe night time in a place that they know well.

Lesson 4

Think about the sentences we use in our writing

Students look at Thomas' use of lists and then write their own list of the people, or characters, who would be asleep in your chosen place.

Using lists again the students describe the route night takes through the town. They also think about how night behaves, e.g. night casts its spell on Potter's stile!

They then write two paragraphs that include lists, similes and metaphors, describing how night behaves in those places. Swapping their work with a partner they then add more verbs, adverbs and adjectives.

Lesson 5

Use the senses to make writing more descriptive

Students look at transferred epithet. They then create their own based on farm animals and places.

Students look at the way Thomas draws attention to the senses. They write down what you can see, hear or smell at night.

They then incorporate transferred epithets and senses into their writing.

Lesson 6

Preparing to write

Students use all they have learned so far about Dylan Thomas' writing and write their piece in his style.

**Maurice
Billingsley**
*A Tale of
Two Singers*

Two Singers

“To praise you is the desire of man, a little piece of your creation... you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.”¹

Thus Augustine opens his *Confessions*. Dylan Thomas is a modern Augustinian confessor, writing for the love of man and in praise of God.² Each writer illuminates the other.

Both faced similar issues: ambitious parents speaking the dominant, not their native, language of their family and country: Latin for Augustine’s family, English for the Thomases;³ a dissolute youth continued at imperial centres: Rome and Milan for Augustine; London and New York for Dylan; both were uncomfortably gifted with words: the convert Augustine mistrusted his polished eloquence when as a Christian he came to value plain speaking,⁴ while Dylan had to be goaded to finish his masterpiece.⁵ Metropolitan life left Augustine struggling with temptation⁶ until he found rest in God. Grace also worked in ‘seashaken’ Dylan, despite his drinking, debts and unfaithfulness to Caitlin.⁷

Where Augustine dissects his *City of God*,⁸ Dylan paints with glowing words. *Under Milk Wood*, too, opens with Creation:

“To begin at the Beginning:

It is spring, moonless night in the small town, starless and bible-black.”⁹

Many Singers in Harmony

Although Dylan wrote Do Not Go Gentle for his dying father, darkness in Llareggub’s city of sinful saints is not Augustine’s absence of light.¹⁰ His angels are here, the dead sing in dreams or Bethesda churchyard.¹¹ Their ‘How’s it above?’ harmonises with Mary Ann’s dream and Eli’s psalms to praise St. David’s small things.¹² “I said some words to the close and holy darkness, and then I slept.”¹³ All through the night “the processional salt slow musical wind” breathes life.¹⁴ *Under Milk Wood* is prayer, not the pagan theatre which Augustine regretted,¹⁵ though he too claimed “knowledge not possessed through the senses”;¹⁶ the poet’s gift.

¹ Augustine: '*Confessions*', Tr. Henry Chadwick, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, p3.

² John Davenport: 'Dylan Thomas, the Man', in E. W. Tedlock, Ed.: '*Dylan Thomas: the Legend and the Poet*', London, Mercury, 1963. P 81. Lancel, '*St Augustine*', p209.

³ Augustine: '*Confessions*', I, xiv (23) p 17; Davenport, 'Dylan Thomas' in Tedlock: 'Dylan Thomas' pp 75-76.

⁴ Augustine: '*Confessions*', III, iv (7), pp 38-39; V, vi (10), p78; IX, ii (2) p155-56.

⁵ Quoted by Nicolas Soames: 'Under Milk Wood – a Short History' in: Sleeve Notes to The Essential Dylan Thomas, Redhill, Surrey, Naxos Audio Books, NA434312, 2005; pp 11–21; ref. to p16.

⁶ Augustine: '*Confessions*', VI, xi (20), p 106; '*Confessions*', IV, ii (2), p 53.

⁷ Dylan Thomas: '*Prologue*' to Collected Poems, p2.

Dylan Thomas, '*Letters*' p 789; p 991.

⁸ Augustine: '*City of God*', Tr. Henry Bettenson, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1972.

⁹ UMW (Folio)13.

¹⁰ Augustine, *City of God*, 12.8, p480.

¹¹ Dylan Thomas: '*Under Milk Wood*', pp 2, 85.

Augustine, *City of God*, XII, 23, p205.

¹² Dylan Thomas: '*Under Milk Wood*', pp 4–6; p21–22; 24–25; 76.

¹³ Dylan Thomas: '*A Child's Christmas*', pages not numbered.

¹⁴ Edith Sitwell: 'Comment on Dylan Thomas' in Tedlock: '*Dylan Thomas*', p 150.

¹⁵ Augustine, '*City of God*', II, 4–5, pp 51–53.

¹⁶ Kathleen Raine: '*Defending Ancient Springs*', Oxford University Press, 1967, p21. Augustine, *Confessions*, X, xii (19) p 190.



Llareggub's people are brought to God by Eli Jenkins, who is not blind to their sins,¹⁷ but like his namesake, praises his creator morning and evening and prays he may “for all my life and longer... never, never leave” this earthly paradise.¹⁸ Polly Garter loves babies, lies with many men, but holds the aching memory of “little Willie Wee, who is gone, gone, gone”. Mog and Myfanwy will never consummate their love being too concerned for “the money to be comfy”.¹⁹ Dylan commented elsewhere that they could have married and had children, but “their passionate love, at just this distance, is all they need.”²⁰

Discordant Notes

The “iceberg-white” garments Mrs Ogmores-Pritchard assumes have become her shroud: Pelagius’ “germ-free” Superwoman daughter, virtuous without God’s grace, exudes “acid love” for her husbands before willing herself to “cold, quick sleep”.²¹ God-like was Dylan’s word for her tidiness: and Augustine’s for pagan debauchery, false gods edging out love.²²

Original Sin, turning from God to nothing in Augustinian and Calvinistic terms²³ arises in the children’s play: Billy Swansea hitting the girls, who gang up on Dicky who will not kiss Gwennie in their game: “It all means nothing at all”. Sin, Augustine tells us is turning away from God to nothing.²⁴ My pupil who was arrested one New Year’s night said his fighting was nothing. Augustine’s theft of pears was a ‘nothing’;²⁵ all found pleasure sinning as part of the gang.²⁶

The poet Dylan forgives his characters and does not dwell on the consequences of sin; even if the guilt racked Calvinist could not do so for himself,²⁷ a closet Manichee like Augustine insists on shading in the detail and convicting himself:

“how vile I was, how twisted and filthy... there was no way of escaping from myself... give me chastity and continence, but not yet.”²⁸

All Through the Night

Was *Under Milk Wood* a Credo? A death following a particularly bad bout of drunkenness hardly suggests a peaceful soul. But though he raged against the dying of the light, Dylan knew that the night was a time for creation, a time for healing. The child who snuggled up to God in the dark is the poet who hears the “processional wind” all through the night.

¹⁷ Dylan Thomas: 'Under Milk Wood', p 74.

¹⁸ Dylan Thomas: 'Under Milk Wood', p25.

¹⁹ Dylan Thomas: 'Under Milk Wood', p7.

²⁰ Dylan Thomas, 'Letters' p814.

²¹ Dylan Thomas: 'Under Milk Wood', p76–77.

²² Dylan Thomas, 'Letters' p814; 'Notebooks', p26.

²³ Augustine, 'On Free Will', 2.20.54. in Lucy Beckett, 'In the Light of Christ: Writings in the Western Tradition', San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 2006, p116.

²⁴ Augustine, 'On Free Will', 2.20.54. in Lucy Beckett, 'In the Light of Christ: Writings in the Western Tradition', San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 2006, p116.

²⁵ Augustine, 'Confessions', II, viii, (16) p33.

²⁶ Augustine, 'Confessions', II, iii, (4) p 28-29.

Dylan Thomas: 'Under Milk Wood', pp38; 56-60.

²⁷ Dylan Thomas, 'Letters' pp 676, 844, 876.

²⁸ Augustine, 'Confessions', VIII, vii, (17) pp 144-45.

The above is an extract from Maurice Billingsley’s essay “Two Singers from Two Cities of God: Dylan Thomas and Saint Augustine”. For further information and to read the full piece of work please contact Maurice at maurice.billingsley1@btopenworld.com.

HOW HAS DYLAN THOMAS AFFECTED YOU?

When we asked you how Dylan Thomas has affected your life we received an abundance of comments and stories ranging from the heart-rending to the comical.

That so many of you took the time to share your stories shows the overwhelming affect Dylan Thomas has had on so many people on both a personal and professional level.

It is clear that Dylan Thomas will continue to inspire and move people through WJEC English qualifications and through the hard work of teachers like you with your own Dylan Thomas stories and experiences.

Below are some of your stories and comments on Dylan Thomas along with some from us in the English Domain here at WJEC.

Helen Watkins
Cardiff and Vale College

During my A Level studies in Birmingham, prior to entering Cardiff University to study English in 1968, I was helping to organise a public speaking competition. In those days in girls' grammar schools, debating and public speaking were a central part of our lives. Interestingly in my current role as Head of A-Levels and GCSEs at Cardiff and Vale College we have re-introduced a very successful debating club as part of our enrichment activities and of course presentations are the life blood of WJEC.

So, in 1967, my poem for the public speaking competition was A Refusal to Mourn the Death by Fire, of a Child in London. As I had to learn the poem by heart, the nuances were embedded into my psyche and so began a lifelong journey with Dylan Thomas as a university student and then teacher. Dylan wasn't a conventional academic so the appeal of his writing has always been his variety of genre and style, available for all ages and experiences.

Alison Fisher

I haven't taught Dylan Thomas since my years as a very young teacher some 30 years ago. I remember that the A-Level students loved the musical quality of his poetry and related to his recollections of his childhood in poems such as Fern Hill. He has always been a personal favourite and I have several anthologies. My favourite is Poem in October and I remember its particular resonance on my 30th birthday in that month. Visiting Laugharne a few years ago and peering into his shed felt like a pilgrimage.

Marion Early

Dylan Thomas' play Under Milk Wood is a text dear to my heart as we performed it when I was in the sixth form at school. I played the part of Mary Ann Sailors. It was great fun.



David Izod
*Droitwich Spa
High School*

When my mum was dying in Rowcroft Hospice in Torquay in the Spring of 1987, I got hold of a copy of *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog* and used to take it in with me to read as I sat by her bedside. Sometimes I would read to myself and sometimes I would read to her.

I still can't read *Who Do You Wish Was With*

Kirsten Wilcock
*Subject Officer
English Language*

My first and most memorable experience of Dylan Thomas's work is as an eight year old child sitting in a primary school classroom.

After a pretty tumultuous week before Easter making cards and chocolate nests and decorated bonnets, Mrs Esau clearly needed a break from the glue and crepe paper and general chaos. She took out the old record player from her cupboard. "Now, you're in for a treat, my little bookies." She used Afrikaans diminutives for us constantly which added to her exoticism. "Mr Burton, who is a very fine actor, is going to read a story to you..."

And from the first crackle as the needle grazed the surface of the record, I was mesmerised. Still today, the harmony of Burton's voice with Thomas's words sounds like music rather than a 'play for voices': the lyricism, the intimacy, the movement, all continue to transport me to that stuffy, crackling classroom of many years ago.

Catrin Gwawr Ladd

A great lesson I remember was comparing the short story *The Peaches* with his poem *Fem Hill* and then, actually visiting the boathouse in Laugharne and the surrounding area on a school trip. This is where my love of modern Welsh writing in English began and after my Master's degree on the subject at Swansea University I became a teacher myself and started trying to convey that love of Dylan Thomas back to my pupils.

Twenty years ago there seemed to be more time and more scope somehow for the Curriculum Cymreig in all Key Stages, although I am delighted that some poems are studied in the WJEC Anthology still, as well my own personal crusade in A Level coursework. The various activities and events around Wales for Dylan 100 has been a real source of pleasure for me and my pupils. Here in Lampeter we have enjoyed being part of the Dylan Trail.

I only wish we as English teachers had more time to pass on all of our individual loves and interests to our pupils.

Angharad Ryder Owen
*Norbury Manor
Business &
Enterprise
College*

My Great Uncle, Octavius Owen (Uncle Ocky), was a barber and used to cut Dylan Thomas' hair in the Old Pound in Llansteffan. "Dylan had a nice head of hair, that boy" he used to say. Apparently, Thomas used characters from Llansteffan for the characters of *Llareggub* in *Under Milk Wood* and my uncle was the inspiration for *Ocky Milkman*.



**Alison
Morgan**
*Monmouth
Comprehensive
School*

I visit Laugharne a few times a year as we use timeshare accommodation there. I used my photographs of the village, castle, boathouse etc, as it looks today to show to my Year 7 Humanities class. Around Christmas time this year we were looking at the question, 'Have we lost the true meaning of Christmas?' One element of the topic was to look at appropriate literature that has a reference to Christmas. Of course one such example had to be Dylan Thomas' A Child's Christmas in Wales. We studied a fairly long extract, listened to some of it being read by Richard Burton and watched an extract of a dramatisation found on YouTube.

I was born in the late 1950s so it brought back long forgotten memories for me! My Year 7s then chose their own favourite lines, said why they liked them and drew an illustration to go with their quotation.

Viv Harris
*Ellen
Wilkinson
School for
Girls*

My favourite Dylan Thomas anecdote concerns his wife Caitlin and cooking chicken. I read about it many moons ago when I was

an undergraduate student and a quick internet trawl is yielding no definitive proof that it is anything other than apocryphal.

However in my memory, the story went something like this; she cooked a chicken without properly plucking it and brought it to the table still half raw. Dylan Thomas still ate it with relish and glowered in such a way that everyone else had to do so as well. Alcohol may have been involved.

I loved that he would support his wife so, even if their relationship was at times tempestuous, there must have been true love and affection there too. My daughter's middle name is Caitlin, partly in response to this tale.

**Cheryl
Island**

Dylan Thomas lived in Cwmdonkin Road, Swansea, as a child; along with my father and his older brother Ron (who was the same age as Dylan).

The three boys were great friends and a lot of time was spent in the spacious vicarage grounds where they would climb trees (my father and his brother lived at the vicarage as their mother was Housekeeper to the Vicar of Landore). One day Dylan had climbed an apple tree. My grandmother was underneath; she was cross for some reason with her sons. Dylan threw an apple at her; it hit her on the back of the head and took her by surprise. All three boys scarpered as they did not want to feel the full force of her tongue!

My father went to Swansea Grammar School and was taught by Dylan's father. Ron remained great friends with Dylan until he was posted abroad; they were seen out drinking together most nights, particularly in their twenties.

Both boys read his play Under Milk Wood and seemed to be able to guess the true identity of the characters. Indeed it is one of my favourite plays as well. I enjoy it so much as it typifies what I remember of the Welsh culture and characters when I grew up in Swansea. I would not have known the original characters that Dylan based his play on as I was born in the same year that Dylan died.

**Mark
Newman**
*Loreto Sixth Form
College*

I read Poem in October to my class of inner city pupils in Salford when it was indeed 'my thirtieth year to heaven', and I've read it often since, including at my retirement celebration. It is now my sixty-second year to heaven and the poem still moves me.

KEY DATES: SUMMER 2014

ADDITIONAL ENGLISH

4 May	Sample submission deadline
3 July	Reports to centres

ENTRY LEVEL ENGLISH

4 May	Coursework submission deadline
3 July	Results

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

28 April – 23 May	Controlled Assessment window
6 May	Levels 1 & 2 examinations
23 May	Mark submission deadline
14 August	Results

GCE

14 May AM	English Language LG1 examination
15 May	Coursework submission deadline
16 May AM	English Language and Literature LL1
16 May AM	English Language LT1 examination
3 June AM	English Language LG4 examination
6 June AM	English Literature LT4
6 June AM	English Literature and Literature LL4
14 August	Results



GCSE AND
LEVEL 1&2 CERTIFICATE

5 May	Controlled Assessment samples to moderator (PRU/ Special Schools/FE centres only)
5 May	Speaking and Listening Marks to WJEC
5 May	Speaking and Listening Outline of Activities form and Sample of Records to moderator
15 May	Estimated grades to WJEC
20 May AM	English Literature Unit 4201 examination
22 May PM	English Literature Unit 4202 examination
3 June AM	English/English Language Units 4171 & 4172 examinations
3 June AM	English Language Level 1&2 Certificate examination Paper 1
3 June AM	English Language Unit 4941 examination (WALES ONLY)

5 June AM	English Language Unit 4942 examination (WALES ONLY)
5 June AM	English Language Level 1&2 Certificate examination Paper 2
20 June PM	English Literature Level 1&2 Certificate Paper 1
25 June AM	English Literature Level 1&2 Certificate Paper 2
21 August	Results

WHAT'S ON

THEATRE



Under Milk Wood

11th March – 12th July

Dylan Thomas' unforgettable drama has been touring the UK since 11th March. However there are many more chances to go and see it with the tour ending in Richmond Theatre, London on the 12th July. For more information on dates and locations see the **Under Milk Wood Tour website**.

Laugharne Castle Poetry and Film Festival

6th – 8th June

Spend a weekend celebrating Dylan Thomas' life at Laugharne Castle. The festival offers a unique programme of film screenings, poetry readings, talks and creative workshops that will celebrate and build on the legacy of Dylan Thomas. For more information see the Festival website

Dylan

28th June – 20th December

The National Library of Wales will stage a multi-media exhibition along with a series of showcase events. Visitors will experience an insight into Dylan's world of poetry, stories, plays and extensive musings, guided by Dylan himself. The exhibition will include manuscripts which have never before been exhibited and items on loan from the United States.

Partnerships with dancer Eddie Ladd, Cwmni Theatr Arad Goch, poet Damien Walford Davies and visual artists Pete Finnemore and Russell Roberts will give a fresh perspective on Dylan's prose and poetry, the Laugharne Boathouse and Caitlin Thomas. For more information visit the **National Library website**.

USEFUL LINKS

The Stage

News, opinions, listings, reviews, jobs and auditions for the performing arts industry.

Theatres Online

Find theatres near you.

London Theatre Guide

Find London shows playing now or in the near future.





The Three Lives of Dylan Thomas

– *Hilly Janes*

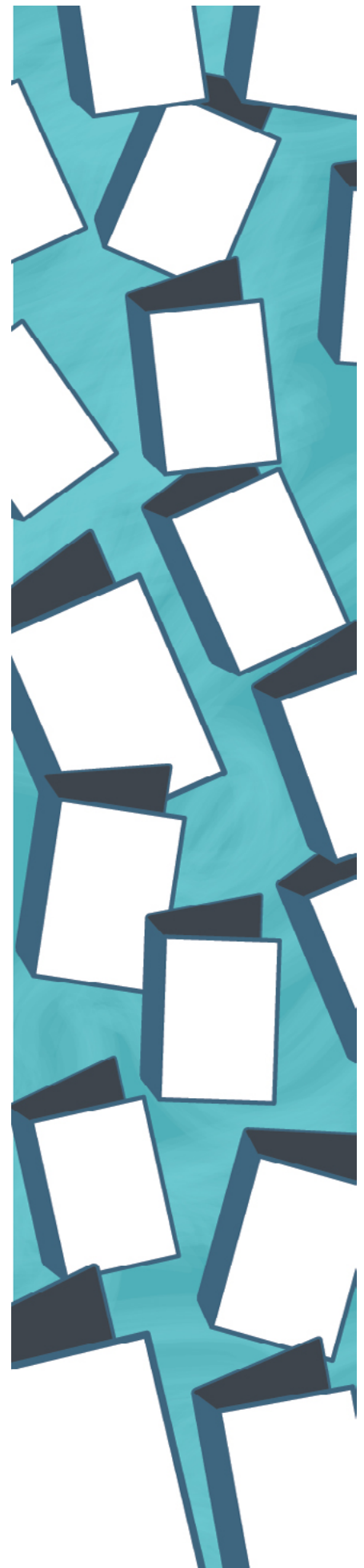
Using three paintings by Dylan Thomas' great friend, and her father, Alfred Janes; Hilly Janes walks us through Thomas' life from his birthplace in Swansea in 1914 to his death in a New York hospital in 1953. *The Three Lives of Dylan Thomas* draws on a personal archive of drawings, diaries, letters and new interviews with Dylan Thomas' friends and descendants to create a portrait that goes beyond Thomas' reputation as a boozy Welsh bard to reveal his charming, dedicated and lovable side.

Publisher: The Robson Press
ISBN: 1849546886
Published: 8th May 2014
No. of pages: 304

Poems That Make Grown Men Cry: 100 Men on the Words that Move Them – *Anthony Holden and Ben Holden (eds.)*

From fields such as literature, film, science, architecture, theatre and human rights 100 well known men, often in words as powerful as the poems themselves, write about the poem that moves them the most. Including names such as Salman Rushdie, Daniel Radcliffe, Stephen Fry, Seamus Heaney and Simon Armitage this collection delivers private insight into the souls of men whose writing, acting, and thinking are admired around the world.

Publisher: Simon & Schuster UK
ISBN: 147113489X
Published: 10th April 2014
No. of pages: 336



A Story Larger Than My Own: Women Writers Look Back On Their Lives and Careers

– *Janet Burroway*

The many accomplished women featured in this book belong to the ground-breaking generation of female writers coming of age during the mid-century feminist movement. They paved the way for aspiring writers by challenging the status quo and finding success for themselves. The stories in *A Story Larger Than My Own* show demonstrate the pressures that come with success such as crises of confidence and combining a successful writing career with family life. The stories give advice to writers at all stages of their careers whilst also acting as a collective memoir of a truly remarkable generation of women.

Publisher: University of Chicago Press
ISBN: 022601410X
Published: 27th February 2014
No. of Pages: 192

A Child's Dylan Thomas

– *Phil Carradice*

This book provides a short, accessible introduction to Wales' most famous poet and author. It tells the story of the Swansea boy who began his writing career when he was still a child, exercising his imagination in Cwmdonkin Park and in the company of his many aunts and uncles from West Wales.

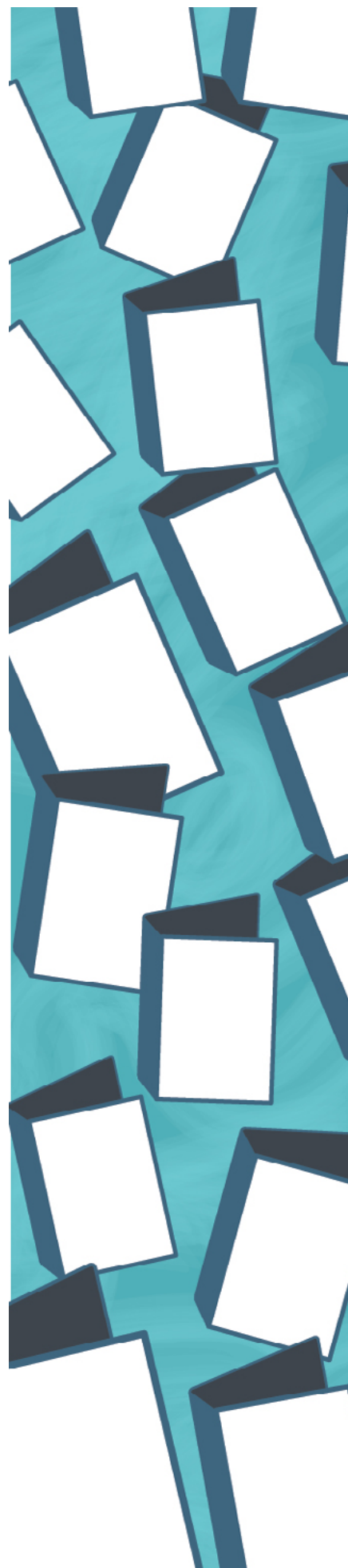
Publisher: Gomer Press
ISBN: 1848517491
Published: 28th January 2014
No. of Pages: 32

A Reader's Book of Days: True Tales from the Lives and Works of Writers for Every Day of the Year

– *Tom Nissley*

To find stories that make the lives of poets and authors' lives fascinating; their epiphanies, embarrassments and achievements Tom Nissley has combed literary history. In *A Reader's Book of Days* each page is dedicated to a day of the year and includes accounts of events in the lives of great writers and also fictional events which occurred on that particular day

Publisher: W.W. Norton & Company
ISBN: 0393239624
Published: 29th November 2013
No. of Pages: 464



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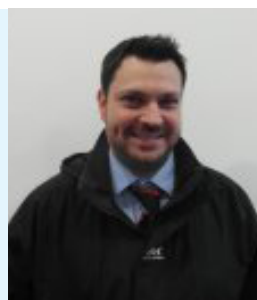
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