

2026 Eisteddfod English Recitation

Leisure by William Henry Davies

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

2026 Eisteddfod Welsh Recitation

Y Drych gan Dafydd ap Gwilym

Ni thybiais ddewrdras ddiridra
Na bai deg fwyneb a da
Oni syniais yn amlwg
Yn y drych; llyna un drwg!

Yna dywod o'r diwedd
Y drych nad wyf wych o wedd
Melynu am ail Luned
Y mae'r croen, mawr yw na'm cred.

Gwydr yw'r grudd gwedy'r griddfan
A chlais melyn lliw achlân.
Odid na ellid ellyn
O'r trwyn hir; truan yw hyn.

Pan diriaid bod llygaid llon
Y dyllau terydr deillion?
A'r ffluwch bengrech led echwyrth
Bob dyrnaid o'i said a syrth.

(translation)

The Mirror by Dafydd ap Gwilym

I always deemed my features bright,
And beautiful and fair,
Until yon mirror met my sight—
When, lo! an ugly face was there!

And from that mirror I have learned,
That now my beauty all is fled,
To yellow—Enid's scorn has turned
The glow that o'er my cheeks was spread!

And that by grief's incessant dews
My faded cheeks are changed to glass,
So striped with blue and yellow hues,
So thin, so pale, they seem, alas!

And that a razor now supplies,
Oh, woe! The place of the long nose;
And that the seat of the full eyes,
Holes, as by auger pierced, disclose!