

# William Wordsworth

**INTRODUCTION** ♦ William Wordsworth is best known as a nature poet who found beauty, comfort and moral strength in the natural world. If he were alive today he would probably be a member of an organisation that campaigns to protect the environment. For him the world of nature is free from corruption and stress, and offers man a means of escape from industrialised society (► Visual Links E2 and E3).

## LEAD IN

Have you ever felt you study too much or that there is too much to study? Well, read the following poem because William Wordsworth has some advice for you!

### Text E6 The Tables Turned

#### GLOSSARY

1. **quit**: leave
2. **you'll grow double**: you will not be able to stand up straight
3. **clear your looks**: give your eyes a rest
4. **toil**: hard work
5. **lustre**: light
6. **mellow**: soft
7. **dull**: boring
8. **strife**: struggle
9. **linnet**: small brown singing bird
10. **my life ... in it**: there is more to be learned from the linnet than from books
11. **hark**: listen
12. **blithe**: cheerful
13. **throstle**: singing bird
14. **no mean preacher**: a good teacher
15. **forth**: out
16. **ready wealth**: riches ready to be enjoyed
17. **breathed**: expressed
18. **vernal**: connected with spring
19. **sages**: wise people
20. **lore**: knowledge
21. **meddling**: interfering
22. **Mis-shapes**: changes the natural form
23. **dissect**: analyse in detail
24. **barren**: not fertile
25. **leaves**: pages of a book

(...)

Up! up! my Friend, and quit<sup>1</sup> your books;  
Or surely you'll grow double<sup>2</sup>:  
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks<sup>3</sup>;  
Why all this toil<sup>4</sup> and trouble?

The sun above the mountain's head, 5  
A freshening lustre<sup>5</sup> mellow<sup>6</sup>  
Through all the long green fields has spread,  
His first sweet evening mellow.

Books! 'tis a dull<sup>7</sup> and endless strife<sup>8</sup>:  
Come, hear the woodland linnet<sup>9</sup>, 10  
How sweet his music! on my life,  
There's more of wisdom in it<sup>10</sup>.

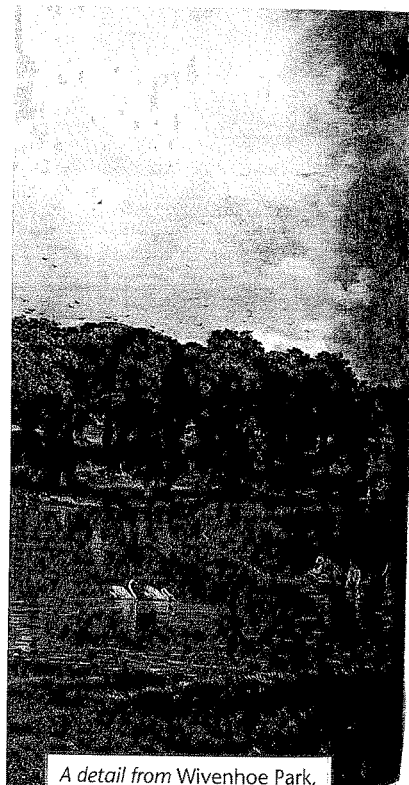
And hark<sup>11</sup>! how blithe<sup>12</sup> the throstle<sup>13</sup> sings!  
He, too, is no mean preacher<sup>14</sup>:  
Come forth<sup>15</sup> into the light of things, 15  
Let Nature be your Teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth<sup>16</sup>,  
Our minds and hearts to bless –  
Spontaneous wisdom breathed<sup>17</sup> by health,  
Truth breathed by cheerfulness. 20

One impulse from a vernal<sup>18</sup> wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good  
Than all the sages<sup>19</sup> can.

Sweet is the lore<sup>20</sup> which Nature brings; 25  
Our meddling<sup>21</sup> intellect  
Mis-shapes<sup>22</sup> the beauteous forms of things: –  
We murder to dissect<sup>23</sup>.

Enough of Science and of Art;  
Close up those barren<sup>24</sup> leaves<sup>25</sup>; 30  
Come forth, and bring with you a heart  
That watches and receives.



A detail from Wivenhoe Park, Essex, by John Constable (1816).