

Blackout poems – Country Diary

Blackout poetry is a way of creating new works of art without starting with a blank page.

We'll give you a creative prompt. All you need to do is cross out some words and leave others legible to create your own original work.

How a blackout poem works

Your finished text might look something like this:

~~It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way – in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.~~

Example from *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

Finished poem

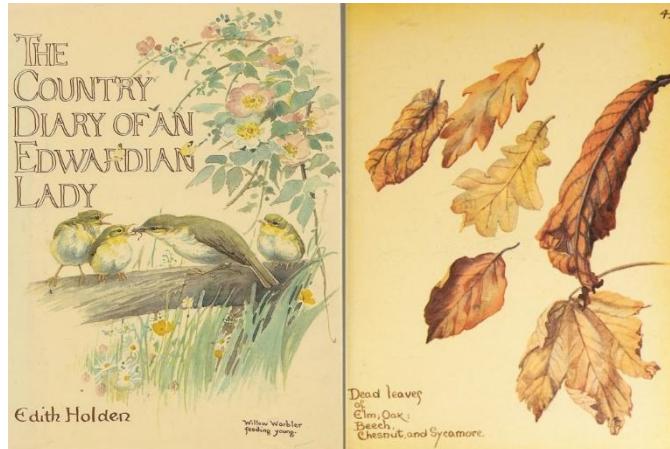
Wisdom was nothing like
The noisiest authorities

On the following page, you'll find a prompt to create your own blackout poem. Get your pen out and start scribbling!

Country Diary

In 1906, Edith Holden kept a journal documenting her experiences of living in the Midlands countryside.

Many years later her collection of poems, nature notes and sketches became a publishing sensation.



Use this as a starting point for your blackout poem

January

*The leaves which in the autumn of the year
Fall auburn-tinted, leaving reft and bare
Their parent trees, in many a sheltered lair
Where winter wait and watches, cold, austers,
Will lie in drifts; and when the snowdrops cheer
The woodland shadows, still the leaves are there,
Though through the glades and balmy southern air
And birds and boughs proclaim that spring is here*

'Old Year Leaves' Mackenzie Bell

*Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the night thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eve-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon*

'Frost at Midnight', S. T. Coleridge