

Scots Language Learning Journey

Third to Fourth level:

Literacy, Social Studies, Expressive Arts, Technologies, Health and Wellbeing

Overview

The context for study is learning about Scots language using clips from Scotland's moving image archive and BBC Scotland.

The resource is designed to be used in conjunction with the educational website **Scotland on Screen**.

Three-Step Approach

Our suggestions for learning experiences have been organised into three steps:

- 1 **Explore** – Close reading and discussion
- 2 **Discover** – Find out more (go into greater depth)
- 3 **Create** – Make something new

Each activity can be done on its own but the learning journey is more rewarding when it involves all three steps.

Prior learning:

Learners will be able to reflect on what they know about Scots language. They may be aware of some Scots words, but not fully aware that it is one of Scotland's three indigenous languages (along with English and Gaelic) with its own literature and history.

Learners should reflect on what they know about Scots language and – after watching clips included in this resource – see historical contrasts and social factors that have shaped where the language is today.

Learners should develop their understanding of how the films and television programmes are constructed. How and why were films made? Who made them? Where were they shown and what audience were they intended for?

Capabilities:

Successful learners: The use of Scots language and film are undergoing significant development in education settings. By exploring familiar themes using accessible media, learners are enthused and motivated. The use of technology for learning is encouraged. Creative and independent thinking is stimulated.

Confident individuals: Both Scots and film have a growing influence in terms of raising attainment, inspiring confidence and improving literacy skills. Studying Scots enables learners to develop transferable literacy skills, and can enhance engagement in language and literacy.

Responsible citizens: Knowing other languages and understanding other cultures is a 21st century skill set for students as they prepare to live and work in a global society. The Scots language provides a rich resource for children and young people to learn about Scotland's culture, identity and literature. Film clips can be an effective tool to assist in the learning and teaching of Scots.

Effective contributors: By stimulating critical thinking and discussion in the analysis of moving image texts and by enabling team work on creative projects, learners are encouraged to be proactive in their learning journey.

Relevant Experiences and Outcomes:

Literacy & English

When I engage with others, I can make a relevant contribution, encourage others to contribute and acknowledge that they have the right to hold a different opinion. I can respond in ways appropriate to my role and use contributions to reflect on, clarify or adapt thinking.
LIT 3-02a

As I listen or watch, I can:

- identify and give an accurate account of the purpose and main concerns of the text, and can make inferences from key statements
- identify and discuss similarities and differences between different types of text
- use this information for different purposes.

LIT 3-04a

I can show my understanding of what I listen to or watch by commenting, with evidence, on the content and form of short and extended texts. **LIT 3-07a**

When listening and talking with others for different purposes, I can:

- communicate information, ideas or opinions
- explain processes, concepts or ideas
- identify issues raised, summarise findings or draw conclusions.

LIT 3-09a

I can make notes and organise them to develop my thinking, help retain and recall information, explore issues and create new texts, using my own words as appropriate

LIT 3-15a / LIT 4-15a

To show my understanding across different areas of learning, I can:

- identify and consider the purpose, main concerns or concepts and use supporting detail
- make inferences from key statements
- identify and discuss similarities and differences between different types of text.

LIT 3-16a

Technologies

I can explore and use the features of a variety of familiar and unfamiliar software to determine the most appropriate to solve problems or issues. **TCH 3-03a**

I enhance my learning by applying my ICT skills in different learning contexts across the curriculum. **TCH 3-04a**

By using problem-solving strategies and showing creativity in a design challenge, I can plan, develop, organise and evaluate the production of items which meet needs at home or in the world of work.

TCH 3-14a

Social Studies

I can use my knowledge of a historical period to interpret the evidence and present an informed view. **SOC 3-01a**

I can make links between my current and previous studies, and show my understanding of how people and events have contributed to the development of the Scottish nation. **SOC 3-02a**

I can explain the similarities and differences between the lifestyles, values and attitudes of people in the past by comparing Scotland with a society in Europe or elsewhere. **SOC 3-04a**

I can describe the factors contributing to a major social, political or economic change in the past and can assess the impact on people's lives. **SOC 3-05a**

I can discuss the motives of those involved in a significant turning point in the past and assess the consequences it had then and since. **SOC 3-06a**

Through researching, I can identify possible causes of a past conflict and report on the impact it has had on the lives of people at that time. **SOC 3-06b**

I can compare the social and economic differences between more and less economically-developed countries and can discuss the possibilities for reducing these differences. **SOC 3-11a**

I can explain why a group I have identified might experience inequality and can suggest ways in which this inequality might be addressed. **SOC 3-16a**

Health and Wellbeing

I understand the positive effects that some substances can have on the mind and body but I am also aware of the negative and serious physical, mental, emotional, social and legal consequences of the misuse of substances. **HWB 2-30a**

I am investigating different careers/occupations, ways of working, and learning and training paths. I am gaining experience that helps me recognise the relevance of my learning, skills and interests to my future life.

HWB 3-20a / HWB 4-20a

Expressive Arts

I have experimented with a range of media and technologies to create images and objects, using my understanding of their properties. **EXA 3-02a**

Through observing and recording, I can create material that shows accuracy of representation. **EXA 3-04a**

I can create, develop and sustain a realistic or stylised character through the use of voice, movement and language. **EXA 3-12a**

Having developed ideas from a range of stimuli, I can contribute to devising, rehearsing and presenting drama or scripts. **EXA 3-14a**

I can sing and/or play music from a range of styles and cultures and perform my chosen music confidently using performance directions, musical notation and/or playing by ear. **EXA 3-16a**

I can use my voice, musical instruments or music technology to improvise or compose with melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre and structure. **EXA 3-17a**

Experiences and Outcomes for 3rd level, that could be adapted for those working at 4th level

Scots Scuil (2012, 6 mins) Colour/Sound

This clip is an excerpt from “Scots Scuil”, an hour long programme where James Robertson and Matthew Fitt invited Scots speaking bairns to come and “speak their ain leid fir a week.” This clip focuses on Cameron’s story, and his decision to speak Scots – the reasons for and against this decision are debated by Cameron and his family.

Look out for: **“a wee bit of a stooshie...”**
“A’Il jist set the box here the now...”
“if Ah git telt oaf bi ma Gran...”

EXPLORE

Reading, Listening and Talking

Key Questions:

This clip is an excellent example of a young person today who does speak Scots and wants to use it more, but, others around him – as well as Cameron himself – are aware of barriers, and have reservations about when is the time and place to speak Scots.

Watch the clip and make notes for each of these settings, listing the views expressed by the different people on the different settings where it is “ok” to speak Scots and which would be better suited to speaking English:

- the home
- work
- an interview
- with friends
- with family
- at school

From your list, which do you agree is an appropriate time and place for Scots – you might consider all to be acceptable settings for speaking in Scots language – give reasons to support your answers.

DISCOVER

Social Studies

In the clip we see prominent Scots language activist Matthew Fitt along with his fellow Scots language publisher at Itchy Co, James Robertson. James says, in Scots Scuil they are “teaching people how to read, write and speak Scots...” and Matthew adds “Scots is about sharin, not excluding – Scots Scuil is aw about sharin language...” In contrast, Cameron’s Dad says “it’s a total different language and I would say it’s slang” because he is worried it might hold him back later in life. Cameron’s Dad is right to be worried about this. Because of factors relating to the history and development of Scots, the language is stigmatised and suffers from a very low status and lack of respect – particularly in Scotland itself.

Consider and research why we have Matthew, James and Cameron’s Papa – all quite passionately – advocating the use of Scots.

Contrast and develop the arguments you can think of/research why Scots is not slang and can have a place in modern Scotland.

CREATE

Technologies / Literacy / Expressive Arts

Create a commentary of your own, like the news story documenting the “Scots Scuil”.

Begin by reviewing your own work done in the Explore & Discover sessions. Share and discuss the views of all learners in the class.

As a team (or in small groups) plan a documentary exploring the views and attitudes held firstly within your class, then also across your school and, if possible, across your community.

This could produce a documentary film, a written news piece, or perhaps a dramatisation to be acted out. Explore the talents and interests of those in your class/group.

When discussing and developing your finished piece, whether it may be a film, article or play, keep in mind the strong opinions some may have on Scots language, whether they are proud speakers of their “mother tongue” or not. As Cameron says in the clip, “When ma Dad tells me oaf fir speakin Scots – I don’t want tae answer back cause it’s ma Dad, but ... he might be different tae me, no ivrybody’s the same...”

Tam Trauchle's Troubles clip | (1934.9 mins) B&W/Sound

This clip shows the conditions in a 1930s Glasgow single-end tenement flat including the recess bed, stove and eating area all in the one room. The Trauchle family is introduced with Tam Trauchle and his sons Sam and Robert at home in their single-end tenement slum flat in the Gorbals.

Listen for: **“Ah ken hoo tae teach ye!”**
“they dishes”

“We huvnae the money [...] let's hae a sang”

This is an early sound film and the quality of the sound is muffled.

EXPLORE

Reading, Listening and Talking

Key Questions: *Questions can be set as an individual reading activity with pupils writing their answers OR as a talking activity splitting the class into groups.*

The film is introduced by Sir Charles Cleland – in English. In the space of one minute (from 1:30-2:30) the film features a variety of Scots language vocabulary and grammar used by Trauchle family. What examples can you find?

What is the effect of the English used by Sir Charles and the woman from the Education Authority when contrasted with the Scots used by Tam and the boys?

What has changed or stayed the same since the 1930s in terms of the place of Scots language in Scotland today? To what extent do you consider speaking Scots to one person, then English to another, to be an example of being bilingual?

The regional variety of Scots language used in and around Glasgow is referred to by linguists as “West Central Scots”. What are the unique features of West Central Scots, used both in the film and in Glasgow today?

DISCOVER

Social Studies

This film is one of a series of fundraising appeal films produced for the Glasgow Necessitous Children's Holiday Camp Fund to raise money to help send poor children on a holiday. What can you find out about Scottish families living in poverty today and in the past? Which charities have helped them?

Tam is a house husband. Was this common at the time, and is it less or more common today? Ask yourself what you do to help around your home. Research Scotland's tradition of men going out to work and how the role of women has changed since the 1930s.

Scots language is most commonly, though not exclusively, used in the home – why is this? Research the history and development of Scots language looking at significant events that have pushed Scots out of public life and into private life.

What are the exceptions to this in today's society? Can you find example of Scots language in the media, in politics, on display in the town/city where you live?

CREATE

Technologies

Prepare a digital presentation on your local area (whether that is a part of Glasgow or a different part of Scotland). Write and deliver the presentation including some Scots language. Use technologies such as film clips and sound recordings where appropriate and as a way to support the amount of Scots language included in your presentation.

Create a film or webpage for your school about the culture and heritage of all the learners in your school. Use Scots and other languages as appropriate.

Literacy / Expressive Arts – Drama

The scenes from *Tam Trauchle's Troubles* are obviously staged. Write scenes set in a Scottish home using features of Scots language which you have learned. Your script can be comic or dramatic – or could be created to support a factual documentary.

Tam O' Shanter (1958, 12mins) B&W/Sound

In this film the famous Robert Burns poem is recited and illustrated with drawings.

Listen for: **“drouthy neibors”**
 “...it gars me greet”
 “Cutty-sarks rin in your mind”

Look out for: **how the use of still images reinforces the impression of this as a literary text**

EXPLORE

Reading, Listening and Talking

Key Questions: *Questions can be set as an individual reading activity with pupils writing their answers OR as a talking activity splitting the class into groups.*

A narrative poem written by Burns in 1790, *Tam o' Shanter* uses a mix of English and Scots. Identify and translate the Scots language used in the text.

It is important for learners to know the differences between these two languages. Beginning with Robert Burns, discuss how and when you might want to use one rather than the other – or when and how you could use Scots and English together?

What other writers from Scottish literary history have explored the two languages in their texts?

Due to his drunkenness, Tam sees all manner of hallucinations. How does Burns use Scots to develop these in the poem?

Intoxication features in a great many Scottish texts, both poetry and short stories, novels and films. Discuss how this reflects and shapes Scottish identity, both past and present. What are the pros and cons of this portrayal of Scottish heritage and culture?

DISCOVER

Social Studies / History

Scots and English are sister languages, in the same way that there is often significant intelligibility between different Scandinavian languages, but as each of them has its own standard form, they are classified as separate languages. Similarly, much of Scots is readily intelligible, with some practice, to an English speaker. Research and discover the shared history of English and Scots from its Germanic roots, through to Old English and Anglian.

During a dark period for Scots language, in 1752 long lists of Scots words were drawn up to enable writers to avoid them! Although prejudice developed towards Scots language throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Scots continued to be spoken by ordinary people across the country. What examples can you find of Scots language now having a respected place in Scotland today, beyond its place in literature and in the home?

In the second half of the eighteenth century, there was a great flourishing of poetry in Scots. This revival culminated in the great poems of Robert Fergusson in Edinburgh and Robert Burns in Ayrshire (the poetry which most famously brought the Scots language to the world). At his peak, Sir Walter Scott was the most famous author in the world. Find out how Scots language literature and film has been treated by international audiences?

CREATE

Literacy / Expressive Arts

In the 1990s, Scottish figurative painter Alexander Goudie created a **cycle of 54 large format paintings** (see Weblinks) dedicated to this Robert Burns' poem. It is displayed at Rozelle House Galleries, near Burns' home in Ayrshire. Look at the paintings and study Goudie's illustrations in contrast to those used in the film clip.

Use the paintings to storyboard a script for the poem where instead of illustrations (as used in the film clip) your new version of the film is live action.

What other techniques can you use to give a modern and original feel to your new version? Can you retell the poem in contemporary Scots, using words and phrases from your local variety of Scots language? You may wish to write some of Burns' English lines in Scots.

If you were to reset your version of the text in your local area, which places would you include? Gather photographs of the locations and settings or draw them in a creative or realistic way.

Using the list of texts you created of other writers from Scottish Literary history, select one and make your own cycle of illustrations. Can you incorporate the photos and drawings you made of your local area?

Sisyphus (1971. 3 mins) Colour/Sound

This 3 minute film is said to be Scotland's first cartoon on film. A version in Scots of the Greek legend of Sisyphus, read by Robert Garioch himself.

Listen for: **“Bumpity down in the corrie
gaed whuddran the pitiless whun stane,
Sisyphus dodderan eftir it,
shair of his cheque at the month’s end.”**

Look out for: **the style of animation and colours used**

EXPLORE

Reading, Listening and Talking

Key Questions: *Questions can be set as an individual reading activity with pupils writing their answers OR as a talking activity splitting the class into groups.*

Watch the film then read the text for Robert Garioch's Scots retelling of this Greek myth. To what extent does being based on a myth make this story of the everyday “wee” man of Scotland into something more meaningful?

How does the story being told in Scots language add to the meaning?

What words and phrases has Garioch successfully incorporated into his text which are unique to Scots language?

Scots language is often used for comic purposes. Identify and discuss the way Garioch and the makers of the film use Scots language to comic effect? Contrast this with the deeper meanings of the text and how it reflects the identity of the working class Scotsman during different times in Scotland's history.

How effective is this style of animation in reflecting Sisyphus' struggle?

DISCOVER

Modern languages

It is widely accepted that there are different 'regional varieties' or dialects of Scots which taken altogether are collectively known as Scots language. Which other modern languages are similar to this? For example, modern day Greek has a standard written form, but many different spoken dialects.

The name 'East Central South' is used to acknowledge the unique variations that appear in some of the Scots language used in and around Edinburgh. What features can you find in the film, or from your own knowledge that are unique to Edinburgh?

Despite some differences due to the different social, linguistic, cultural and historical influences unique to each area, the regional varieties of Scots are mutually intelligible. Robert Garioch, a proud speaker of the Scots unique to Edinburgh, translated over a hundred satirical sonnets by the Italian poet Guiseppe Belli (1791–1863), which written originally in a dialect of Italian. Research Garioch's sonnets and translations of Belli, starting with the poem *The Philosopher Cafe-Proprietor* and *The Dug*.

CREATE

Technologies

Play only the sound from the film – no picture, just Garioch's voice. Using the narration as your script, storyboard a new version for the films' visuals.

Will your film adaptation of the text still be an animation? If so, how can you incorporate modern technologies and techniques to make your version unique and vibrant? If not, where is your film set? Can you go location scouting in places accessible to you?

Expressive Arts – music & drama / Literacy

Bring together Garioch's voice and your visuals for the film. Can you also create a musical score? You can source existing music or sounds for your film or create new music.

What is involved in the process of synchronising the visuals of a film with the score and the narration? If you create your own soundtrack, what steps are involved in recording a reading of someone else's text?

Scots Language Learning Journey

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Weblinks

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement>

<http://www.scotslanguage.com/>

<http://www.dsl.ac.uk/>

Alexander Goudie paintings <http://www.goudie.co.uk/images/GoudiePresentationPictures.pdf>

Wee Windaes Scots language learning resource for schools <http://wee-windaes.nls.uk/>

Witches in Scottish Literature <http://www.nls.uk/learning-zone/literature-and-language/themes-in-focus/witches>

The ideas factory: thinking like a writer <http://digital.nls.uk/ideas-factory/>

Scotland on Film learning resource <https://www.intofilm.org/resources/1136>

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