

Classroom Resources

Burns' Night Activity

1 Read the sentences, then match the words in bold to a picture.

- 1 A: What shall we have to eat with the chicken?
B: Let's have some carrots and some **tatties**.
- 2 A: What's Julie's new boyfriend like?
B: He's a nice **laddie**.
- 3 A: Where did you go on your holiday?
B: We stayed in a castle by a **loch**.
- 4 A: Do you sell candles?
B: **Aye**, we do.
- 5 A: Does your brother have any **bairns**?
B: Yes, he has a daughter called Emma.
- 6 A: Lucy is a pretty **lassie**, isn't she?
B: Yes, she's very attractive.
- 7 A: What did you do on Saturday night?
B: We went to a **ceilidh**. We had a great time.
- 8 A: Is it true that men never wear underwear under their **kilts**?
B: I'm not sure!
- 9 A: Would you like some more dessert?
B: Just a **wee** bit please.
- 10 A: Do we have any biscuits to go with our tea?
B: We have some **shortbread**.
- 11 A: Can you play a musical instrument?
B: I can play 'Scotland the Brave' on the **bagpipes**.
- 12 A: Have you ever eaten **haggis**?
B: No – I don't want to. I'm not sure what's in it!

Notes:

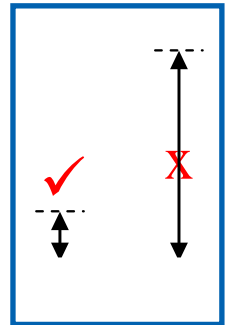
- Aye is pronounced /ai/
- Bairn is pronounced /beə'n/
- Ceilidh is pronounced 'cay-lee' /keili:/
- Loch is pronounced /lɒx/ . /x/ is a Scottish, not an English sound. It sounds midway between /k/ and /h/.



a _____



b _____



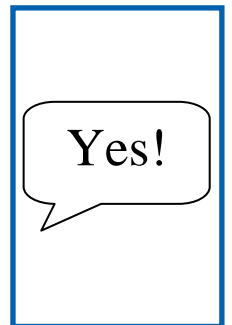
c _____



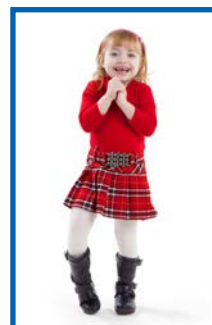
d _____



e _____



f _____



g _____



h _____



i _____



j _____



k _____



l _____

- 2 Read about Burns Night. Complete the spaces with a word from part 1. You may use a word twice, and you may not need all the words.

Burns' Night

Burns' Night is a celebration of the Scottish poet Robert ('Rabbie') Burns, who lived between 1759 and 1796. Many Scottish people hold a Burns' Supper on 25th January, the poet's birthday. Everyone is welcome at a Burns' Supper; men, women and (a) _____. Most people, both men and women, wear the traditional Scottish dress, the (b) _____.

First of all, the guests say the Selkirk Grace, a well-known prayer of thanksgiving written by Robert Burns.

The guests are served 'cock-a-leekie' (chicken and leek) soup as a starter. Then it's time for the main course – this is always (c) _____, served with 'neeps' (parsnips) and (d) _____. The (e) _____ is carried into the room by the cook, while someone plays the (f) _____. Often, someone recites Burns' famous poem: 'Ode to a Haggis'.

There will also be a traditional Scottish dessert followed by coffee and (g) _____. People may also enjoy a (h) _____ drop of Scotch whisky!

After the meal, there are a number of speeches. The first speech toasts Burns and his poetry. Then, a male guest will make a speech to thank the women in the room. This is called the 'Toast to the (i) _____.' After this, a female guest will reply by toasting the (j) _____. These toasts are funny, but not too impolite.

After the speeches, there may be more poetry readings. Often, people join hands and sing 'Auld Lang Syne' – another of Burns' poems, which remembers old friends and old times. Sometimes, after the formal dinner, there is a (k) _____ where everyone can dance.

Classroom Resources

Burns' Night Activity

- 3 Skim the three poems and their English translations. Give them their titles: 'The Selkirk Grace', 'Ode to a Haggis' and 'Auld Lang Syne'.

Original Scots Version

English Translation

a _____

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great chieftain o' the pudding-race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy o' a grace
As lang's my arm.

*Fair and full is your honest, jolly face,
Great chieftain of the pudding race!
Above them all you take your place,
Stomach, tripe, or intestines:
Well are you worthy of a grace
As long as my arm.*

b _____

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and auld lang syne?

*Should old acquaintances be forgotten,
and never brought to mind?
Should old acquaintances be forgotten,
and old times?*

For auld lang syne, my jo,
for auld lang syne,
we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.

*For old times, my dear,
for old times,
we'll take a cup of kindness yet,
for old times.*

c _____

Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it;
But we hae meat, and we can eat,
And sae let the Lord be thankit.

*Some have meat and cannot eat,
Some cannot eat that want it;
But we have meat and we can eat,
And so let the Lord be thanked.*

Glossary

jolly = happy

chieftan = boss

pudding = a hot food, sweet or savoury, containing flour

race = a group of people with similar physical characteristics

tripe / intestines = the stomach / the digestive system

worthy = deserving

acquaintance = friends

the Lord = God

- 4 Complete the Scots-English dictionary by finding translations in the poems.

Scots	English
aboon	
painch	
	intestines
	well
word	
	long

Scots	English
auld	
auld lang syne	
	take
	have
	cannot
sae	

Classroom Resources

Burns' Night Activity

Learning Objectives: Vocabulary, reading skills (deducing meaning from context, following a thread)	Preparation Time: 5 minutes
	Completion Time: 20 minutes
Skill/Grammar: Reading, pronunciation, writing	Age/Level: Intermediate–Upper Intermediate
Resources: Burn's Night ACTIVITY	

Introduction

- Ask the class if any of them have heard of Burns' Night. Elicit any information that they have.
- Tell the class some facts about Burns' Night.
 - It is a Scottish festival
 - It celebrates the life of a Scottish poet, Robert ('Rabbie') Burns
 - It is celebrated on 25th January.
- Hand out the first page of the Burns' Night Activity.
- Tell the students that they will read twelve short dialogues. They should match the word in bold to the correct picture. They should not use dictionaries. The meaning of the words will be apparent from the context.
- Draw students' attention to the pronunciation of the Scottish words.
- Put students in pairs and ask them to practise the short dialogues.
- Hand out the second page of Burns' Night Activity.
- Ask students to fill the gaps using the vocabulary from the first page.
- Check answers.

Answers

a bairns b kilt c haggis d tatties e haggis f bagpipes
 g shortbread h wee i lassies j laddies k ceilidh

Optional Vocabulary Game

- Tell the students that you are going to play a game testing them on the Scottish vocabulary. First, give them 1 minute to memorise the vocabulary from the page.
- Ask the students the following:
 - It's a type of musical Instrument from Scotland. What is it?
 Elicit the answer: bagpipes
 In pairs, students play the same game. Students take turns to describe a Scottish word. The other student says the word without looking.
- Tell the students that they are going to read some of Robert Burns' poems. Warn them that they are written in the Scottish dialect. Some words are spelt differently, some are abbreviated using apostrophes and some are completely different.
- Hand out the third page of the Burns' Night Activity.
- Ask students to match the titles to the poems. Draw their attention to the English translations on the right, and the glossary at the bottom, where they can find the meanings for unknown words.

Scots	English
aboon	above
painch	stomach
thairm	intestines
weel	well
wordy	worthy
lang	long

Scots	English
auld	old
auld lang syne	old times
tak	take
hae	have
canna	cannot
sae	so

Answers

a 'Ode to a haggis' b 'Auld Lang Syne' c 'Selkirk Grace'

- Tell students to use the English translations to complete the English/Scots dictionary in the table.