

Scots language and culture teacher CPD

Unit 4.4 Activity 3A

Model Answer

This is a model answer. You might have noted down other facts and ideas.

Source 1.

Learners may find that the style of written Scots is not exactly how they might speak Scots to each other and they may need to consult the English version of the text for words such as *muckle* (big), *scrievins* (writings), *anent* (about, concerning), *hooiver* (however), *aforesyne* (ago), *herriet* (drove out, harried), *thriepit* (debated, discussed), *dowie* (depressing), *bidit* (lived). Questions, suitable for an S2-3 History class, could include:

- When was the Battle of Nechtansmere and who won the battle?
- What is the origin and date of the name Picts.
- Name two Pictish tribes and one Pictish King
- What was the mightiest Pictish Fort, and where is it located?
- Describe this fort's layout and structure.

Source 2.

A possible translation of the first poem may be:

To Norway, to Norway to Norway over the foam (sea)
The King's daughter of Norway, you must bring her home

They hadn't sailed a league a league, a league but barely three
When the sky grew dark and the wind blew loud and stormy grew the sea

Half way, half way, half way to Aberdour, it's fifty fathoms deep
And there lies good Sir Patrick Spens, with the Scots Lords at his feet.

Blind Harry's *The Wallace*, whilst written a century and a half after Wallace's time, demonstrates the legend that has grown up around him and demonstrates how he opposed many of the Scottish nobility, the barons, and recovers support across Scotland. The language of Early Scots gives an exciting element of the exotic past and approximates to the language Wallace would have spoken, as well as Norman French, and probably Latin too. There is an opportunity to show learners that Scotland was a multilingual place for centuries – Gaelic, Scots, Norman French, Latin, Flemish, Inglis and that it continues to be multilingual today.

John Barbour's *The Brus*, again in Early Scots, paints a heroic picture of Robert The Bruce, and was once one of two books that most households had a copy of, that and the Bible. Bruce would have spoken the Early Scots of the poem, in addition to Old English, Norman French, Latin and Gaelic. Again, this demonstrates how multilingual Scotland was at the time. The teacher or learners having a go at reading sections of *The Brus* in class would bring colour to the topic, and a realisation that Scots has been around for more than 700 years gives confidence to Scots speaking bairns, as well as reinforcing that Scots is a language with a history, not just a slang or region specific dialect.

Source 3.

Layne = wool; *freinyeis* = fringes; *pasmentis* = edging; *quhairthrow* = as a result of which; *skayth* = injury. The qu- is typical of Middle Scots for what is now largely wh-, or in the Northeast f-. *Quhilk* for example is 'which', and in the North-East was until recently *filk*. *Quhatsumeuir* for whatsoever etc.

Questions for an S3-4 class could be:

- Which words in the Scots version seem most strange to you?
- What are you not allowed to wear at school?
- From the text, what clothes were 'commoners' not allowed to wear
- Explain why Nobles would not want commoners to wear fine clothes?

Source 4.

These accounts of conditions for soldiers in WWI are uniquely written in the language the soldiers would have spoken, as they were collected first-hand by a Scots speaker, Jock Duncan. Therefore, they are from the heart and conjure up stark images, and the straightforward manner in describing horrific conditions adds to the emotional impact. There is a rich vocabulary of descriptive words for mud and water: *the soss o dubs*; *the pleiter o watter*; *up tae yer knees in goor*; *dubs up tae ma kweets*. A lot of the soldiers were farm labourers and could richly describe every condition of the ground and the unwelcome wildlife – rats and lice. Learners could label trench models with these rich Scots words, spoken every day by the soldiers.

Source 4. again

The 14-18 pipers are famous in the Scottish Regiments, bagpiping to encourage the soldiers out of the trenches and when they 'went over'. They played a big part in raising the morale of young soldiers, even though it is doubtful how much they would have been heard above the battery of shells. Some learners have researched local pipers who fought in WWI, such as PM Jimmy Robertson, who in solitary confinement in a POW camp composed the oft heard tune Farewell to the Creeks, scribbling it down on a piece of yellow blotting paper, which he kept all his life. He worked as janitor at Banff Academy on his return. Soldiers would have sung both the traditional songs and popular songs of the day. The cultural elements so important to the soldiers is often left out of study in WWI topic courses.

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