

# Scots language and culture Teacher CPD tutorial

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# *Whaur wir been sae far:*



## **Unit 5: Scots language in Literature and Creative Writing**

This unit explores the rich diversity and creativity of the Scots language through a wide range of literature before applying resources and techniques to your own teaching of creative writing using Scots.

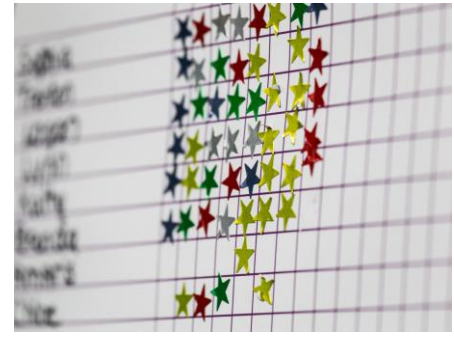
Contemporary Scots is written in the manner in which it is spoken and since there are multiple dialects, each with their own distinct grammatical and syntactical features, it is important for learners to listen to the sounds, intonation and rhythm of the words, as well as the way in which sentences are constructed. Therefore, listening and reading texts aloud as often as possible is a fundamental part of the creative writing process irrespective of the related reading and writing level within the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).



## Unit 5

### Quotes from your lessons and observations:

George's Marvellous Medicine...in Shetland... Dodie's Phenomenal Pheesic !!



Reading the chapter took longer than reading it in English as we had a lot of discussions about the meanings of words and phrases. Pupils looked back over the chapter for descriptions and we gathered the words on the board including ones we were not familiar with.

Pupils enjoyed using the Shetland app on the ipads to search the meanings of words. We don't have many copies of Shetland dictionaries in school so having the app installed on the ipads is making it more accessible for pupils to write and understand Shetland. Using the bank of words on the board pupils wrote short descriptions. Some of the bairns did write good descriptions but I would have liked to have been there for the duration so I could have supported their writing more.

To raise awareness of Scots in the curriculum with parents I put up a display for our Primary open day at the end of term. I displayed some of the pupils work from Da Trow and Dodie's Phenomenal Pheesic and wrote the captions in Scots for pupils and parents to read. Another class teacher had recordings of pupils' translations of traditional tales for parents to watch by QR code. A few parents have told me that their bairns are speaking about the activities I've been doing with them at home, which is pleasing.

# Whit dis Donovan's yuise o Scots dae?

## Clare Examples

'And when ah'd finished something amazing hud happened. Ah canny explain whit it wis but the glitter jist brought everythin tae life, gleamin and glisterin agin the flat cardboard. It wis like the difference between Christmas tree skinklin wi fairy lights and wan lyin deid an daurk in a corner' (p 1).

- Some readers feel that Scots allows the characters to be more expressive
- Some readers feel that the characters are more real
- Some readers feel it allows intimate knowledge of the character
- Some feel they can identify with the words
- Wit dae you hink?

“A wantit tae encourage thi candidates tae explore thur ain meanins an thi connotations they attachit tae these wurd.

A kin see how in thi long-term a cud encourage creative ritin an, a think, this is a way fur me tae develop oor yuise ae Scots.”

- The use of Scots might be a feature you want to explore.
- It is a technique available to the author and used throughout the text of *All That Glisters*, it is woven throughout the story
- Do you feel you know Clare better for hearing her talking in a guid Scots tongue?

# Resources



I'll provide a Photocopy of the relevant pages, if we don't have enough books.

- BBC Bitesize  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/guides/zbbmn39/revision/2>
- You really ought to have opened your account with BBC Bitesize by now.

## Unit 5

### Quotes from your lessons and observations:



A central theme across the readings is the distinction between private and public voice. Livingston (2019) and Jamieson and Ryan (2019) demonstrate how social media has enabled Scots to move into semi-public and public written spaces without losing its intimacy or authenticity. Research indicates that speakers of minority languages are more likely to use them in semi-private online interactions than in fully public ones, reflecting how audience perception influences language choice (Jamieson and Ryan, 2019).

This movement from private to public has also influenced my own professional language use. Writing work emails in Doric for the first time marked a significant shift in how I perceived the appropriateness of Scots in formal communication. While initially approached with some hesitation, these communications were positively received and served to normalise Scots within professional dialogue. This experience reinforced the importance of educators deliberately modelling the values they seek to embed within classroom practice and demonstrated in practical terms how public use contributes to linguistic legitimacy.

Closely linked to this is the concept of “writing like you speak”. Jamieson and Ryan (2019) highlight the high level of linguistic awareness demonstrated by writers using Scots online, challenging assumptions that non-standard writing lacks sophistication. This tension mirrors challenges often observed in classrooms, where pupils may hesitate to write in Scots for fear their language is incorrect or inappropriate. Pupils are often confident using Scots in informal spoken settings yet reluctant to use it in written work that feels public or assessed. The readings suggest that this barrier is socially constructed rather than linguistically necessary (Livingston, 2019). Creating classroom spaces that feel collaborative and supportive through shared writing, discussion or performance, can help pupils transition more confidently from private voice to public expression.

# *Whaur wir gaan tae nixt...*

## **Unit 6:**

## **Scots language, Creativity and the Expressive Arts**



In this unit you will have the opportunity to learn from the much-celebrated artist Gerda Stevenson. Not only has she written the content of the unit, but she is also sharing her own Scots language poetry throughout – specifically from her 2018 collection *Quines*.

The unit is written in the first person as it provides a unique perspective of Stevenson's work. She has crafted a rich unit of material for practitioners to engage with in their own study, including recordings of her reading the poems she discusses. At the same time, we hope that you will find many opportunities for using parts of this unit in your own classroom for your pupils' learning of and about Scots.

We at the Open University and Education Scotland were delighted to gain such access to both Stevenson's poetry, many other of her creative projects, as well as to the thinking, planning and writing process which lead to the creation of her fabulous collection of poetry celebrating women from across both Scotland's landscape and the history of Scotland.

# Breakout Rooms



Whit is nixt ta dae...

<b>Unit 6: Scots language, Creativity and the Expressive Arts</b>	<b>3. Tutorial</b>	
	<b>4. Planning</b>	
	5. Application	<b>Submit Unit 6 Professional Recognition task in <a href="#">your reflective blog</a> by Saturday 16 May</b>
	6. Community Link	
	7. Research on teaching Scots language	<b>Submit Unit 6 Application task in the <a href="#">course forum</a> by Saturday 6 June</b>
	8. Professional Recognition Reflective Task	