

The Tale o' Tam o' Shanter

The Stormy Crew – Primary 5

This crew foretell the dangers of the forest and forsaking a good wife for friends who are out only to have a good time.

They perform the following songs:

Song 1 – Beware

Song 3 – The Scary Storm sung along with Tam

Song 5 – The Chase

The Stormy Crew Exercise

- Robert Burns wrote *Tam o' Shanter* in 1790.
- He loved reading all kinds of stories, and it's thought *Tam o' Shanter* was based on a real person!
- Alloway Kirk and the bridge which crosses the River Doon are still standing.
- Alloway was the village in which Robert Burns was born.
- Scotland has lots of myths and legends including Nessie (the Loch Ness Monster), the Selkies and the Kelpies.

In the final verse of *Tam o' Shanter*, Tam is on horseback (on his mare, Meg) and is being chased by Nannie the witch. He is just able to escape by crossing the bridge, over running water, which the witches cannot cross. Nannie is only able to grab the horse's tail, which comes away in her hands.

So, what happens next...?

Exercise: Write a 'what happens next' extension to the poem in Scots and/or English language. Once the verse has been written, this can then be performed and shared with the group.

Aims: To cover Literacy Across Learning and the curriculum areas of Expressive Arts; Languages and Social Studies.

Additional Exercises

- Create art works to accompany the drama – for example, a quill and manuscript with your verse written on it, or a stained glass window from the church.
- Extend the poetry into a drama using drama conventions to find out more character information.



Exercise: Write a 'what happens next' extension to the poem in Scots and/or English language. Once the verse has been written, this will then be performed and shared with the group.

	Task	Notes/Suggestions
1	Read the poem <i>Tam o' Shanter</i> .	This could be worked individually or, as an alternative, spoken aloud in a group, with each individual taking on a line/paragraph.
2	Discuss the narrative of the poem. Be clear about what action is taking place, where and with whom. Clarify any unknown words.	See RESOURCE B Perhaps split the poem into smaller parts and distribute amongst groups to highlight?
3	Write a 'what happens next' extension to the poem in English.	Worked as an individual exercise.
4	Share the new verses with the rest of the class by reading aloud.	Worked in small groups or full group exercise.
5	Discuss what works/what excites etc.	
6	Highlight any words used, previously identified in Exercise 2, which can be translated.	
7	Create a frieze showing the alternatives of English to Scots.	There are various online resources which allow English to Scots translation.
8	Rewrite the new verse using Scots language, replacing some words with new alternatives from the frieze.	
9	Share the new verses with the rest of the class.	Alternatively, share amongst small groups first of all to build confidence.

Curriculum for Excellence
LIT 2-02a LIT 2-04a LIT 2-05a LIT 2-06a LIT 2-07a LIT 2-08a LIT 2-09a
ENG 2-03a ENG 2-17a ENG 2-19a ENG 2-27a
SOC 2-01a SOC 2-06a

Extension Exercises:

	Task	Notes
1	Make a feather quill.	SEE RESOURCE C
1b	Create an old manuscript.	
1c	Create a stained glass window using a frame and different coloured tissue paper.	
2	Extend the poetry into a drama.	
2b	Hot-seating: Place a seat in the performance space, facing the audience. A volunteer sits down in role (as Tam/Nannie/Meg or any new character from the verse). The audience is invited to ask questions, which stimulate a dramatic response.	SEE RESOURCE A
2c	In small groups, create 4 still images/photographs showing a chosen section of the poem. Divide the poem into sections across small groups, with no two groups having the same section. The groups then create 4 images which represent their section.	SEE RESOURCE A
2d	Perform the entire poem from start to finish, with each small group performing in order.	Consider small props or pieces of costume which could help distinguish each character. For example, the pupil playing Tam o' Shanter might always wear the same hat.

Curriculum for Excellence

EXA 2-03a
EXA 2-05a
EXA 2-12a
EXA 2-13a
EXA 2-14a

(See previous exercise codes)

Curriculum for Excellence outcomes achieved through participation in performance:

	Task	Notes
1	Perform in the production of <i>Tam o' Shanter</i> to an audience of peers/family/friends etc.	Facilitated by Scottish Opera staff. Taking in to account dance, drama and music.
2	Learn characterisation for the performance.	Facilitated by Scottish Opera staff.
3	Learn and perform choreography for the performance.	Facilitated by Scottish Opera staff.
4	Learn the lyrics and music for the performance.	
5	Post-performance evaluation.	

Curriculum for Excellence
EXA 2-01a EXA 2-10a EXA 2-11a EXA 2-12a EXA 2-14a EXA 2-15a EXA 2-16a EXA 2-19a

RESOURCE A – Dramatic Conventions

Used to help pupils interact and use their imaginations to create meaning.

STILL IMAGE

Still images require the pupils to invent body-shapes or postures and create a tableaux, rather like a photograph. Groups can be asked to tell a story through a series of prepared still-images. This is an effective method which does not require improvised dialogue.

HOT-SEATING

Hot-seating allows a group to have the opportunity to question a character for further information. This allows deeper understanding of background, behaviour and motivation.

Not only will this give the group further information, it will also allow the actor to develop the character they are playing.

Traditionally, the pupil playing the character sits on a chair in front of a small group, arranged in a semi-circle. Alternatively, characters may be hot-seated in pairs.

The group proceeds to ask questions, facilitated by the teacher.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

A chronological sequence of events is created by the pupil. Parameters can be set prior to starting – for example, what happens at 6am, at 8am, at noon etc – or the pupil can make the decision on what times of the day are important to the context of the character.

The events created can be shown as a frozen picture. As confidence increases, these pictures can come to life, including text.

Words can be added simply by asking for a single word to describe each image. That word can become a sentence. And finally, the frozen image can be brought to life either by being mimed or acted with dialogue.

RESOURCE B

Examples of translations from Scots to English

skellum	good for nothing
blether	chat, talk, gossip
blellum	chatterer, gossip
cutty	short
sark	dress, slip, tunic, underskirt
roarin' fu'	completely drunk
deil	devil
gart	made
skirl	shriek
dirled	echoed, resounded
unco	unusual
drouthy	thirsty
ingle	fireplace
souter	cobbler
ne'er	never
houlet	owl
winnock bunker	window seat
duddies	ragged, tattered clothes
beldum	old hag

RESOURCE C – Illustration example of quill

