

# The Tale o' Tam o' Shanter

## The Tavern Crew – Primary 6

This crew are the friends of Tam, carefree yet unreliable, only out to celebrate life and have a good time. Finally their comeuppance arrives in the shape of The Witches Crew.

They perform the following songs:

Song 1 – Beware

Song 2 – The Terrible Tavern sung along with Tam

Song 5 – The Chase

### The Tavern Crew Exercise

- Robert Burns was a champion of the Scots language.
- He uses humour to point out our failings.
- He pokes fun at people to make a point.
- He was the son of a farmer, born in a cottage his father built.
- His birthplace was Alloway (the setting of Tam o' Shanter) and he was the eldest of seven children.

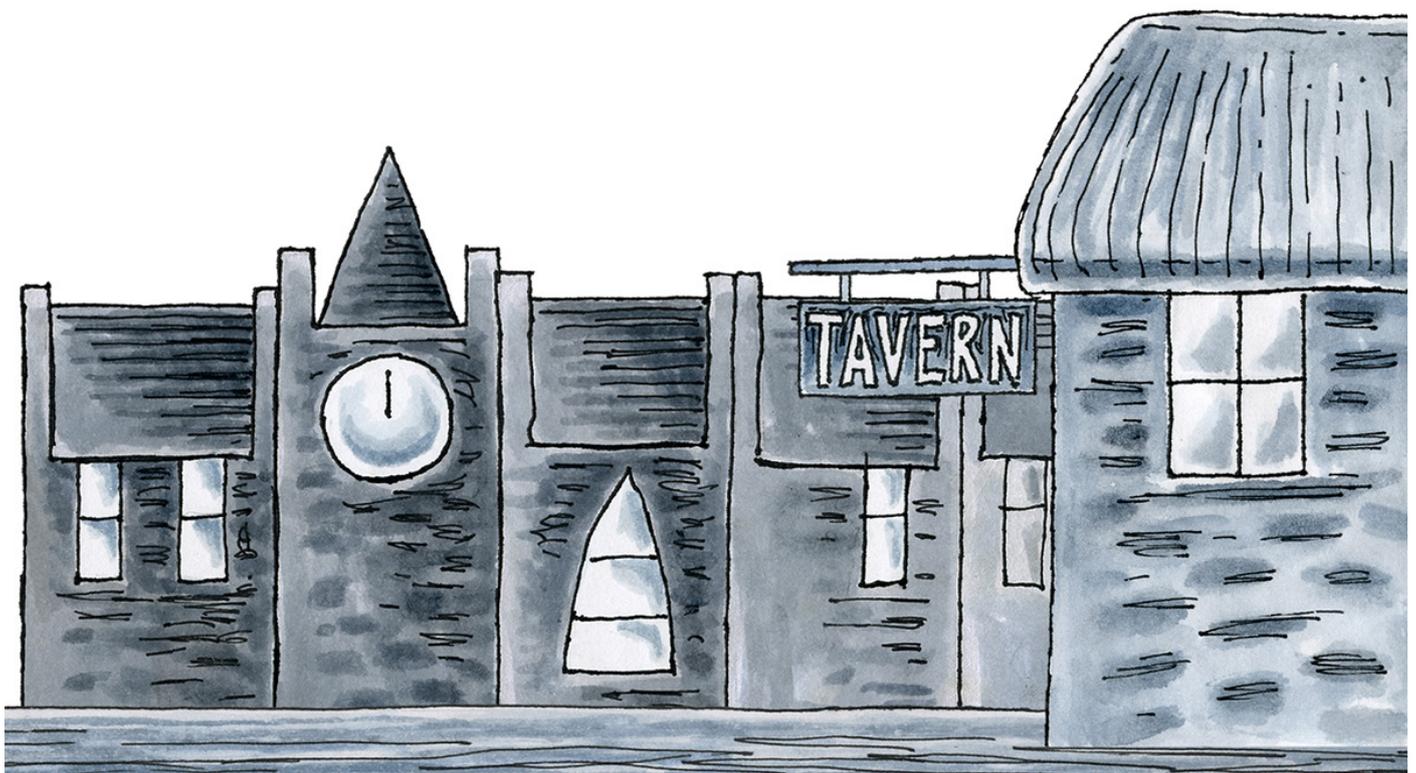
### What was life like in Robert Burns' time and how have things changed?

**Exercise:** Write a letter to yourself from Robert Burns, describing his life in the 1700s. Consider options such as food and drink, school, work, leisure, family. Swap these amongst the class and write a response from 2016. Use a mixture of Scots and English language.

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

### Additional Exercises

- The letters can then be developed into a dramatic monologue.
- Create a quill and manuscript to write your letter.
- Use 'hot-seating' to gather additional information.
- Create a frieze of images highlighting the differences.



**Exercise: What was life like in Robert Burns' time and how have things changed? Write a letter to yourself from Robert Burns, describing his life in the 1700s. Consider options such as food & drink; school; work; leisure; family. Swap these amongst the class and write a response from 2016. Use a mixture of Scots and English language.**

|   | Task   | Notes  | Curriculum for Excellence  |
|---|--|--|--|
| 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.   | LIT 2-02a<br>LIT 2-04a<br>LIT 2-05a<br>LIT 2-06a<br>LIT 2-07a<br>LIT 2-08a<br>LIT 2-09a<br>LIT 2-14a<br>LIT 2-15a<br>LIT 2-16a<br>LIT 2-18a<br>LIT 2-24a<br>LIT 2-25a<br>LIT 2-26a<br><br>EXA 2-12a<br>EXA 2-13a<br>EXA 2-14a<br><br>ENG 2-03a<br>ENG 2-17a<br>ENG 2-19a<br>ENG 2-27a<br><br>SOC 2-01a<br>SOC 2-02a<br>SOC 2-03a<br>SOC 2-04a<br>SOC 2-06a |
| 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<br>Perhaps split the poem into smaller parts to distribute amongst groups to highlight?   |  |
| 3 | Group discussion on life in Scotland between 1759–1796.  | Use Section 8 – Useful resources.<br>Use <i>Tam o' Shanter</i> for clues.  |  |
| 4 | Create a mind-map of all the ideas.  | SEE RESOURCE D as an example of mind-mapping.<br>This could be worked in small groups.<br>Alternatively, groups could also be split into specific sections, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food and Drink</li> <li>• School</li> <li>• Work</li> <li>• Leisure</li> <li>• Family</li> </ul> |  |
| 5 | Individually, choose a year between 1759 and 1796. Write a letter to the class from Robert Burns, describing what life is like for him. Take into account Robert's age as he writes. | Write the letter in English.   |  |
| 6 | The letters can be shared with the rest of the class.  | Consider sharing in small groups or in one large group.  |  |
| 7 | Group discussion: what crossovers are there in the letters? What things, if any, stand out?  |  |  |
| 8 | In small groups, create a sequence of images showing life between 1759 and 1796.   | SEE RESOURCE A – Day in the Life<br>Decide beforehand if there is a limit to the number of images and/or if specific times of day are to be re-created.<br>If possible, use a clear space big enough for small groups to have room to work.  |  |

|    | Task  | Notes  |
|----|---|--|
| 9  | Share the sequences with the class.   | If possible, use a clear space big enough for small groups to have room to work. |
| 10 | Share the letters amongst the class so that no-one receives their original letter. Write a reply.                     |  |
| 11 | Highlight any words used, previously identified in Exercise 2, which can be translated into Scots from English.       |  |
| 12 | Create a frieze showing the alternatives of English to Scots.   | There are various online resources which allow English to Scots translation.     |
| 13 | Rewrite the letters to Robert Burns using Scots language, replacing some words with new alternatives from the frieze. |  |
| 14 | Share with the group.   |  |

#### Extension Exercises:

|    | Task   | Notes          |
|----|--|----------------|
| 1  | Make a feather quill.  | SEE RESOURCE C |
| 1b | Create an old manuscript.  |                |
| 2  | Extend the poetry into a drama.  |                |
| 2b | Using previous Day in the Life information, try Hot-seating. Place a seat in the performance space, facing the audience. A volunteer sits down in role as someone from between 1759 and 1796. The audience is invited to ask questions, which stimulate a dramatic response. | SEE RESOURCE A |
| 2c | These exercises could be reversed for the current year and comparisons made.   |                |
| 2d | Group discussion on comparisons.   |                |

| Curriculum for Excellence  |
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| EXA 2-03a<br>EXA 2-05a<br>EXA 2-12a<br>EXA 2-13a<br>EXA 2-14a<br>EXA 2-15a |
| (See previous Exercise codes)  |

**Curriculum for Excellence outcomes achieved through participation in performance:**

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

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| EXA 2-01a<br>EXA 2-10a<br>EXA 2-11a<br>EXA 2-12a<br>EXA 2-14a<br>EXA 2-15a<br>EXA 2-16a<br>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 – Example of mind map

