

# Popular Rhymes of Scotland

## Primary activities

'Popular Rhymes of Scotland', edited bi Robert Chambers, wis collectit chiefly frae oral sources an first imprentit in 1826. It is a hairstin o Scottish verse, stories, folklore, proverbs an superstitions.

Some o its bairns rhymes an sangs wid hae been recognisable in street games intil recent times. Ithers sic as 'Katie Beardie' an 'Aiken Drum' survived in variant forms. While the main narrative o 'Popular Rhymes' is scievit in staundart Inglis, it hauds a rowth o rich Scots wirts an expressions. It is by-ordinair for a 19th century imprent in that its verbatim folktales gie extendit prose passages in Scots.

Hae a wee luik at this wirt leet o Scots animals. Beasties appear in mony Scots bairnsangs siclike Katie Beardie:

Katie Beardie had a coo,  
Black and white about the mou;  
Wasna that a dentie coo?  
Dance, Katie Beardie!

(p193-194, Popular Rhymes of Scotland, J.F. Campbell Collection)

### Scots/English wirt leet: beasties

Scots	English
dug	dog
moose	mouse
coo	cow
bubblyjock	turkey
grumphie	pig
cuddie	horse
hurcheons	hedgehog
tod	fox
puddock	frog

<b>Scots</b>	<b>English</b>
mowdie	mole
hairy oobit	caterpillar
speeder/ettercap	spider
clocker	beetle
bumbee	Bee
eemock	ant
troot	trout
selkie	seal
puggie	monkey

Yaise a puckle o these nouns (namin wirds) tae scribe yer ain rhyme or verse.  
Ye nicht yaise twa-three adjectives (describin wirds) an verbs (daein wirds) an aw.

### **Scots/English wurd leet: adjectives**

<b>Scots</b>	<b>English</b>
wee	small
tottie	small
muckle	big
bonnie	pretty
sonsie	handsome
hackit	ugly
broon	brown
ridd	red
yella	yellow
purpie	purple
crabbit	bad-tempered
nebbie	nosy
sleekit	sly
gallus	cheeky
auld	old
braw	handsome
glaiokit	stupid
mingin	smelly

### Scots/English word list: verbs

Scots	English
blaw	blow
birl	turn
bounce	bounce
bowf	bark
cairy	carry
chant	sing
chap	knock
dae	do
daunce	dance
drap	drop
gang	go
greet	cry
hae	have
lowp	jump
shoogle	shake
skelp	slap
stap	stop
howk	dig

Mind an add **in** tae the end o a verb tae mak the present participle, an mind an no yaise an apostrophe!

Why dae ye think Robert Chambers thocht it important tae collect oral Scots rhymes an verses? Whit wis he etflin tae preserve?

## Secondary activities

'Popular Rhymes of Scotland', edited bi Robert Chambers, wis collectit chiefly frae oral sources an first imprentit in 1826. 'Popular Rhymes' is a hairstin o Scottish verse, stories, folklore, proverbs an superstitions. Mony o the rhymes are concerned wi Scottish touns an cities – whit they are like, their history an their inhabitants.

Some o the rhymes personify the landmarks, fir example in this wan aboot Berwickshire:

**Tweed said to Till,  
What gars ye rin sae still?**

This rhyme features wan river bletherin tae anither.

Some o thaim tell us aboot myths, legends an stories relatit tae the place, lik in this wan aboot Kinneil House in Bo'ness, hauntit bi a ghost o a wummin whae wance bided there:

**Lady, Lady Lilburn,  
Hunts in the Gilburn.**

This rhyme warns us o the ghost's presence.

An some o thaim are aboot the toun's reputation – whit they're weel kenned fir:

**Glasgow for bells,  
Lithgow for wells,  
Falkirk for beans and pease.**

This rhyme tells us that Glasgow wis kenned fir its mony kirks (the kirk bells), Linlithgow wis kenned fir its watter fountains (wells) an Falkirk wis kenned fir bein a market toun where ye could buy food.

### Task 1

Workin in pairs, yer task is tae scribe a prose passage, poem or rhyme about yer local area.

Ye micht want tae yaise the examples abune tae help ye – will ye personify the landmarks, recall a myth or legend, describe the inhabitants or convey the area's reputation?

Ye can yaise this wurdbank tae help ye - but if ye want tae find wurds yaised in yer local area ye can find thaim oan the [Education Scotland website](#):

<b>Prepositions</b>	
<b>Scots</b>	<b>English</b>
ablow	below
abune	above
aside	alongside
atween	between
neist	next
owerby	nearby

<b>Adjectives</b>	
<b>Scots</b>	<b>English</b>
auld	old
bonnie	beautiful
braw	fine, splendid
mirk	dark, gloomy

<b>Nouns</b>	
<b>Scots</b>	<b>English</b>
brae	hill
brig	bridge
burn	stream
folk	people
glen	valley
grund	ground
hame	home
hoose	house
kirk	church
stane	stone
toun	town
watergaw	waterfall
water-yett	water-gate

## Task 2

Match up the Scots wurd wi their English equivalents. All o these wurd describe the landscape. Ye can yaise the '[Dictionar o the Scots Leid](#)' tae help ye:

<b>Prepositions</b>	
<b>Scots</b>	<b>English</b>
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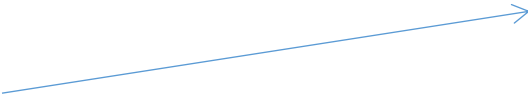
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Scots	English
Cleugh	A piece of grassy ground
Green	A narrow gorge
Knowe	A steep bank
Shaw	A small wood or thicket
Steel	A small hill



### Task 3

Workin wi a partner, draw a map o yer local area an label the landmarks yaisin Scots wurd. Does yer local area have a kirk, or some braes, or a burn? Try tae point oot as mony features o the landscape as ye can.

## Teaching notes

English Experiences and Outcomes:

ENG 3-27a / ENG 4-27a, ENG 3-31a/ ENG 4-31a

Literacy Experiences and Outcomes:

LIT 3-20a / LIT 4-20a, LIT 3-23a/ 4-23a

Scots Language Award Outcomes:

Scots Language: Understanding and Communicating, Outcome 2 (Levels 3 and 4)

Scots	English
Cleugh	A narrow gorge
Green	A piece of grassy ground
Knowe	A small hill
Shaw	A small wood or thicket
Steel	A steep bank

N.B. Suitable extension tasks, particularly if students are studying 'Scottish Studies', may be 'The Place Names of Scotland' resource. Teaching note available as a downloadable PDF on the ASLS website: <http://www.arts.gla.ac.uk/scotlit/asls/pdfs/Placenames.pdf>