



Alexander Wilson

Primary activities

The antihero o 'Rab and Ringan' the tale, Rab, whan takkin on the affectations o English, faws intae ramstam an rackless habits. Meanwhile the quietly diligent Ringan becomes blithe an siccra as a meenister. Alexander Wilson yaised the twa leids, Scots an English, tae guid effect: even in Wilson's day some fowk regairdit Scots as a less worthy leid than English, which they thocht wis mair wicelike. In Rab and Ringan, Wilson turned this notion on its heid tae mak social an political points.

1. Whit point dae ye think he wis makkin?

2. Nouadays there are aye fowk that cry Scots as coors an slang. Whit are your thochts?

3. 'Rab and Ringan' gies some illustration o Scots vocabulary an pronunciations in the late 18th century while comparin Scots an English words sic as 'kirk' fir church an 'yirth' fir globe (or 'earth').

Hae a luik at these words. Whit dae ye tent aboot Scots?

Scots	French	English meaning
fash	facher	annoy
jalouse	jalouser	guess
douce	doux/douce	gentle
aumrie	armoire	wardrobe
asht	asiette	serving plate
groset	groseille	gooseberry
dour	dur	stern,severe,etc.
tassie	tasse	cup
bien	Bien	well to do, comfortable, in good condition, etc.
sybie	ciboule	spring onion

Scots	Dutch	English meaning
craig	kragg (collar)	cliff or neck
dowp	dop (shell)	bottom of an eggshell, buttocks, seat of trousers
bucht	bocht	a bend, elbow joint, fork of a tree, etc.
owsen	osse	oxen
callant	calant	boy, youth
doit	Doit (small copper coin)	small copper coin, confused
howff	hof	enclosed open space, yard, etc.
redd	reden (tidy up)	free up, clear away, put out or extinguish (a fire)
scone	scone	a type of cake
keek	kijken	glance, look

As ye can see, leids dinnae staun still, they're aye chyngin.

Noo mak a leet o aw the weys ye ken that English has chynged ower the years.

Wilson wid walk frae Paisley tae Edinburgh tae tak part in the Pantheon Debating Club, a democratically-mindit society attendit bi audiences o up tae 500 men an women. 'Rab an Ringin' wis wan o the compositions Wilson scribed fir the Pantheon.

Bytimes politicians an newspapers yaise Scots for effect.

4. Can ye mind o ony exaimples?

5. Gie reasons why ye think they yaised Scots an no English?

6. Dae ye think some fowk are richt that Scots is slang?

Secondary activities

Alexander Wilson's use o Scots

Alexander Wilson wis a weaver an Scots poet wha wid become kened as the Faither o American Ornithology. Fluent in Scots an a great believer in its merits fir scrievin an talkin, he wid walk frae Paisley tae Edinburgh tae tak pairt in the Pantheon Debating Club, a democratically-mindit society attendit bi audiences o up tae 500 men an women. As ye micht ken, pairt o debatin is bein able tae challenge yer opponent's statements, regardless o whit ye personally believe. Hooivver, ye micht need tae support yer team-mate's statements as well.

Task 1: Group debating task

In groups or pairs, decide wha's goin tae **support** (agree wi) the following statement aboot Scots an wha's goin tae **challenge** (disagree wi) thaim. Then tak each statement in turn. The person or team supportin the statement should aye go first.

If ye are supportin the statement, ye can start wi the phrase, 'I couldnae agree mair...'.
If ye are challengin the statement, ye can start wi the phrase, 'I completely disagree...'

Yaisin Scots promotes literacy.	Learnin Scots is pairt o oor heritage.
Yaisin the Scots Leid in schools increases oor sense o national identity an pride.	Maist folk in Scotland yaise Scots regularly.
There should be mair Scots yaised in the media.	Scots can be yaised in formal an informal situations.
Texts in the Scots Leid should be pairt o the SQA English exams.	The Scots Leid can be yaised in every subject in school.

Task 2: Persuasive scrievin

Write an essay aboot the merits o yaisin the Scots Leid. Yaise the statements abune fir the main points o each paragraph. Try tae scribe yer essay yaisin as muckle Scots as ye can.

Teaching notes

English Experiences and Outcomes:

ENG 3-03a/ ENG 4-03a, ENG 3-27a / ENG 4-27a

Literacy Experiences and Outcomes:

LIT 3-02a/ LIT 4-02a, LIT 3-06a / LIT 4-06a, LIT 3-09a/ LIT 4-09a, LIT 3-20a / LIT 4-20a, LIT 3-23a/ 4-23a, LIT 3-25a/ LIT 4-25a, LIT 3-26a / LIT 4-26a, LIT 3-29a/ LIT 4-29a

Scots Language Award Outcomes:

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

