

LANGUAGE & LITERACY — CFE · P3–P7

Scots Leid — Scots Language & Poetry

P3–P7 Classroom Resource

Scots language in the classroom

1

Status of Scots

Scots is recognised by the Scottish Government as a distinct language (not a dialect of English). Approximately 1.5 million Scots speakers. CfE explicitly values Scots language and literature.

2

Scots vocabulary — everyday words

braw (fine/splendid), dreich (grey, wet, dismal), outwith (outside/beyond), wee (small), loch (lake), burn (stream), aye (yes), naw (no), och (exclamation), dinnae (don't), cannae (can't)

3

Robert Burns and Scots

Burns wrote in Scots at a time when educated Scots wrote in English. His choice was deliberate and political — a celebration of Scottish vernacular language. 'To a Mouse' and 'Tam o' Shanter' are the most accessible classroom Scots poems.

4

Hugh MacDiarmid (1892–1978)

Born Christopher Grieve in Langholm. Revived Scots as a literary language in the 20th century through 'Lallans' (literary Scots). His collection Sangschaw (1925) began the Scottish Renaissance.

5

Reading Scots aloud

Scots should be read aloud — it comes alive when spoken. Key sounds: 'ch' = guttural LOCH sound; 'ae' = long A; 'ui' = OO sound (guid = GOOD, puir = POOR); 'oo' = OO in boon.



6

CfE link

Scots literature is explicitly mentioned in CfE's Literacy and English experiences and outcomes. 'Reading, listening to and creating literature in Scots' is part of the First and Second Level requirements.

