

## Primary 5-7 Activity Pack

# Burns Cottage – Self Led

*Scots language and domestic history for Second level*



Curriculum for Excellence Level: Second (Primary 5 –  
Primary 7)



## How to use this resource

### *Scots language and farmyard themed fun for P5-7*



Hello and welcome to your Burns Cottage Activity Pack for teachers. Everything you will need is explained in this document. In here you will find:

- Fun activities for you and your pupils designed to help you get the most out of your visit to Burns Cottage.
- Key facts and instructions to help your pupils learn more about life in the eighteenth century.

## Aims and achievements:

### **What your pupils will achieve:**

- A deeper understanding of the Scots language,
- A deeper understanding of the farming environment Robert Burns lived in during his time at Burns cottage
- A stronger understanding of the differing roles that different members of the Burns family took on

### **What skills your pupils will develop:**

- Use of different languages (English and Scots).
- Deductive skills in working out what things were used for.
- Increased confidence through participation in group activities.
- An understanding of the past through learning about a famous historical figure
- Listening and observation skills.





## Activity 1: Smallholding and Kailyard

*Learn about the crops grown on the farm at Burns Cottage and what food they were used for*

### **Lesson objectives:**

- Improve knowledge of life on an eighteenth century farm
- Increase understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet
- Gain awareness of the sort of food eaten in 18<sup>th</sup> century Scotland.

### **Curriculum for Excellence:**

HWB 2-30a

HWB 2-34a

Leader's Fact: This is the Kailyard, the space outside the Cottage where the Burns family grew vegetables such as potatoes, onions and curly kale. The family did keep livestock but did not eat meat often. Why do pupils think that is? (Answer: Because they needed animals to supply them with eggs/milk/etc.)

Pupils should think of some non-vegetable foods that might have been produced at the Cottage – e.g. Eggs, milk, cheese, butter. Pupils should think about what kind of meals the Burns family could have produced with these ingredients and the vegetables.

Pupils should now spend time thinking about whether or not the Burns family were healthier or less healthy than the average family today. They can write their reasons in the box on the accompanying worksheet. They may wish to take into account the following points:



**HEALTHIER:** Lots of vegetables, lots of exercise, no junk food, no pollution/cigarettes.

**NOT HEALTHIER:** Not enough protein, sometimes not enough food, poorer medicine, too much hard work.

## Cottage exterior and Stackyard



**Leader's Fact:** Robert Burns was born in this cottage and he lived in it until he was seven. It was built by his father, William, and is made out of stone and clay. The roof is made out of reeds.

Encourage your pupils to discuss the differences between Burns Cottage and their own homes. Do they have a roof made of reeds?

Do they have stone walls? Why might their homes be different now?

**Leader's Fact:** The enclosed area of land to the left of the cottage as you look at it is called a Stackyard. It is where the crops were dried after they had been cut down in the fields. The triangular structure covered in straw is called a 'Stook' and is where the crops would have been put out to dry before being processed in the barn.

### Key Scots words:

<b>Neeps</b>	Turnips
<b>Tatties</b>	Potatoes
<b>Stook</b>	For drying out crops in the stackyard.

## End of Activity 1



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# Activity 2:

## The Barn



*Continue to find out about what life was like in the eighteenth century by exploring Burns Cottage.*

### Lesson objectives:

- Give pupils an idea of the sort of activities that happened in the Cottage.
- Encourage speculation about the uses of historical objects.

### Curriculum for Excellence:

EXA 2-04a

SOC 2-03a

Leader's Fact: This room is called the 'Barn'. It was the last room to be built in the cottage and was used for storing plants and farming tools. The crops stored in the barn would later be used to make food like porridge and oatcakes.

Now get your pupils to look up at the ceiling at all of the different farming tools.

Leader's Fact: Now farmers use machines to collect what they grow, but 250 years ago these farming tools were all that they had. The scythe and the sickle were used by men and women in pairs to collect the harvest. That's where Robert met the first girl he fell in love with, Helen Kilpatrick, and he wrote his first ever poem about her!

Pupils should pick a tool to draw on their worksheet and write underneath what they think it would have been used for.

Tell pupils that Robert Burns wrote mainly in Scots, and that they can learn about Scots language at the Cottage and the museum. Pupils should look out for Scots words in each room of the Cottage and write down one word from each room. They can use these Scots words as part of a final activity to create their own Scottish superhero, either here at Burns Cottage or back at school.

## End of Activity 2



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# Activity 3: The Byre



*Explore the different animals that would have been kept at Burns Cottage, and the different jobs members of the household would have done.*

### Lesson objectives:

- Learn about the different jobs that boys and girls did on the farm
- Experience object handling
- Increase familiarity with Tam o' Shanter

### Curriculum for Excellence:

SOC 2-02a

EXA 2-04a

**Leader's Fact:** This room is called the 'Byre'. Ask pupils what they think might have lived in this room. Pupils should say 'animals'. Tell pupils to spend a minute being quiet and listen to the sounds of the animals. What 3 different animal noises can they hear?

Find the butter churn in one of the cow stalls. In English it is called a 'Churn' but in Scots it is a 'Kirn', and this is what Robert Burns would have called it. Encourage some of the girls (as this would have been their job) to have a go at 'making butter' by moving the wooden stick up and down and twisting it round.

Explain that while the girls made butter, boys would be looking after the animals and cleaning up their poo. Show the boys the rake (Scots – graip) and brush (Scots – besom) which would have been used. Let some of the boys hold the besom and pretend to sweep up poo.

Explain that Robert Burns wrote a lot of poems about nature and that some poems were inspired by the animals he cared for on the farm, including Tam o' Shanter as Burns's horse was called Meg. Pupils should now use the worksheet to answer questions on Tam o' Shanter.

## End of Activity 3



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# Activity 4:

## The Spence



*Gain a deeper understanding of life in Burns Cottage and education in the eighteenth century.*

### Lesson objectives:

- Learn about the impact Robert Burns had on literature and society
- Give pupils the opportunity to experiment with rhyme to write poems

### Curriculum for Excellence:

LIT 2-20a

SOC 2-06a

Leader's Fact: This room is the 'good room' or 'Spence'. At first it was the room where the animals lived, but when the Byre was built it became the schoolroom. Instead of going out to school, Robert Burns and his brother would have learnt their lessons at home. Their father asked a man called John Murdoch to come and teach them.

Point out the graffiti on the door to the Byre – and the graffiti on the window facing the road. This graffiti has been left by visitors to the Burns Cottage for over 100 years. Pupils should think about what message they might want to leave for Robert Burns and write this on their worksheet in the spaces provided.

One of the Scots words on the wall is 'crambo-jingle' which means to rhyme. 'Crambo' is also the name of a parlour game in which players challenged each other to rhyme different words. Tell pupils to try out their own rhyming skills by finding rhymes to the words on their worksheets. Once they have done this, they can incorporate their ideas into a small poem in the space provided. If time, pupils can share their poems.

Remind pupils to look for a Scots word in this room and add it to the bottom of their Spence worksheet.

## End of Activity 4



## Primary 5-7 Activity 5: The Kitchen



*Develop an understanding of the difference between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.*

### **Lesson objectives:**

- Learn about how objects with the same usages have changed over time.
- Engage in creative writing

### **Curriculum for Excellence:**

SOC 2-04a

LIT 2-26a

**Leader's Fact:** This was the first room to be built by Robert's Dad, William. 4 children were born in this Cottage and Robert was the eldest – he lived here until he was 7. Although it is only one room, it was used in three different ways.

Ask pupils to have a look around for clues, thinking about rooms they would have in their own house. Pupils should get a) Kitchen, b) Bedroom and c) Living room. For each answer, ask them to explain why they think that.

N.B. The family would have also eaten in here, so Dining Room is also an answer!

Pupils should answer the questions on their sheets about what modern objects have replaced the eighteenth century ones in this room.

Explain that this is the room where Robert Burns would have been told stories as a boy by a woman called Betty. This is represented by the audio of the story that may have inspired Tam o' Shanter and the lantern that casts shapes of monsters and witches. Give pupils time to write a very short story about Robert Burns based on what they have found out from visiting the Cottage and/or museum.

Remind pupils to look for a Scots word in this room and add it to the bottom of their Kitchen worksheet.

*End of Activity 5 – we hope you and your class enjoyed your visit!*

