

Burns Night



Burns Night is a Scottish festival that takes place every year on 25th January. It is a time when Scotland remembers and celebrates the life of Robert Burns.

Robert Burns was a famous Scottish poet. He was born in Alloway, Scotland on 25th January 1759 and grew up living and working on a farm with his parents. Burns always had a love of reading and writing and when he grew up, he wrote many of Scotland's most famous and popular poems and songs. Burns sadly died at the young age of 37 on 21st July 1796.

On Burns Night, people in Scotland and around the world host a Burns supper. This is a gathering of friends and family and can be small and relaxed or a larger organised event. There are certain proceedings that take place during a Burns supper:

- guests are welcomed in by a bagpiper;
- 'The Selkirk Grace' is read aloud;
- the haggis is presented on a silver platter;
- 'Address to a Haggis' is read aloud and then,
- guests eat haggis, neeps and tatties followed by dessert.



'Neeps' is Scottish for turnips and 'tatties' means potatoes. These are served mashed alongside the haggis.

'Address to a Haggis' and 'The Selkirk Grace' are both poems written by Robert Burns.

Did You Know...?

Haggis is a mixture of meats, spices and oatmeal. Traditionally, this would have been cooked inside a sheep's stomach. Today, it is cooked inside an artificial casing, more like a sausage.



A traditional dessert eaten at a Burns Supper is cranachan. This is a combination of whipped cream, raspberries and oatcakes.

After supper, the entertainment begins. This is usually a variety of dancing, poetry readings and music. The evening will most likely end with guests singing one of Burns' most famous songs, 'Auld Lang Syne'. This is traditionally sung around the world on New Year's Eve.

The song says goodbye to the old year and welcomes in the new one. Guests link arms and shake hands whilst singing. Burns Night celebrations are loud and joyous and an important date in Scotland's calendar.



Questions

1. Who was Robert Burns? Tick one.

- ☐ a painter
- ☐ a poet
- ☐ a chef
- ☐ a politician

2. What did Burns' parents do for a living?

3. How old was Burns when he died? Tick one.

- ☐ 21
- ☐ 25
- ☐ 37
- ☐ 73

4. Number the events from 1-5 to show the order that they happen at a Burns Supper. The first one has been done for you.

- ☐ 'Address to a Haggis' is read.
- ☐ The Selkirk Grace is read.
- ☐ Guests eat their meal.
- ☐ The haggis is presented on a silver platter.
- ☒ 1 Guests are welcomed by a piper

5. What is the Scottish word for potatoes?

6. What three ingredients are used in cranachan? Tick one.

- ☐ cream, strawberries and oatcakes
- ☐ ice cream, raspberries and biscuits
- ☐ cream, raspberries and shortbread
- ☐ cream, raspberries and oatcakes

7. What part of Burns Night would you enjoy the most and which would you enjoy the least?
Explain your answer fully.

Answers

1. Who was Robert Burns? Tick one.

- ☐ a painter
- ☒ **a poet**
- ☐ a chef
- ☐ a politician

2. What did Burns' parents do for a living?

Burns' parents were farmers.

3. How old was Burns when he died? Tick one.

- ☐ 21
- ☐ 25
- ☒ **37**
- ☐ 73

4. Number the events from 1-5 to show the order that they happen at a Burns Supper. The first one has been done for you.

- 4** 'Address to a Haggis' is read.
- 2** The Selkirk Grace is read.
- 5** Guests eat their meal.
- 3** The haggis is presented on a silver platter.
- 1** Guests are welcomed by a piper

5. What is the Scottish word for potatoes?

tatties

6. What three ingredients are used in cranachan? Tick one.

- ☐ cream, strawberries and oatcakes
- ☐ ice cream, raspberries and biscuits
- ☐ cream, raspberries and shortbread
- ☒ **cream, raspberries and oatcakes**

7. What part of Burns Night would you enjoy the most and which would you enjoy the least? Explain your answer fully.

Pupil's own response, such as: At a Burns Night, I think I would enjoy the entertainment after the meal such as the dancing and music. I think I would least enjoy the neeps as I do not like turnips.

Burns Night



Burns Night is a festival that is celebrated every year on 25th January in Scotland and around the world. It is a time when Scottish people remembers the life and works of Robert Burns.

Robert Burns was a famous Scottish poet. He was born in Alloway, Scotland on 25th January 1759 and grew up living and working on a farm with his parents. Life was not easy for them and in his writing, Burns praised his country and its people, especially the poor and hard-working. Burns always had a love of reading and writing. When he grew up, he wrote many of Scotland's most famous and popular poems and songs. Sadly, Burns died at the young age of 37 on 21st July 1796.

On Burns Night, people host or attend a Burns supper. This is a gathering of friends and family and can be a small, relaxed meal or a larger, more organised event. There are certain proceedings that take place in a particular order during a Burns supper. Firstly, guests might be welcomed in by a bagpiper. Then, the Selkirk Grace is read aloud, usually by the host. Everyone then stands as the haggis is presented on a silver platter and laid at the main table.



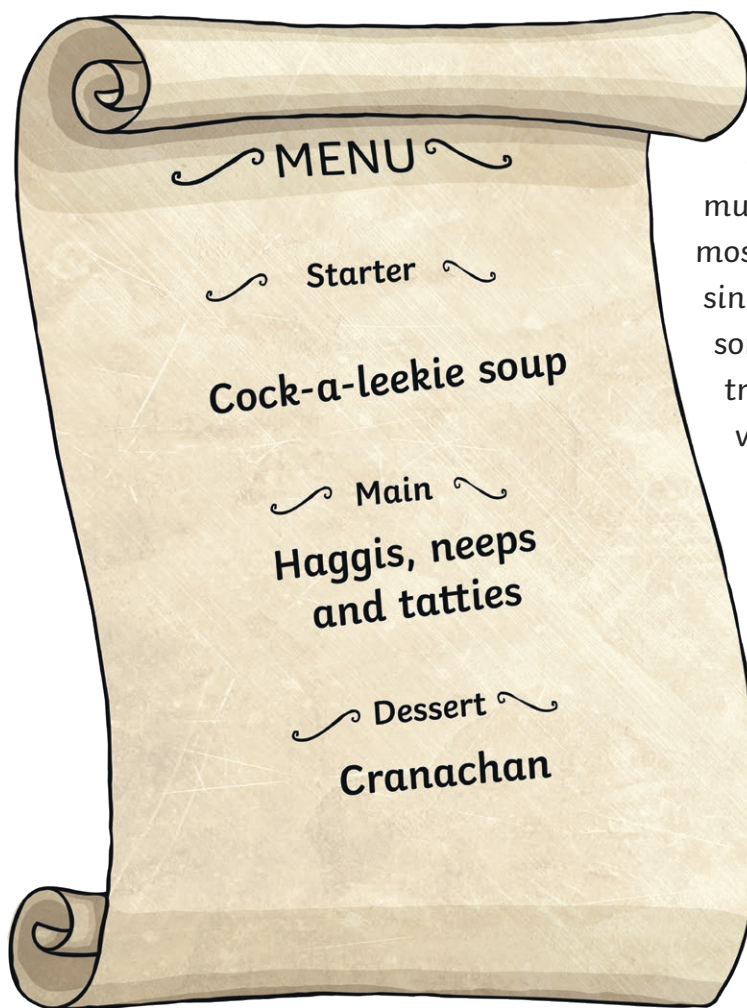
'Neeps' is Scottish for turnips and 'tatties' means potatoes. These are served mashed alongside the haggis.

One of Burns' poems called 'Address to a Haggis' is read aloud before guests finally begin eating their meal.

Did You Know...?

Haggis is a mixture of meats, spices and oatmeal that would have been traditionally cooked inside a sheep's stomach. Today, it is more commonly cooked inside an artificial casing, much like a sausage.





Once the meal has finished, the entertainment begins. This is usually a variety of Scottish dancing, poetry readings and music performances. The evening most likely will end with guests singing one of Burns' most famous songs, 'Auld Lang Syne'. This is traditionally sung around the world on New Year's Eve to say farewell to the old year and welcome the new one in. Guests link arms and shake hands whilst singing. Burns Night celebrations are loud and joyous and an important date in Scotland's calendar.



The traditional drink served at a Burns Supper is whisky. Burns talks about whisky in some of his poems and Scotland is famous for its production of whisky.

Questions

1. Who is celebrated on 25th January every year in Scotland?

2. Where was Robert Burns born? Tick one.

- ☐ Aberdeen, Scotland.
- ☐ Galloway, Scotland.
- ☐ Alloway, Scotland.
- ☐ Edinburgh, Scotland.

3. Explain in your own words why Burns wrote about and praised the poor and hard-working in his works.

4. When did Robert Burns die? Tick one.

- ☐ 25th January 1759
- ☐ 21st July 1796
- ☐ 21st January 1796
- ☐ 25th July 1759

5. Draw **five** lines to match the different foods with their Scottish name.

neeps

a traditional Scottish dessert

haggis

soup

tatties

turnips

cranachan

meats, spices and oatmeal

cock-a-leekie

potatoes

6. Which of Burns' poems is read once the haggis has been laid on the table?

7. Why do you think that whisky is served at a Burns Supper? Explain your answer fully.

8. Which of Burns' poems is traditionally sung around the world on New Year's Eve? Tick one.

- ☐ The Selkirk Grace
- ☐ Tam o' Shanter
- ☐ A Red, Red Rose
- ☐ Auld Lang Syne

Answers

1. Who is celebrated on 25th January every year in Scotland?

Robert Burns is celebrated on 25th January every year in Scotland.

2. Where was Robert Burns born? Tick one.

- ☐ Aberdeen, Scotland.
☐ Galloway, Scotland.
☒ **Alloway, Scotland.**
☐ Edinburgh, Scotland.

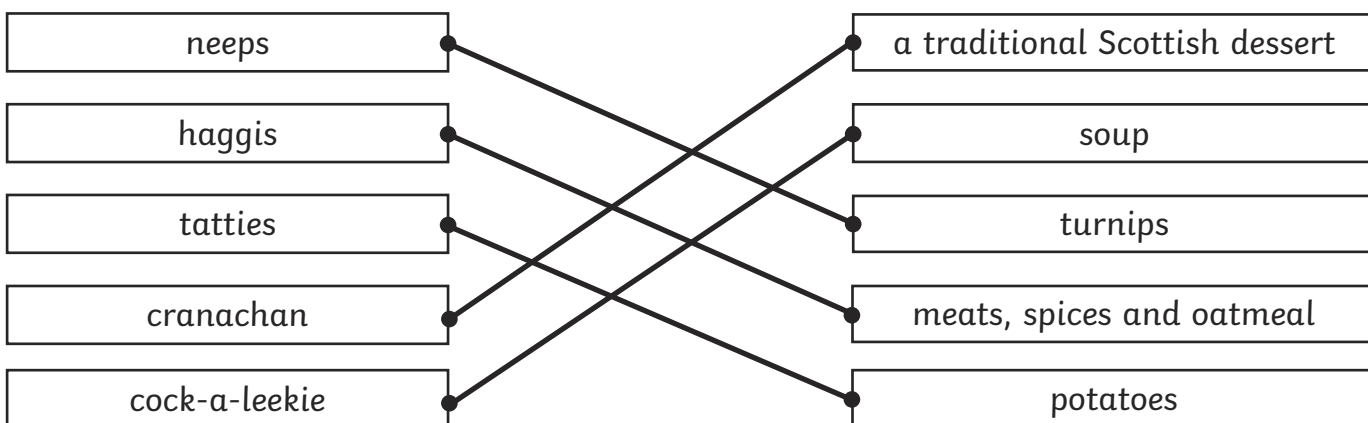
3. Explain in your own words why Burns wrote about and praised the poor and hard-working in his works.

Pupil's own response, such as: I think that Burns wrote about and praised the poor because it says that his parents were farmers and that life was not easy for them which suggests that they were not wealthy and that Burns understood what it meant to have to work hard.

4. When did Robert Burns die? Tick one.

- ☐ 25th January 1759
☒ **21st July 1796**
☐ 21st January 1796
☐ 25th July 1759

5. Draw **five** lines to match the different foods with their Scottish name.



6. Which of Burns' poems is read once the haggis has been laid on the table?

Burns' poem 'Address to Haggis' is read once the haggis has been laid on the table.

7. Why do you think that whisky is served at a Burns Supper? Explain your answer fully.
Pupil's own response, such as: I think that whisky is served at a Burns Supper because people are remembering Burns and he spoke about it in some of his works and he obviously enjoyed it.
8. Which of Burns' poems is traditionally sung around the world on New Year's Eve?
Tick one.
- ☐ The Selkirk Grace
 - ☐ Tam o' Shanter
 - ☒ A Red, Red Rose
 - ☐ **Auld Lang Syne**

Burns Night



In Scotland, one of the most important annual events is Burns Night. This celebration takes place on or around the 25th January and involves music, whisky and some rather unusual foods!

On Burns Night, people in Scotland remember the life and works of Robert Burns. Burns was a famous poet who wrote large numbers of songs and poems. He was born in Alloway, Scotland on 25th January 1759 to hard-working farmer parents. Although they were not poor, their life was not easy. Much of Burns' work celebrated and praised his country and its people, especially those who worked hard like his parents.

Burns had 9 children with his wife Jean however not all of them survived to adulthood. Burns died on 21st July 1796, aged just 37.

A Burns supper can be a small gathering of friends or a large organised event. At more formal gatherings, guests may be 'piped' in by someone playing the bagpipes and will be welcomed by the host of the event.

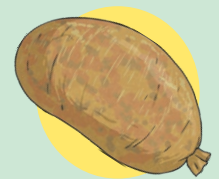
Once seated, the Selkirk Grace is said. This is a poem written by Burns to be said before eating.



At this point, guests will stand as the haggis is presented on a silver platter and laid at the main table. Guests take to their seats and another of Burns poems, called 'Address to a Haggis', is read. The reader plunges a knife into the outer-casing of the haggis and reveals the insides as they pour out. Guests then stand and toast the haggis, usually with a glass of whisky, before enjoying their meal.

Did You Know...?

Haggis is a mixture of meats, spices and oatmeal that would have been traditionally cooked inside a sheep's stomach. Today, it is more commonly cooked inside an artificial casing, much like a sausage.

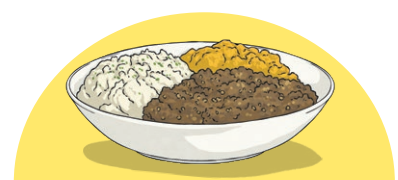




Once the meal has finished, the entertainment begins. Guests enjoy Scottish dancing, poetry readings and performances from musicians and bands. The evening will usually end with one of Burns' most famous songs, 'Auld Lang Syne'. This is traditionally sung around the world on New Year's Eve to say goodbye to the old year and to welcome in the new one. Burns Night has many other traditions, such as hanging of the Scottish Flag. The flag is called the Saltire. People also wear tartan in the form of kilts or shawls. Tartans each have different colours and patterns, all of which represent a different

part of Scotland or a different family or clan. Whatever traditions may or may not be followed, a Burns Night will be a joyous occasion when Scottish people celebrate their most famous cultural icon.

Whisky is a drink often associated with Scotland and is the traditional drink served at a Burns Supper. This is because Burns was a fan of the alcoholic beverage and mentioned it in a number of his poems.



'Tatties' is a Scottish word for potatoes. It is served mashed alongside the neeps and haggis.

Questions

1. When do Scottish people celebrate the life and works of Robert Burns? Tick one.

- ☐ 25th July
- ☐ 21st January
- ☐ 25th January
- ☐ 21st July

2. Where was Burns born?

3. Give three different Burns' night traditions.

- ---
- ---
- ---

4. Why was the 25th July 1796 a very emotional day for Burns' wife? Explain fully using evidence from the text to support your answer.

5. What are 'neeps'? Tick one.

- ☐ sausage
- ☐ oatcakes
- ☐ turnips
- ☐ potatoes

6. How has haggis changed in recent years? Explain fully using evidence from the text to support your answer.

7. What is the Saltire?

8. Find and copy a word that shows that Robert Burns is an important historical figure in Scotland.

Answers

1. When do Scottish people celebrate the life and works of Robert Burns? Tick one.

- ☐ 25th July
- ☐ 21st January
- ☒ **25th January**
- ☐ 21st July

2. Where was Burns born?

Alloway, Scotland

3. Why do you think Robert Burns wrote about and celebrated people who worked hard in his works? Explain fully using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Pupil's own response, such as: I think that Robert Burns celebrated the poor because he it says in the text that his parents were hard-working farmers and that life was not easy for them. Therefore, Burns understood what it was like for people who are not rich and who have to work hard to survive.

4. Give three different Burns' night traditions.

Accept any three of the following: wearing tartan; hanging the Scottish flag; eating haggis; being welcomed by bagpipes; reading Robert Burns' poems; singing Auld Lang Syne.

5. What are 'neeps'? Tick one.

- ☐ sausage
- ☒ oatcakes
- ☐ **turnips**
- ☐ potatoes

6. How has haggis changed in recent years? Explain fully using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Pupil's own response, such as: Haggis has changed because the insides used to be encased inside a sheep's stomach whereas now, the insides are inside an artificial casing.

7. What is the Saltire?

The Saltire is the Scottish flag.

8. Find and copy a word that shows that Robert Burns is an important historical figure in Scotland.

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