

Investigate local place names

**Stage: 2-4****Time: 1 hour**

Introduction: We invite you to investigate names for places and natural features local to you and try to find out if any have a link to Gaelic or Scots. We then challenge you to translate the names you have found between English, Gaelic and Scots.

Curricular links

LGL 2-4-07a, 2-4-08a, 2-4-11a, 2-3-11b, 2-11c, LIT 2-4-13a

Learning for Sustainability links

Target 2030 4Cs – Curriculum and Culture

SDGs - Goal 4 (Quality Education)

UNCRCs – Article 29 (Aims of Education), Article 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups)

Meta skills – Focusing, Curiosity, Sens-making



Investigate

Look up your local place names and try to find out if they have a link to Gaelic or Scots.

To help, you can use the following resources:

- [Gaelic maps created by our Gaelic officer Jonathan](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the page and search by your area).
- [Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba – Gaelic Place-names of Scotland maps](#)
- [Scots Place-names map](#) (zoom into your local area to find Scots placenames local to you)
- [Map of Scotland in Scots guide](#) (which includes a list of Scots placenames and a list of Scots placename elements with their meanings)

You can also try to find out if any of your local natural features such as hills, woodlands, lochs and rivers have Gaelic and Scots origins. To help with this you can use online dictionaries to search for parts of the words. For example, the hill in Clackmannanshire called Ben Cleuch can be broken down into Ben, which comes from the Gaelic beinn, which means mountain, and Cleuch, which in Scots means a chasm with high rocky sides.

[Gaelic dictionary](#)

[Scots dictionary](#)

You could find out if anyone in your local community speaks Gaelic and / or Scots and ask them to help you.

Translate your findings

Once you have identified some local placenames that come from Gaelic and / or Scots, try to find out what they mean using the dictionary links above. They have a go at translating the names between languages. If the name is in Gaelic, translate it into English and Scots. If the name is in Scots, translate it into English and Gaelic. You could share your findings with your whole school and local community.