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Burns Night Activity Pack

By Sian McGhee (Childhood Practitioner)



What is Burns night?

Burns night (Burns supper) is a cultural celebration of the life and work of Robert (Rabbie) Burns.

Celebrations are held on the poet's birthday, the 25th of January, every year.

Who was Robert Burns?

He was born in Ayrshire, Scotland in 1759 (more than 250 years ago). The son of a farmer, although he was born into a poor family, he received a good education and started writing songs and poetry as a teenager.

His father died when he was 25 and so he and his brother ran the farm, but he kept writing inspired by Scotland's nature. He had decided to go overseas in search of work, when his first book of poems was published in Edinburgh. He spent time in the city before returning to the west where he was married to Jean Armour. She gave him 9 children and inspired many of his poems.

Although his book was successful, the money ran out. Which is when he got a job as a customs officer. This allowed Rabbie to continue writing.

Rabbie died at 37 years old of rheumatic fever, many people gathered at his funeral, the last of his children was born during the service. It was only after his passing his poetry and songs became famous around the world (Auld Lang Syne). Six years after his death (1796) the first Burns Supper was held in Alloway (1801). Story has it 9 guests sat and celebrated his best-known poetry (Address to a Haggis).

Some of Rabbie Burns' work:

- ☒ 'Halloween'
- ☒ 'The Banks o' Doon'
- ☒ 'John Anderson My Jo'
- ☒ 'To a Louse'
- ☒ 'Holy Willie's Prayer'
- ☒ 'A Red, Red Rose'
- ☒ 'A Mans a Man for A' That'
- ☒ 'Auld Lang Syne'
- ☒ 'Tam o' Shanter'
- ☒ 'To a Mouse'

Some helpful links:

Scottish Poetry Library: <https://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poem/address-haggis/#:~:text=Fair%20fa'%20your%20honest%2C%20sonsie,o'%20the%20Puddin%2Drace!&text=As%20lang%20's%20my%20arm.>

BBC full A-Z list of Rabbie Burns Poetry: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/robertburns/works/firstletter/all/>

Address to a Haggis:

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great Chieftain o' the Puddin-race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy of a *grace*
As lang 's my arm.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your *pin* wad help to mend a mill
In time o' need,
While thro' your pores the dews distil
Like amber bead.

His knife see Rustic-labour dight,
An' cut ye up wi' ready slight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
Like onie ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin, rich!

Then, horn for horn, they stretch an' strive:
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swallow'd kytes belyve
Are bent like drums;
Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive,
Bethankit hums.

Is there that owre his French *ragout*,
Or *olio* that wad staw a sow,
Or *fricassee* wad mak her spew
Wi' perfect sconner,
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view
On sic a dinner?

Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckless as a wither'd rash,
His spindle shank a guid whip-lash,
His nieve a nit;
Thro' bluidy flood or field to dash,
O how unfit!

But mark the Rustic, *haggis-fed*,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his wallee nieve a blade,

He'll make it whissle;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned,
Like taps o' thrissle.

Ye Pow'rs wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware
That jaups in luggies;
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer,
Gie her a *Haggis*!

FACT:

- **Rabbie Burns writes in Scots as well as English.**
- **Scots is a language which has been spoken for several centuries, and still is today.**
- **Sometimes it is known as Doric, Lallans or Scotch.**
- **Scots is one of three dialects spoken in Scotland today, with the other two being Gaelic and English.**
- **Scots has been referred to as “slang” because schools discouraged children speaking the language, similar to the crown outlawing Gaelic in 1616.**

Here are some Scots words. You will hear them used all over Scotland.

About, bairn, bonnie, brae, cooncil, doun, dreich, faither, fitba, flit, glaikit, gowk, heid, hoose, ken, kirk, laddie, lang, lassie, mither, nane, poke, rare, scunner, speir, stooshie, stramash, threap, wean.

People who speak Scots use these words and many other words like them.

Scots Language Centre:

https://www.scotslanguage.com/What_is_Scots%253F_uid2/What_is_Scots_%253F

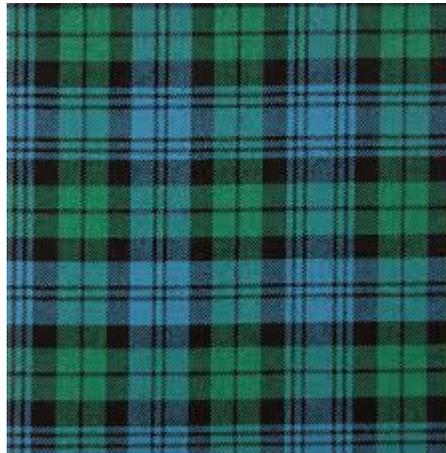
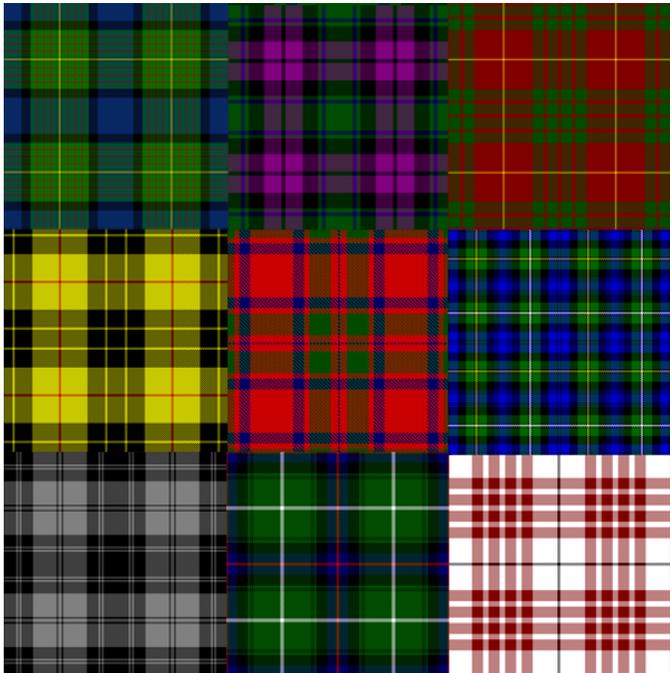
Rabbie Burns Facts!

- ✠ J.D. Sailing's 'Catcher in the Rye' based its title on the poem 'Comin' Thro' the Rye'
- ✠ Burns wrote and collected almost double the amount of songs than poems!
- ✠ The oldest existing statue is believed to be in Camperdown, Australia. It was carved in 1830 and shipped to Australia in 1850.
- ✠ 'Of Mice and Men' took its name from a line in 'To a Mouse': "The best laid schemes o' mice an men/ Gang aft agley".
- ✠ 'Auld Lang Syne' is recognised by the Guinness Book of world records as one of the top three most popular songs in the entire English language.
- ✠ The Mitchell Library in Glasgow is believed to house the largest Burns collection, including translations of the work in more than 30 languages.
- ✠ Abraham Lincoln had a lifelong admiration for the work of Robert Burns (some claiming that the poets work had a key role in helping Lincoln win the American Civil War and abolish slavery).
- ✠ In New Zealand there is a town names after Robert Burns' farm in Ayrshire (Mosgiel).

Burns Night Traditions:

There are celebration that take place all across the country (and the world) every year. From grand gatherings, ceilidhs and household suppers. Any way and any place its celebrated it will surely involve haggis, neeps and tatties / whiskey / poetry / decorations / kilts / music and if there are enough people, some dancing.

When dressing for the occasion, a kilt is the garment of choice. Specifically, your family tartan. Other special events where you might see a kilt or tartan being worn could include St Andrews Day (30th November) or Hogmanay (New Years Eve). They are also worn at ceilidhs and weddings.



On the **left** is an example of some tartans.

On the **right** there is an example of the Campbell tartan. (Burns is a sept of the Campbell clan).

GET YER
KILT OOT
IT'S BURNS NIGHT

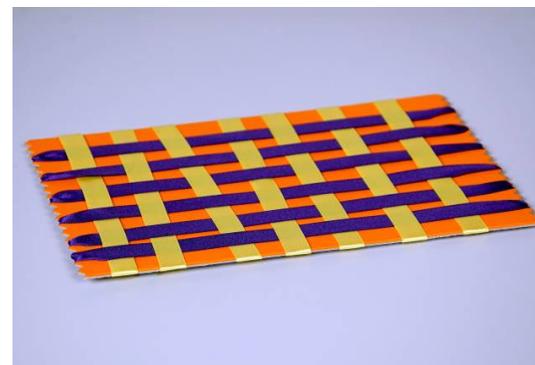
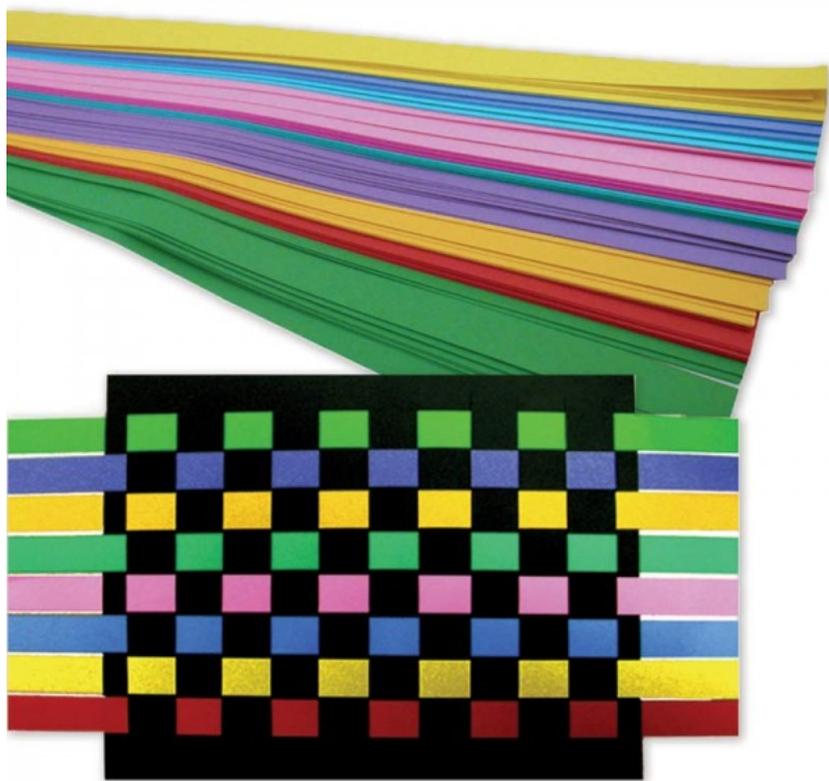
ACTIVITIES!

Simply cut lines into an A4 sheet of paper (careful not to cut right to the edges).

Cut strips of coloured paper to weave with.

Weave strips of paper over and under to create your tartan!

Tartan Weaving



ACTIVITIES!

You will need: Shortbread, icing, food colouring, and an icing bag.

Cut your shortbread to your desired shape. Make up your coloured icing. Pipe the icing onto the shortbread and enjoy!

Shortbread Kilts



SCOTTISH TARTAN

www.foodiequine.co.uk

SHORTBREAD KILTS



ACTIVITY!

Poetry

We celebrate burns night with poetry. Why dont you look at some of the links on page 3 and pick your favourite. Read it to your loved ones! And if you fancy, you can try write your own!

Write your own Acrostic Poem:

S _____

C _____

O _____

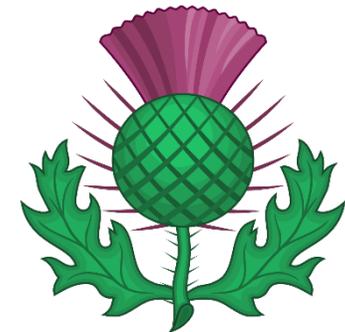
T _____

L _____

A _____

N _____

D _____



ACTIVITY!

Poetry

Write your own acrostic poem:

| | |
|---------|---------|
| R _____ | B _____ |
| O _____ | U _____ |
| B _____ | R _____ |
| E _____ | N _____ |
| R _____ | S _____ |
| T _____ | |

ACTIVITY!

Poetry

Fill in the missing words.

Use the word box to find the missing words to these short poems.

The Selkirk Grace

Some hae _____ and canna eat,
And some wad _____ that want it;
But we _____ meat, and we can eat Sae let the _____ be _____

hae
thankit
eat
Lord
meat

The Cotter's Saturday Night

From scenes like these _____ Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her _____ at home, revered abroad:
Princes and _____ are but the breath of _____,
An _____ man's the noblest work of _____.

kings
loved
God
honest
Old
Lords

Haggis, neeps and tatties

Haggis, neeps and tatties is a traditional Scottish dish. Haggis is different types of meet mixed with seasoning and oats. Thankfully, it is found in many shops premade ready to cook. Served along side it are the neeps and tatties.

ACTIVITY!

Here is a nice little recipe!

Ingredients:

750g -800g good quality haggis, 800g potatoes, 800g neeps, Milk and butter for mashing

Cook the haggis as per the manufacturer's guidelines. Most will recommend that you remove the outer packaging, wrap the haggis in foil and place in a dish of water in the oven however it is also suitable to be microwaved.

Peel and dice the potatoes and neeps and cook separately until both are soft. Mash the potatoes with milk, butter and seasoning. Do the same with the neeps but without the milk.

For the whisky sauce, should you wish to include it, first start by softening the shallots in the butter in a large saucepan.

Add the whisky and turn up the heat to burn off the alcohol, this won't take long and will avoid any bitterness. Reduce the heat and stir in the cream. Allow to simmer for a couple of minutes.

Serve the haggis on a plate alongside the side dishes and have the whisky sauce on the side, to give people the option of pouring over their plate.

Whisky Cream Sauce (Optional):

4 shallots, finely
chopped

300ml double cream

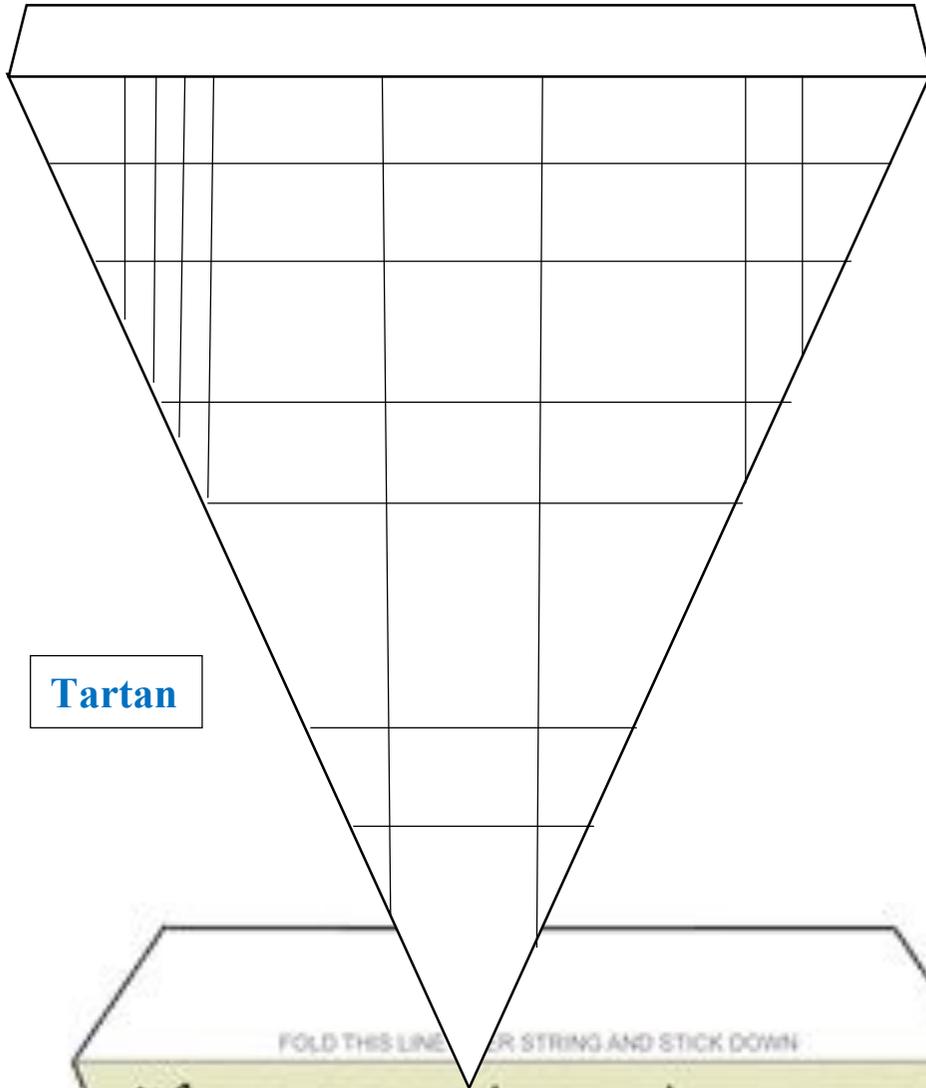
100ml good whisky

Knob of butter

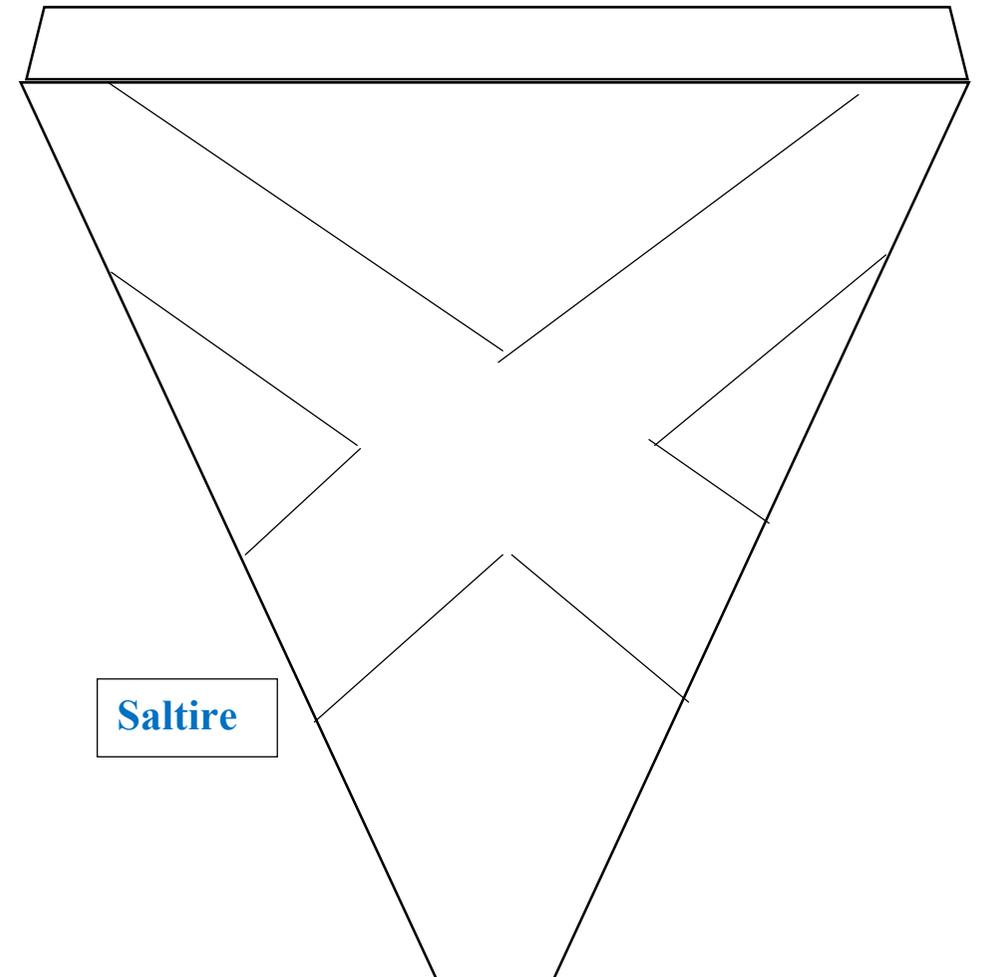
Decorations

There are many ways to decorate your space for burns night. Here are a few extras you might enjoy.

Bunting



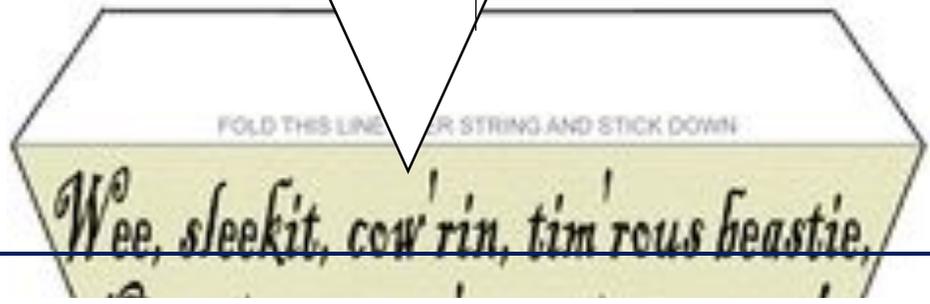
Tartan



Saltire

Here are some links to some music to help you celebrate:

Ceilidh:



ACTIVITY!

Quiz

Questions

1. Who is the Patron Saint of Scotland? A) St Patrick B) St Andrew C) St George
2. The capital city of Scotland is... A) Glasgow B) Stirling C) Edinburgh
3. The national animal of Scotland is... A) Stag B) Unicorn C) Buzzard
4. The population of Scotland is around... A) 6 million B) 8 million C) 5 million
5. Scotland made significant developments in what sport? A) Golf B) Water polo C) Shinty
6. The birth place of Robert Burns is? A) Alloway B) Stirling C) Mull
7. How many Scottish islands are there? A) around 70 B) Just under 170 C) Over 700
8. How many distilleries are in Scotland? A) 100 B) 130 C) 160
9. How many clans are in Scotland? A) 274 B) Over 400 C) Over 500
10. What is Scotland's national emblem? A) Primrose B) Thistle C) Bluebell



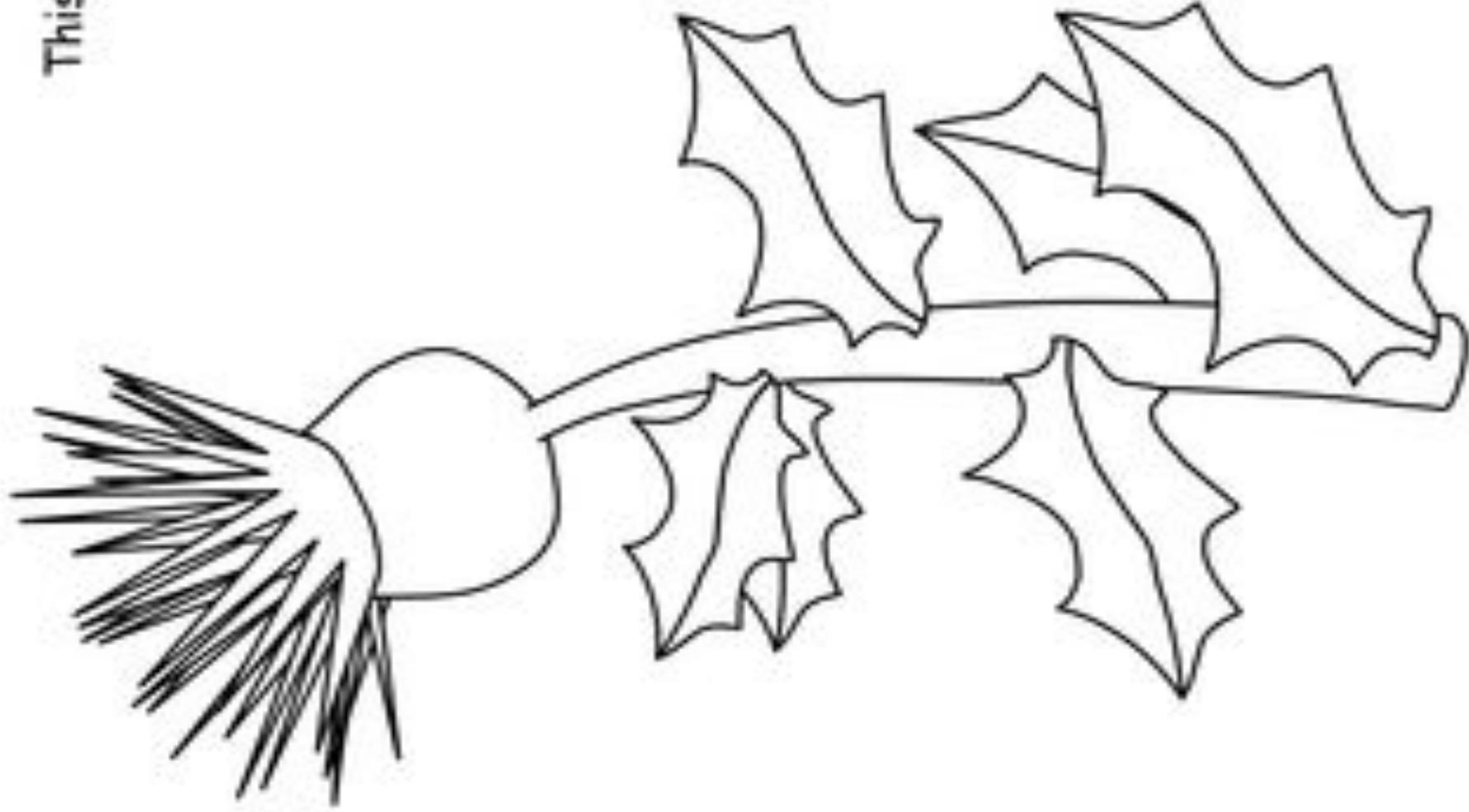
Answers

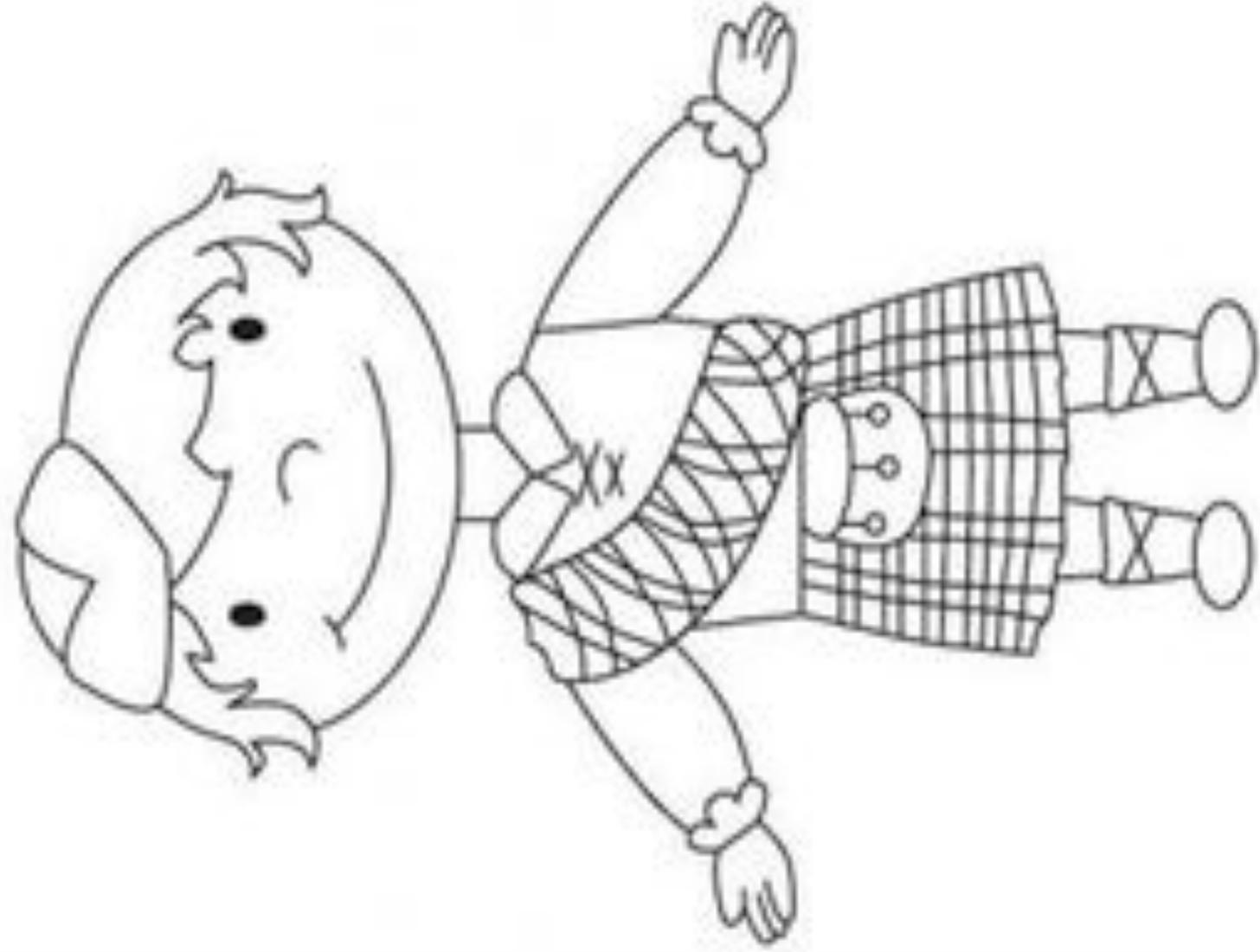
1. St Andrew
2. Edinburgh
3. Unicorn
4. 5 million
5. Trick question, the answer is all three (and curling!)
6. Alloway
7. Over 700
8. 130
9. Over 500
- 10.

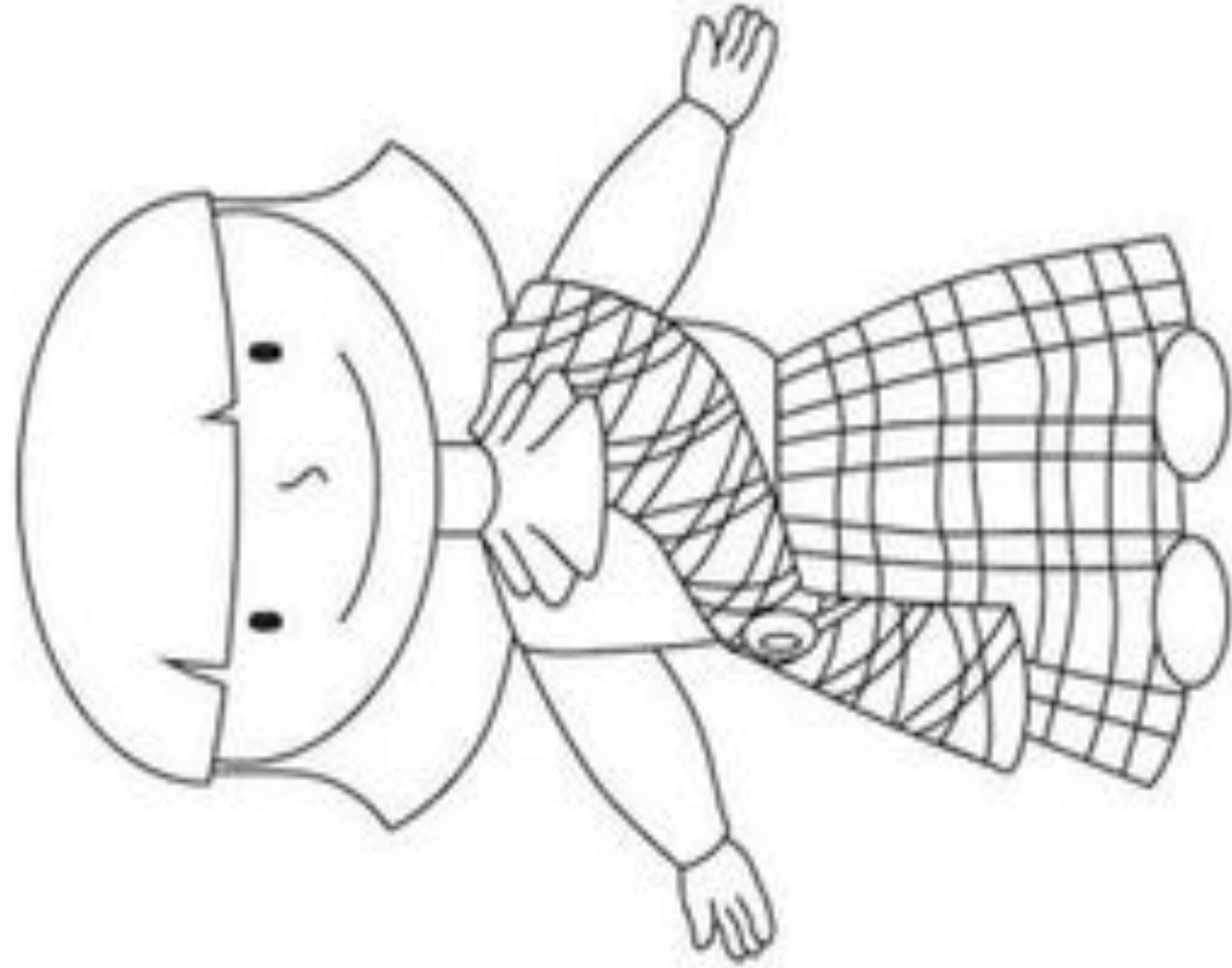
Thistle.

Here are some additional activities.

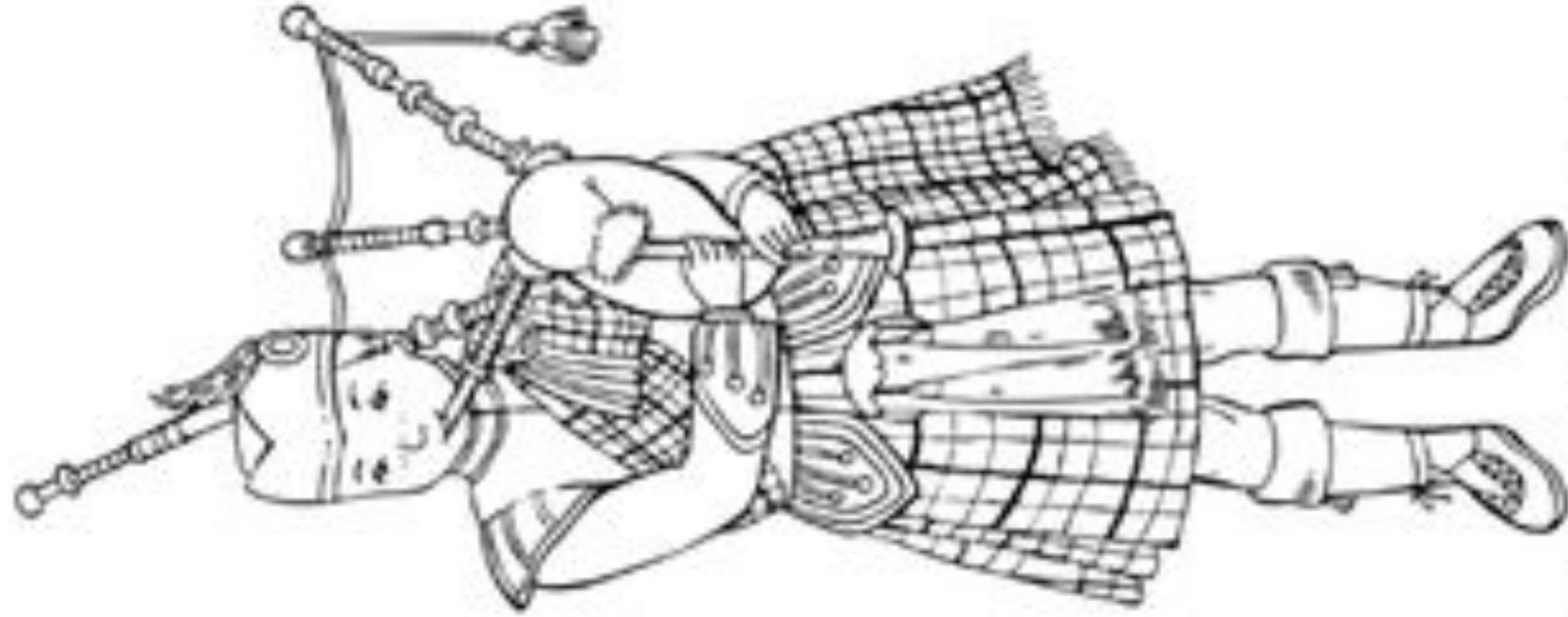
Thistle

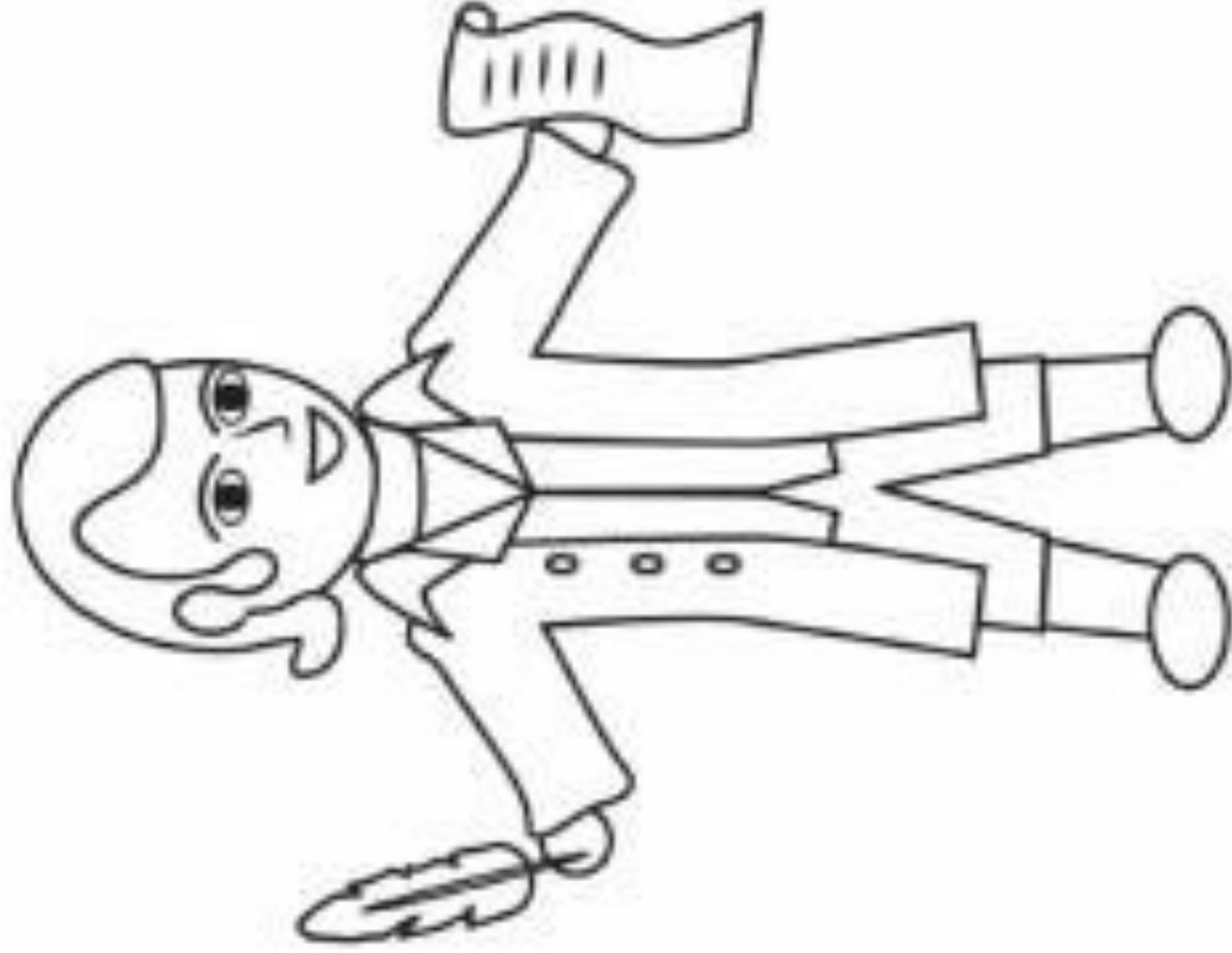






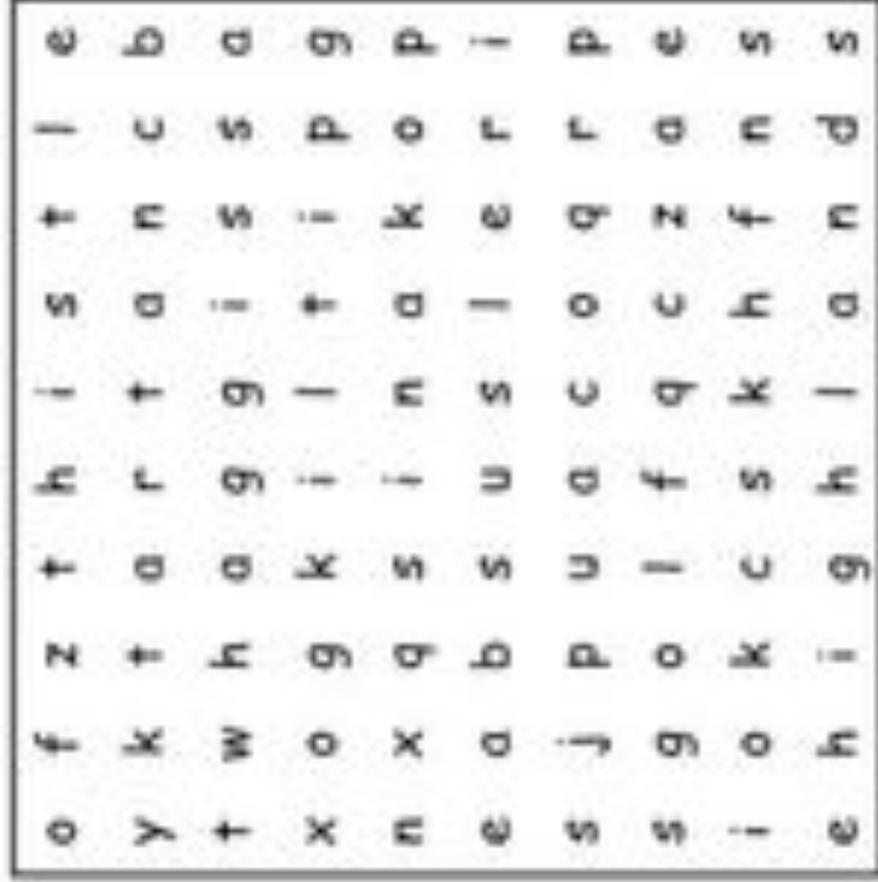
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Robert Burns

Scotland Word Search



thistle

nessie

highlands

loch

tartan

kilt

bogpipes

sporrans

haggis

golf



PHOTO FROM JANE LYNNE BURNES AND OTHERS, 1850-1860

HAPPY BURNS NIGHT!



Robert Burns

Robert Burns

{Child...}

Happy
Burns
Night!

Pencil/Scissor Skills

