**Spellin oot thorny kinch fir language thought police**

***by Rab Wilson***

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Fowk still scrieve in Scots, an e’en mair speik it in their daily lives. In the 2011 UK census, that spiered o Scots gin they cuid speik, read an write Scots, 1.2 million (aamaist 25 per cent o Scots) replied in the affirmative that they cuid – an seemt prood tae admit it.

Despite the perceived lack o ony offeeshul orthography fir the leid, Scots language is a hardy beast that refuses tae dee; keep mind, gin ye’re concernt wi richt weys o spellin, that we hae 10 muckle volumes o the Scottish National Dictionary! Plus a Concise Scots Dictionary an the free mobile phone app, Scots Dictionary for Schools. Please pit this oan yours an the weans’s phones! It’s braw! An wull cost ye naethin!

The orthographic collieshangie likesay wull nae dout rumble oan – but aiblins we micht airgue that Scots hus survived acause it hus nae strict orthography? Mibbes thair’s somethin in oor auncient Scots character that rails agin “authority” an ony attempts tae try an pit a ‘straicht-jaicket’ oan a thing o beauty that hus aye-an-oan rin wild an free!?

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**Activity: Scots Language Award – Level 4**

*Hints for learners:*

* *‘orthography’ is an English word. It means ‘the spelling system of a language’.*
* *‘spiered’ is a Scots word. It means ‘asked’.*
* *‘collieshangie’ is a Scots word. it means ‘noisy dispute’ or ‘noisy argument’.)*

**Activity 1**

Complete this task to demonstrate your understanding of the language used in this article.

Create your own Scots Glossary:

* Using the above section from Rab Wilson’s newspaper column, ‘Spellin oot thorny kinch fir language thought police’, create a glossary of the Scots words used.
* The English words are already in the glossary for you.
* You have to type in the Scots words.
* Remember that you must spell the Scots word exactly the same way as it appears in the article.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| English word | Scots word |
| write | scrieve |
| speak | speik |
| proud | prood |
| to | tae |
| right | richt |
| on | oan |
| nothing | naethin |
| might | micht |
| put | pit |
| any | ony |

**Activity 2**

Answer the following questions to demonstrate your understanding of this article:

1. In the last census how many people admitted that they speak Scots?
2. 10
3. 2,011
4. 25
5. 1,200,000
6. 0
7. 2, 100, 000
8. Which form of Scots dictionary can people get for free?
9. The Scottish National Dictionary
10. The Concise Scots Dictionary
11. The Scots Dictionary for schools
12. Ten muckle volumes
13. Which phrase tells us that the writer is certain?
14. ‘seemt prood’
15. ‘likesay’
16. ‘nae dout’
17. ‘aye-an-oan’
18. The writer makes a few points about Scots language. Select the statements below that reflect the content of the article and the writer’s beliefs:
19. Hardly anyone speaks Scots.
20. Scots language is strong.
21. People think carefully about spelling Scots words.
22. People will soon stop arguing about Scots language.
23. The Scottish National Dictionary is a small, slim book.
24. The Scots language app is very good.
25. Scots language is like a wild animal.
26. People no longer write in Scots.

**Activity 3**

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of purpose and audience:

1. What is the main purpose of this text? Select two of the following statements:
2. To inform people about Scots language.
3. To advertise an app.
4. To encourage people to answer questions in the next census.
5. To encourage people to speak, read and write Scots.
6. To tell us that we need ‘strict orthography’.
7. Which audience is this text suitable for? Select all audiences that are suitable:
8. People who are interested in wild animals.
9. People who are wondering which dictionary to buy.
10. People who are interested in languages.
11. People who are Scots speakers.
12. People with babies and toddlers.