



## Teaching about Scotland

This is one of a series of units for teaching about Scotland in German Secondary schools. All the materials were created by very motivated students in my Area Studies Scotland class, some with experience of teaching in a “Gymnasium“. The materials can be tried out as they are, or altered as desired. They can also be combined. One basic idea behind them all is that both the teacher and the learners can develop the materials themselves, according to their own interests, and then even offer them to another class.

For some of these units printed information material is needed, for example ferry timetables, but if you don't have this, it is no problem to print it out from the Internet. Useful websites are given.

### Scotland and Film – A project

Target group and Aim.

The unit is intended for grades 12 or 13 (or age 16 and upwards) of a German Secondary school. It is planned as a project and covers roughly six lessons (270 minutes). However, it can also be carried out in fewer, or more, lessons. It all depends on how much time the teacher is willing to invest in this project and how much time they are able to spare from the other topics which have to be dealt with.

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Course: Area Studies Scotland

Why did we choose this topic?

Scottish film combines various themes and topics. The landscape, culture, people, their behaviour and their traditions are shown, but Scottish film is more than *Braveheart* and other cliché Hollywood productions, and is certainly not just about the landscape either.

As in other countries the Scottish film industry produces many (award-winning) films every year with contemporary themes like drug abuse, sex and crime, abortion, racism, the search for identity - and other problems people have to face in a modern world. Besides those topics, current Scottish films also show the normal life of people. This variety gives the students the chance to choose a topic they are really personally interested in, a good incentive to becoming involved in the project.

Aim:

We have several aims.

One of our aims is to show students the sheer variety of films produced by the Scottish film industry.

Secondly, as the skill of running and presenting projects is becoming more and more important outside school, we would also like to give the students the chance to practice these skills in school.

By analysing, interpreting and discussing films we hope to improve their oral skills, but also help them to listen carefully to the ideas of other people and accept other opinions.

Working in groups over a period of time is also intended as a good opportunity to learn social skills - after all, real teamwork is not learned in one short session.

Project structure:

1. Groups write the script for a "Scottish" film and act out a scene for the class.
2. Groups present a Scottish film as if they were at a film festival.
3. Class collates information on Scottish films.

**Part 1:** creating film script and presenting (2 x 45 minutes)

Task:

Create a film script (not too detailed) of your own "Scottish" film. (Think about a topic for your film. Can you justify and explain your choice of topic? How is your film related to Scotland? What makes your film interesting for the audience (your classmates)? Prepare to present your script to the class. It would be nice if you could act at least one important scene, so the class could see what characters are involved. )

**Aim:**

To get to know how the students see Scotland, what they already know, what they think they know and if there are some stereotypes of Scotland.

**Procedure:**

Divide the class into groups of four students. Every student gets a task sheet with the questions above on it. The students have 45 minutes time to create their own film script. In the next lesson (45 minutes) the students should present their ideas and act out a scene from their script.

Afterwards: discuss the films with the class (the teacher chairs the discussion). Any important points could go on a transparency.

**Part 2:** “(name of the school) – Scottish film festival” (3 x 45 minutes)

**Task:**

Choosing a film from a list and preparing a presentation on it, as if it were a film festival.

**Aim:**

The students should learn to organize themselves and gather information on their own, and learn how to present their ideas competently.

They will get practice in all the language skills, from independent listening, viewing and understanding, to acting and presenting orally.

They will also become familiar with the variety of Scottish films and the Scottish film industry - they should become aware of the fact that there is more than just Hollywood cliché productions.

**Procedure:**

The class is divided into new groups of four students. The teacher distributes a list of films (see below, source: [www.ub.uni-konstanz.de](http://www.ub.uni-konstanz.de)). Each group chooses one film, watches it outside class and finds important scenes. (The students should be given the chance to watch the films at school!). In class (45 minutes, the students should be given access to the internet and computers, if necessary) the students create a presentation of their film (if not finished, it should be completed outside class). In the next lesson (45 minutes) the fictive film festival takes place. The class functions as a jury. The groups present their films; one film gets the award for the best Scottish film. The winning group could get a prize sponsored by the teacher (sweets, chocolate, etc. or tickets for the cinema, to see the next Scottish production).

**Task sheet:**

Choose a film from the list or find your own film with a Scottish theme and watch it together outside class.

You won't understand every word, but try to get the gist. You will probably have to watch it two or three times.

Watch the film BEFORE you search for additional information (books, internet etc. That way you can see what impression it makes on YOU).

Choose snippets from the film which you think are important.

Prepare a presentation of the film, giving information on the themes, the period and setting, some of the actors, etc. and show the snippets.  
What makes you think that your film should win the (name of the school) – Scottish film festival award.

**Part 3:** Collecting and pooling information on Scottish film to get an overview (45 minutes)

Task:

Collecting information on Scottish actors, directors, topics, settings, films, etc.

Aim:

After the creative part of the project work, the aim of this part is to give the class facts about Scottish films and the Scottish film industry so that they get an overview of the variety of Scottish film.

Procedure:

When the students were listening to the film festival presentations they could have extended the film list sheet and written down information on the period, setting, actors, directors etc. themselves. If not, now is a good opportunity to collate that information.

It is also a good chance for the class to ask the teacher if they know of any other Scottish films, or if there are any Scottish films on the topic X,Y,Z - and wouldn't it be great if the teacher had an answer! (See the Course Materials section of FindYourFeet for information on Scottish films.)

[PS: The films below were chosen by Sebastian and Fabian. Students might well ask why the last one is included in the list of "Scottish" films – maybe they chose it because it includes a pretty well known Scottish actor 😊 and the composer is a Scot]

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<b>Film</b>	<b>Topic, Scottish aspect</b>	<b>Library catalogue number</b> (University of Constance)	<b>Director</b>	<b>Date of publication</b>
Braveheart	Scotland's struggle for independence, Scottish landscape, portrait of William Wallace	6 tff 710:g450/b71a	Mel Gibson	May 1995
Red Road	Drug abuse, rape, loss of a beloved person. Depicting a security operator who observes through her monitors a man from the past. Scottish setting and actors	6 tff 710:a752/r22	Andrea Arnold	May 2006
The needle	German spy ship-wrecked in Scotland and falls in love with a Scottish woman. Dramatic story, Scottish landscape	6 eng 959:f667:k/e92	Richard Marquand	1981
Trainspotting	Life of heroin addicts in Scotland. Scottish actors and setting.	6 tff 710:b791/t71a	Danny Boyle	February 1996
The last king of Scotland	Story of a young Scottish doctor who becomes personal physician to the dictator Idi Amin. Scottish director.	6 eng 959:f653:k/l18	Kevin MacDonald	September 2006
Young Adam	Dramatic crime story taking place on a barge in Glasgow. Scottish actors and setting.	eng 959:t843:k/y69a	David Mackenzie	September 2003
Rob Roy	Historical movie about the life of Rob Roy, who is in conflict with feudal landowners.	6 tff 710:c366/r61	Michael Caton Jones	April 1995
Moulin Rouge	It tells the story of a young poet/writer, Christian, who falls in love with the star of the Moulin Rouge cabaret actress and courtesan, Satine. Scottish actor.	6 tff 710:l951/m69a	1952 version: John Huston  2001 version: Baz Luhrman	1952  2001