

Burns Night

Name _____ Date _____

Adapted from: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/burns-night-2024-what-when-date-b2474921.html>

What is Burns Night and how did it start?

Maya Oppenheim, Sabrina Barr: The Independent - 08 January 2024

The Burns Supper is a celebration of the life and legacy of the Scottish poet Robert Burns. A major event for Scots at home and around the world, it is celebrated with traditional Scottish fare, folk music and renditions of Burns's poetry.

Who was Robert Burns?

Burns penned more than 550 poems and songs before his death in 1796. He is considered a hero for his liberal and socially-minded outlook and his focus on all things political.

Dubbed the “greatest Scot of all time” by STV (Scottish Television) in 2009, the writer from Ayrshire died of rheumatic fever at the age of just 37. His funeral was held on the same day that his son Maxwell was born.



Portrait of Burns by Alexander Nasmyth, 1787, Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

When is Burns Night?

Burns Night falls on 25 January every year. The date was chosen to coincide with the poet's birthday, who was born on 25 January 1759.

Sub heading

The main attraction of Burns Night is the Burns Supper. This traditionally involves participants donning tartan, listening to bagpipes, crooning Auld Lang Syne – also sung at New Year's Eve – and reciting the great writer's songs and poems.

A traditional Burns Night kicks off with the host reading Burns's poem “Address to a Haggis” (first published in The Caledonian Mercury in 1786).

The very first Burns Supper was organised by friends and family as a memorial dinner in 1802. Although new rituals have since been appended, the crux of the day remains unchanged and revolves around paying tribute to Burns in whatever way feels most fitting.

What's in the traditional dinner?

The jewel in the crown of any Burns Supper is always haggis, a savoury pudding containing minced sheep's heart, liver and lungs bound with onion, oatmeal, suet, stock and a selection of spices. Haggis is served with the classic side of mashed neeps and tatties (swedes and potatoes). The food is accompanied by the finest domestic whisky.

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Reading skills

Purpose, source and main points

1) a. The source of the text is _____

b. Is it a report, a review, an eye-witness account or a story?

_____ L1/L2, 2 marks

2) The main purpose of the text is to:

a	describe the life of Robert Burns	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	tell you about the origins of Burns Night and how it is celebrated	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	persuade you to celebrate Burns Night	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	advise you on what to do on January 25th	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Tick one) L1, 1 mark

3) What is the main topic of the text?

a	haggis	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	Robert Burns	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	Burns Night	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	poetry	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Tick one) L1, 1 mark

4) The sub-heading for paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 is missing. Suggest a suitable one.

_____ L1/L2, 1 mark

Punctuation and abbreviations

5) What is the purpose of the two dashes in paragraph 5?

_____ L2, 1 mark

6) Why is there an apostrophe in New Year's Eve?

_____ L1, 1 mark

7) a. STV is an abbreviation for _____

b. Which punctuation mark(s) helped you find this information?

_____ L1/L2, 2 marks

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Detail and inference

8) Name two days when Auld Lang Syne is sung.

_____ L2, 2 marks

9) What fabric might you see worn on Burns Night?

_____ L2, 1 mark

10) What musical instrument is often played on Burns Night?

_____ L2, 1 mark

11) In which newspaper did a Robert Burns poem appear? In what year?

_____ L1/L2, 1 mark (2 x ½)

12) List four ingredients that are mixed with the minced items to make a haggis.

_____ L1/L2, 2 marks (4 x ½)

13) Haggis is served with:

a	swedes and neeps	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	tatties and potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	swedes and potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	savoury pudding	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Tick one) L1, 1 mark

14) The Burns supper is accompanied by whisky. Where is the whisky made?

_____ L2, 1 mark

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Words and language

You can use a dictionary or thesaurus to help with questions 15-19.

15) Use a dictionary to find the meanings of the words below.

rendition _____

crooning _____

L1, 2 marks

16) Find two words or phrases to replace **appended** and **crux** in this sentence and keep the meaning the same.

Although new rituals have since been _____, the

_____ of the day remains unchanged and revolves

around paying tribute to Burns in whatever way feels most fitting.

L1-2, 2 marks

17) Which two language features are used in **paragraph 1** of the text?

a	direct address	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	alliterations	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	quotation	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	rule of three	<input type="checkbox"/>

L2, 2 marks

18) Explain in your own words what **kicks off** means in paragraph 6.

L1, 1 mark

19) Find words in **paragraph 4** that mean:

a. match: _____

b. occur: _____

L1, 2 marks

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Style and tone

20) Which word best describes the style of the text?

a	academic	
b	informal	
c	informative	
d	conversational	

L2, 1 mark

21) Which two words best describe the tone of the text?

a	admiring	
b	angry	
c	knowledgeable	
d	humorous	

L2, 2 marks

Organisational features

22) Name two organisational features used in the text.

(Do **not** include 'paragraphs' or 'bold font' as answers.)

L1-2, 2 marks

23) Who was Alexander Nasmyth?

L1-2, 1 mark

Bonus question

24) The word **tribute** is used in the text.

All the missing words in this puzzle contain **trib** which means to give up / to pay.

- a. The River Ock in Oxfordshire is a _____ of the Thames. (9 letters)
- b. Maria finishes on Friday. Please _____ to her leaving present. (10 letters)
- c. Volunteers are working hard to _____ food to those in need. (10 letters)

(L2+, 3 marks)

Maximum possible marks = 36.