

Donald Dewar's speech at the opening of the Scottish Parliament 1 July 1999

(Donald Dewar was Scotland's first First Minister, 1999 - 2000)

"This mace is a symbol of the great democratic traditions from which we draw our inspiration and our strength.

At its head are inscribed the opening words of our founding statute:

'There shall be a Scottish Parliament.'

Through long years, those words were first a hope, then a belief, then a promise. Now they are a reality.

This is a moment anchored in our history.

Today, we reach back through the long haul to win this Parliament, through the struggles of those who brought democracy to Scotland, to that other Parliament dissolved in controversy nearly three centuries ago.

Today, we look forward to the time when this moment will be seen as a turning point: the day when democracy was renewed in Scotland, when we revitalised our place in this our United Kingdom.

This is about more than our politics and our laws. This is about who we are, how we carry ourselves. In the quiet moments today, we might hear some echoes from the past:

The shout of the welder in the din of the great Clyde shipyards;
The speak of the Mearns, with its soul in the land;
The discourse of the enlightenment, when Edinburgh and Glasgow were a light held to the intellectual life of Europe;
The wild cry of the Great Pipes;
And back to the distant cries of the battles of Bruce and Wallace.

The past is part of us. But today there is a new voice in the land, the voice of a democratic Parliament. A voice to shape Scotland, a voice for the future.

Walter Scott wrote that only a man with soul so dead could have no sense, no feel of his native land. For me, for any Scot, today is a proud moment; a new stage on a journey begun long ago and which has no end. This is a proud day for all of us.

A Scottish Parliament. Not an end: a means to greater ends. And those too are part of our mace. Woven into its symbolic thistles are these four words:

'Wisdom. Justice. Compassion. Integrity.'

Burns would have understood that. We have just heard – beautifully sung – one of his most enduring works. At the heart of that song is a very Scottish conviction: that honesty and simple dignity are priceless virtues, not imparted by rank or birth or privilege but part of the soul.

Burns believed that sense and worth ultimately prevail. He believed that was the core of politics; that without it, ours would be an impoverished profession.

'Wisdom. Justice. Compassion. Integrity.' Timeless values. Honourable aspirations for this new forum of democracy, born on the cusp of a new century.

We are fallible. We will make mistakes. But we will never lose sight of what brought us here: the striving to do right by the people of Scotland; to respect their priorities; to better their lot; and to contribute to the commonweal.

I look forward to the days ahead when this Chamber will sound with debate, argument and passion. When men and women from all over Scotland will meet to work together for a future built from the first principles of social justice."

Curriculum Links		☆ = individual ■ = group ● = class ▲ = pairs	Learning and Teaching Activities/Possible Organisation	Assessment Strategies	Resources
Learning Outcomes	Success Criteria				
<p>Main focus: Talking and Listening</p> <p>Talking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk readily about own feelings. (A) • Talk about Dewar’s possible feelings. (B) • Show an understanding of the kind of reaction Dewar’s speech might have produced. (C) • Clearly express own feelings and opinions. (D/E) <p>Listening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the speech and respond in a way that shows some reaction to at least 1 aspect of it. • Offer some personal response to the feelings/attitudes of both Dewar and his audience. (C/D/E) 	<p>When working in pairs, pupil’s partner clearly understands pupil’s point of view, and pupil is able to explain his/her point of view using own words.</p> <p>During class discussion, pupil has offered at least one opinion/ reaction to Dewar’s speech.</p> <p>Pupil gave at least 1 reason why Dewar’s speech was effective for them.</p>	<p>●</p> <p>■</p> <p>▲</p> <p>●</p> <p>■</p> <p>●</p> <p>☆</p> <p>☆</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Talk about where the Scottish Parliament is, what it does and the role of our MSPs. Also discuss the dissolution of the last Scottish Parliament in 1707 and the significance of the new Scottish Parliament which opened in 1999. Discuss how Donald Dewar would have felt - talk about pride, honour, etc. Children to talk about how they would have felt, if it had been them.</p> <p>Upper Primary children could look more closely at Donald Dewar’s speech. Discuss aspects of the speech:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repetition of key words/phrases, • sentence length, • the way the sentences are structured for impact, • the organisation of the speech: talking about the past, the present and finally the future, • the type of person the speech is aimed at: everyone! <p>☆ Talk about why the speech is effective. How does it make you feel? How is Donald Dewar trying to make you feel?</p>	<p>Discussion. Questioning.</p> <p>Oral response. Think, pair, share.</p> <p>Discussion. Questioning.</p> <p>Oral response.</p>	<p>Copy of Donald Dewar’s speech – attached.</p>

Personal Writing – The New Scottish Parliament cont'd

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<p><u>Writing</u></p> <p>Write briefly about a personal experience. (A)</p> <p>In writing, use an appropriate sequence and give an indication of feelings using adequate vocabulary. (B)</p> <p>In writing, show an attempt to aim the speech at a specific audience. (C)</p> <p>In the speech, use language and organisation appropriate to the audience. (D)</p> <p>Demonstrate some capacity to use specific style in the speech in order to have maximum impact on the audience. (E)</p> <p>Talking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a prepared speech to a group or class. • Speak clearly and audibly during the speech.(A) • Showing an awareness of own effect on the audience – using pace and tone. (D/E) 	<p>When peers read pupil's sentences, they can easily understand how he/she would feel in Donald Dewar's position.</p> <p>In their writing, pupil has separated the text into comments about the past, the present and the future.</p> <p>In their writing pupil has varied their sentence lengths to try to have a stronger impact on the people who read/listen to it.</p> <p>In editing, pupil has taken account of their friend's comments and changed at least two things about their writing.</p> <p>When giving their speech, the audience can understand how the pupil feels because of something they said or the way they said it.</p>	<p>☆</p> <p>▲</p> <p>☆</p> <p>☆</p> <p>▲</p>	<p><u>Main Task</u></p> <p>Teachers/pupils can choose from one of the following:</p> <p>Lower Primary</p> <p>Draw a picture of yourself in your best clothes, ready to give this important speech - opening Scotland's new Parliament. Underneath the picture, write sentences to describe how you felt giving the speech and why it was so important to you.</p> <p>Upper Primary/Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a short speech as if you were the First Minister of Scotland's new Parliament. • Write a short speech as if you were opening a building or event which would mean something to you - perhaps the new Wembley Stadium, or a new school, or skateboarding centre. <p><u>Organisation</u></p> <p>Use a similar structure to Dewar's speech - past, present and future.</p> <p>Use a writing frame to make notes and from this write up first draft.</p> <p>Edit, share with peers, re-edit, write up final copy. Give the speech!</p>	<p>Drawing</p> <p>Written work. 3 stars and a wish.</p> <p>Extended piece of writing. 3 stars and a wish.</p> <p>Observe peer discussions.</p>	<p>Use writing frame.</p>