

Uncovering Tartans and Tales: A Journey into Scottish Clans & Your Heritage

Introduction (15 mins)

Begin with a discussion: What comes to mind when you think of Scotland? Kilts, bagpipes, castles? Introduce the concept of Scottish clans – extended kinship groups with shared identity and territory. Discuss how family history connects us to the past. Briefly explain that today, you'll be a historian, writer, and artist, exploring this fascinating part of Scottish culture and potentially your own roots.

Activity 1: Historical Deep Dive (60 mins)

- **Research prompt:** What was the Scottish clan system? When did it flourish? What factors led to its decline (e.g., Highland Clearances, Battle of Culloden)?
- Choose 2-3 major clans (e.g., MacDonald, Campbell, MacLeod, Fraser) OR start researching surnames in Tahlia's own family history that might have Scottish origins.
- For each researched clan (or potential family clan), find:
 - The main territory/lands.
 - The clan crest and motto.
 - A brief history or famous story associated with the clan.
 - The clan tartan(s).
- **Resources:** Reputable websites like ScotClans, the National Records of Scotland, historical society websites, online encyclopedias.

Activity 2: Language and Legends (30 mins)

- **Motto Analysis (English):** Look at the mottos of the researched clans. What do they mean literally? What do they suggest about the clan's values or reputation? Discuss the power of slogans and mottos.
- **Narrative Spark (English):** Read a short excerpt about clan life or a specific historical event (e.g., the Massacre of Glencoe, a clan gathering). Discuss the tone and perspective.

Activity 3: Creative Expression - Design Your Crest (45 mins)

- **Art Exploration:** Look at examples of traditional Scottish clan crests. Notice common elements: the strap and buckle border, the motto, central symbols (animals, plants, objects).
- **Design Time:** Based on your research or family history findings (even if connections are uncertain, use discovered themes!), design a personal crest. Consider:
 - What symbols represent you, your family, or the values you admire in the clans?
 - What motto would you choose for yourself or your family? (It can be in English or inspired by Gaelic/Latin).
 - Sketch your design, paying attention to layout and symbolism. Use colours that feel meaningful.

Activity 4: Bringing it Together & Reflection (30 mins)

- **Writing Task (English):** Choose ONE: a) Write a short descriptive paragraph explaining the symbolism in your designed crest. b) Write a short fictional journal entry from the perspective of someone living in a Scottish clan during a specific historical period you researched. c) Write a brief summary of your family history findings (or lack thereof) related to Scottish clans.

- **Sharing and Discussion:** Share your crest design and your written piece. Discuss what you found most interesting, surprising, or challenging during the lesson. How does understanding history, language, and art help paint a fuller picture of a culture or family heritage?

Extension Ideas (Optional):

- Research and try drawing/colouring a specific tartan pattern.
- Explore Scottish folklore and mythology related to clans.
- Cook a traditional Scottish recipe (e.g., shortbread, oatcakes).
- Watch a documentary or historical film about Scotland (check ratings/appropriateness).