

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Druim

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 1,154. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 850 corresponds to Litir 1,154.*

Dè tha am facal *druim* a’ ciallachadh dhuibh? Bidh sibh a’ smaoinichadh air ‘back’, tha mi cinnteach. ’S dòcha gu bheil ceangal ann eadar *druim* agus *dorsum* ann an Laidinn – às am faighear am facal Beurla *dorsal*. Tha mo dhruim ghoirt ‘my back is sore’. **’S iomadh turas** a thuir mi sin an dèidh latha saothrach anns an leas!

Ach tha ciallan eile air an fhacal *druim*. Uaireannan, tha e a’ seasamh airson mullach rudeigin – mar ‘the ridge of a hill’. Druim an aonaich ‘the mountain ridge’. Airson sin a thuigsinn, bidh mise a’ smaoinichadh air cù no each – ainmhidh ceithir-chasach. Bidh a dhruim car coltach ann an cumadh ri druim aonaich. ’S iomadh druim a nochdas air mapaichean na Gàidhealtachd a’ ciallachadh *ridge*.

Agus bidh an eileamaid *druim* a’ nochdadh ann an ainmean-àite far an robh a’ Ghàidhlig ga bruidhinn uaireigin. Mar eisimpleir – Drumchapel ann an Glaschu. Tha cuid a’ cumail a-mach gur ann à *Druim a’ Chapail* a thàinig e – *the ridge of the horse*. Ach chuala mi beachd cuideachd gun tàinig e à Druim a’ Chaibeil ‘the ridge of the chapel’.

Airson ‘the spine’ of a book canaidh sinn *druim an leabhair*. Cuiribh bàta bun-os-cionn air a’ chladach. Dè chì sibh a-nise ach druim a’ bhàta aig a’ mhullach – *the keel of the boat*. Druim a’ bhàta. Ma tha am bàta mòr gu leòr is ma tha sibh treun gu leòr mar sheòladairean, ma dh’fhaodte gun tèid sibh a-mach gu druim a’ chuain. *The open sea*. ’S iomadh maraiche Gàidhealach a th’ air a bhith eòlach air druim a’ chuain.

Anns an t-seann aimsir, nam biodh daoine a’ bruidhinn mu ‘druim an rathaid’, bhathar a’ ciallachadh ‘the middle of the road’. Druim an rathaid. Cùm an t-each agad air druim an rathaid. Ach cha chumadh sibh each air druim an taighe! Tha sin a’ ciallachadh ‘the ridge line of the house’. Bithibh faiceallach ma tha sibh shuas gu h-àrd, ag obair air druim an taighe.

Ciamar a chanas sinn ‘flat on my back’ ann an Gàidhlig? Air mo dhruim dìreach. Bha mi nam laighe air mo dhruim dìreach. No ‘you were flat on your back’ – bha thu air do dhruim dìreach.

Uaireannan, bidh a’ ghealach air a druim. Am faca sibh sin riamh? Sin nuair a tha a’ ghealach chorrnach ann – no *crescent moon* – agus na h-adharcan aice a’ stobadh an-àirde aig gach ceann dhith. Tha i coltach ri bobhla no beul a tha ri gàire. A rèir nan seann Ghàidheal, nuair tha a’ ghealach mar sin, bidh deagh aimsir ann.

Tha am facal *druim* rud beag neo-riaghailteach. Anns an tuiseal ghinideach shingilte canaidh sinn *droma*. Taigh an Droma ‘the house of the ridge’. Sin baile

beag ris an canar Tyndrum ann am Beurla. Airson ‘the spine’ canaidh sinn *an cnàimh-droma* no *cnàimh an droma*.

Anns an tuiseal ghairmeach, canaidh sinn *a dhruim!* Ò, a dhruim, carson a tha thu cho goirt? An e m’ aois as coireach?! Agus, anns an tuiseal ainmneach iolra, canaidh sinn *dromannan. Backs. Dromannan. Ma bhios daoine an dromannan a chèile*, tha iad ri carachd no *wrestling*.

Seo gnathas-cainnt le *druim* ann. **Ma leigeas tu òirleach leis, leanaidh e air do dhruim thu.** Tha sin car coltach ris a’ Bheurla, *give him an inch and he’ll take a mile*. Ma leigeas tu òirleach leis, leanaidh e air do dhruim thu.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** ciallan: *meanings*; ainmhidh ceithir-chasach: *quadruped*; maraiche: *mariner*; neo-riaghailteach: *irregular*; tuiseal: *case*; ainmneach: *nominative*; gairmeach: *vocative*; ginideach: *genitive*; iolra: *plural*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** às am faighear am facal X: *from which the word X is obtained*; tha e a’ seasamh airson mullach rudeigin: *it stands for the top of something*; airson sin a thuigsinn: *to understand that*; bidh a dhruim car coltach ann an cumadh ri druim aonaich: *its back is quite similar in shape to a mountain ridge*; far an robh a’ Ghàidhlig ga bruidhinn uaireigin: *where Gaelic was once spoken*; cuiribh bàta bun-os-cionn: *put a boat upside-down*; dè chì sibh a-nise ach druim a’ bhàta aig a’ mhullach: *what do you see now but the keel of the boat at the top*; ma tha sibh treun gu leòr: *if you are bold enough*; ma dh’fhaodte gun tèid sibh a-mach gu druim a’ chuain: *perhaps you’ll go out to the open sea*; bithibh faiceallach ma tha sibh shuas gu h-àrd, ag obair air druim an taighe: *be careful if you are up high, working on the ridge-line of the house*; bha mi nam laighe air mo dhruim dìreach: *I was lying flat on my back*; nuair a tha a’ ghealach chorrnach ann agus na h-adharcan aice a’ stobadh an-àirde aig gach ceann dhith: *when there is a crescent moon and her horns stick up at either end*; coltach ri bobhla no beul a tha ri gàire: *like a bowl or a smiling mouth*; bidh deagh aimsir ann: *there will be good weather*; a dhruim, carson a tha thu cho goirt?: *o back, why are you so sore?*; an e m’ aois as coireach?: *is it my age that is responsible?!*; nach math gu bheil cleasan mar sin air an gleidheadh againn ann an clò: *isn’t it good that we have games like that preserved for us in print*; dh’fhaodainn a bhith ceàrr: *I could be wrong*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** ’S iomadh turas a thuir mi sin an dèidh latha saothrach anns an leas: *many’s a time I said that after a day of labour in the garden (or cultivated plot). Remember this phrase as it is very useful. It does not vary according to the tense or mood of the rest of the sentence, and it is always at the start of a sentence or clause. Often the English equivalent will be at the end of a sentence: He did that many times. ’S iomadh turas a rinn e sin.*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** **Ma leigeas tu òirleach leis, leanaidh e air do dhruim thu:** *give him an inch and he’ll take a mile.*

*Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA*