

## **An Litir Bheag** **le Ruairidh MacIlleathain**

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 472 (which corresponds to Litir 776). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*I'm working through the alphabet in Armstrong's old dictionary. I'm looking for unusual compound words. We're at the letter 'g'. Gnùis-nàire. Gnùis-nàire. You'll know what nàire is – shame, embarrassment. And gnùis – that's your face or the appearance on your face. Gnùis-nàire – bashfulness, shamefacedness.*

*Ion-phòsta. When ion- is prefixed to another word, it means fit for or worthy of. A person who is ion-phòsta is worthy of being married. Marriageable.*

*And lèigh-losgadh. Lèigh-losgadh. Lèigh is connected to healing. It means doctor, physician. And losgadh – that's connected to extreme heat – burning. Lèigh-losgadh. Healing with heat. Cauterization.*

*Now, an adjective that starts with 'm' – mòr-roinneach. Canada is a 'mòr-roinneach' state. Ontario is a province of Canada. Mòr-roinn – province. Mòr-roinneach – provincial, made of provinces.*

*Nuall-ghuthach. Somebody is nuall-ghuthach if their voice is making howls. Nuall or nuallan – a*

*Tha mi ag obair tron aibidil ann an seann fhaclair Armstrong. Tha mi a' lorg fhaclan-fillte annasach. Tha sinn aig an litir 'g'. Gnùis-nàire. Gnùis-nàire. Bidh fios agaibh dè tha ann an nàire – shame, embarrassment. Agus gnùis – 's e sin d' aodann, no an coltas air d' aodann. Gnùis-nàire – bashfulness, shamefacedness.*

*Ion-phòsta. Nuair a tha ion- air beulaibh facal eile, tha e a' ciallachadh fit for no worthy of. Tha neach a tha ion-phòsta airidh air a bhith pòsta. Marriageable.*

*Agus lèigh-losgadh. Lèigh-losgadh. Tha lèigh co-cheangailte ri slànachadh. Tha e a' ciallachadh dotair, physician. Agus losgadh – tha sin co-cheangailte ri teas mòr – burning. Lèigh-losgadh. A' dèanamh leigheas le teas. Cauterization.*

*Nise, buadhair a tha a' tòiseachadh le 'm' – mòr-roinneach. 'S e stàit mhòr-roinneach a tha ann an Canada. Tha Ontario na mhòr-roinn de Chanada. Mòr-roinn – province. Mòr-roinneach – provincial, air a dhèanamh de mhòr-roinnean.*

*Nuall-ghuthach. Tha cuideigin nuall-ghuthach ma tha guth aca a tha a' dèanamh nuallan. Nuall no nuallan – a*

*lament, howl, wail, shriek. Nuall-ghuthach – having a howling voice or howling, roaring.*

*I have a lovely compound word for you, starting with ‘o’. Òr-mhadainn. Òr-mhadainn – daybreak, the break of day. The time of the morning when the light is golden.*

*The next word – prìomh-sheòl. If you are familiar with sailing boats, perhaps that will be obvious. The prìomh-sheòl is the largest sail on a yacht. Mainsail.*

*And ruadh-thuil. Ruadh-thuil. That means ‘red-brown flood’. It’s a flood on peaty country where the water has gone red-brown in colour (due to tannins).*

*There are only three letters left – ‘s’, ‘t’ and ‘u’. Here’s one starting with ‘s’ – seach-labhairt. Seach-labhairt. You’ll understand labhairt – speaking. And seach – on the side. Seach-labhairt means speaking allegorically.*

*Tuil-dhoras. There’s the word tuil again. Tuil-dhoras – a flood door. It means floodgate or canal-lock. Tuil-dhoras. It’s meaningful, isn’t it?*

*And the final word – uim-sheòladair. A person who sails around [something]. Uime means about him or about it. Uim-sheòladair – circumnavigator. I’ve done enough circumnavigating around compound words. Cheerio just now.*

*lament, howl, wail, shriek. Nuall-ghuthach – having a howling voice no howling, roaring.*

*Tha facal-fillte brèagha agam dhuibh, a’ tòiseachadh le ‘o’. Òr-mhadainn. Òr-mhadainn – briseadh an latha, the break of day. An t-àm dhen mhadainn nuair a tha solas le dath an òir ann.*

*An ath fhacal – prìomh-sheòl. Ma tha sibh eòlach air bàtaichean-seòlaidh, ’s dòcha gum bi sin follaiseach. ’S e am prìomh-sheòl, an seòl as motha air gheat. Mainsail.*

*Agus ruadh-thuil. Ruadh-thuil. Tha sin a’ ciallachadh ‘red-brown flood’. ’S e a tha ann tuil air talamh mòintich far a bheil an t-uisge air a dhol ruadh.*

*Chan eil ach trì litrichean air fhàgail – ‘s’, ‘t’ agus ‘u’. Seo fear a’ tòiseachadh le ‘s’ – seach-labhairt. Seach-labhairt. Tuigidh sibh labhairt – bruidhinn. Agus seach – air an taobh. Tha seach-labhairt a’ ciallachadh speaking allegorically.*

*Tuil-dhoras. Sin am facal tuil arithist. Tuil-dhoras – a flood door. Tha e a’ ciallachadh floodgate no canal-lock. Tuil-dhoras. Tha e ciallach, nach eil?*

*Agus am facal mu dheireadh – uim-sheòladair. Neach a bhios a’ seòladh uime. Tha uime a’ ciallachadh about him no about it. Uim-sheòladair – circumnavigator. Tha mi air uim-sheòladh gu leòr a dhèanamh timcheall air faclan fillte. Mar sin leibh an-dràsta.*