

An Litir Bheag

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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 1,100 (which corresponds to Litir 1,404). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

What's the Gaelic for 'laboratory'? It's obair-lann and also deuchainn-lann. Obair means 'work'. And that's the basis of the word 'laboratory' – 'place of labour or work'. Deuchainn means 'test, examination, trial, experiment'. Deuchainn-lann – a place for testing or experimentation.

But what exactly does lann mean? In olden times, it was meaning 'enclosure' or 'enclosed land'. The word is feminine. Thus, people would say traditionally 'anns an lainn' or 'anns an loinn', instead of 'anns an lann'. That leaves 'lainn' place names in the Highlands.

Near Inverness, for example, there is An Lainn Mhòr and An Lainn Bheag. In English, people call them Lynemore and Lynebeg. In Moray, near Tomintoul, is Lynachork. That's Lainn a' Choirce 'the enclosed field of the oats'.

Today, lann – in conversation or literature – is connected to another element. It means 'a place where something is happening'. You will know leabharlann 'library'. Books are kept there. Usually, when we are writing it, we put a tàthan –

Dè a' Ghàidhlig a tha air 'laboratory'? Tha obair-lann agus cuideachd deuchainn-lann. Tha obair a' ciallachadh 'work'. Agus 's e sin bunait an fhacail laboratory – 'place of labour or work'. Tha deuchainn a' ciallachadh 'test, examination, trial, experiment'. Deuchainn-lann – a place for testing or experimentation.

Ach dè dìreach a tha lann a' ciallachadh? O shean, bha e a' ciallachadh 'enclosure' no 'enclosed land'. Tha am facal boireanta. Mar sin, bhiodh daoine ag ràdh gu traidiseanta 'anns an lainn' no 'anns an loinn', an àite 'anns an lann'. Tha sin a' fàgail ainmean-àite air a' Ghàidhealtachd le lainn.

Faisg air Inbhir Nis, mar eisimpleir, tha an Lainn Mhòr agus an Lainn Bheag. Ann am Beurla, canaidh daoine Lynemore agus Lynebeg riutha. Ann am Moireibh, faisg air Tom an t-Sabhail, tha Lynachork. Sin Lainn a' Choirce 'the enclosed field of the oats'.

Anns an latha an-diugh, tha lann mar as trice, ann an còmhradh no litreachas, ceangailte ri eileamaid eile. Tha e a' ciallachadh 'àite far a bheil rudeigin a' tachairt'. Bidh sibh eòlach air leabharlann 'library'. Tha leabhraichean air an cumail ann. Mar as trice, nuair a tha

<p><i>or hyphen – before the element lann. But leabharlann is written as one word, without a hyphen. Tasglann ‘archive’ is like that.</i></p> <p>Arm-lann means ‘arsenal’. Amharc-lann means ‘observatory’. And perhaps you will know biadh-lann ‘canteen, dining hall’.</p> <p>There are several examples connected with animals in Dwelly’s old dictionary. For example, cearc-lann ‘poultry yard’ and bò-lann ‘cow house, byre’. Beach-lann stands for ‘bee-hive’ and fiadh-lann means ‘deer park’.</p> <p>Do you understand the following? Suain-lann, long-lann. and broc-lann.</p> <p>Suain-lann means ‘dormitory’ – where people sleep. Long means ‘ship’. Thus, a long-lann is ‘a dockyard’. Broc-lann [is] ‘a badger’s den or sett’.</p> <p>Anyway, off I go. I’m going to have a cuppa in the conservatory!</p>	<p>sinn ga sgrìobhadh, bidh sinn a’ cur tàthan – no hyphen – ron eileamaid lann. Ach tha leabharlann air a sgrìobhadh mar aon fhacal, gun tàthan. Tha tasglann ‘archive’ coltach ri sin.</p> <p>Tha arm-lann a’ ciallachadh ‘arsenal’. Tha amharc-lann a’ ciallachadh ‘observatory’. Agus math dh’fhaodte gum bi sibh eòlach air biadh-lann ‘canteen, dining hall’.</p> <p>Tha grunn eisimpleirean co-cheangailte ri beathaichean ann an seann fhaclair Dwelly. Mar eisimpleir, cearc-lann ‘poultry yard’ agus bò-lann ‘cow house, byre’. Tha beach-lann a’ seasamh airson ‘bee-hive’ agus tha fiadh-lann a’ ciallachadh ‘deer park’.</p> <p>Saoil an tuig sibh an fheadhainn a leanas? Suain-lann, long-lann. agus broc-lann.</p> <p>Tha suain-lann a’ ciallachadh ‘dormitory’ – far am bi daoine a’ dol nan suain. Tha long a’ ciallachadh ‘ship’. ’S e long-lann ‘a dockyard’. Broc-lann ‘a badger’s den or sett’.</p> <p>Co-dhiù, mach à seo leam. Tha mi a’ dol a ghabhail srùbag anns a’ ghrian-lann!</p>
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