



Legends of the Scottish Borders

How do the myths and legends of the Scottish Borders reveal the historical connections and tensions between Scotland and England?



▲ Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland.

Culture note

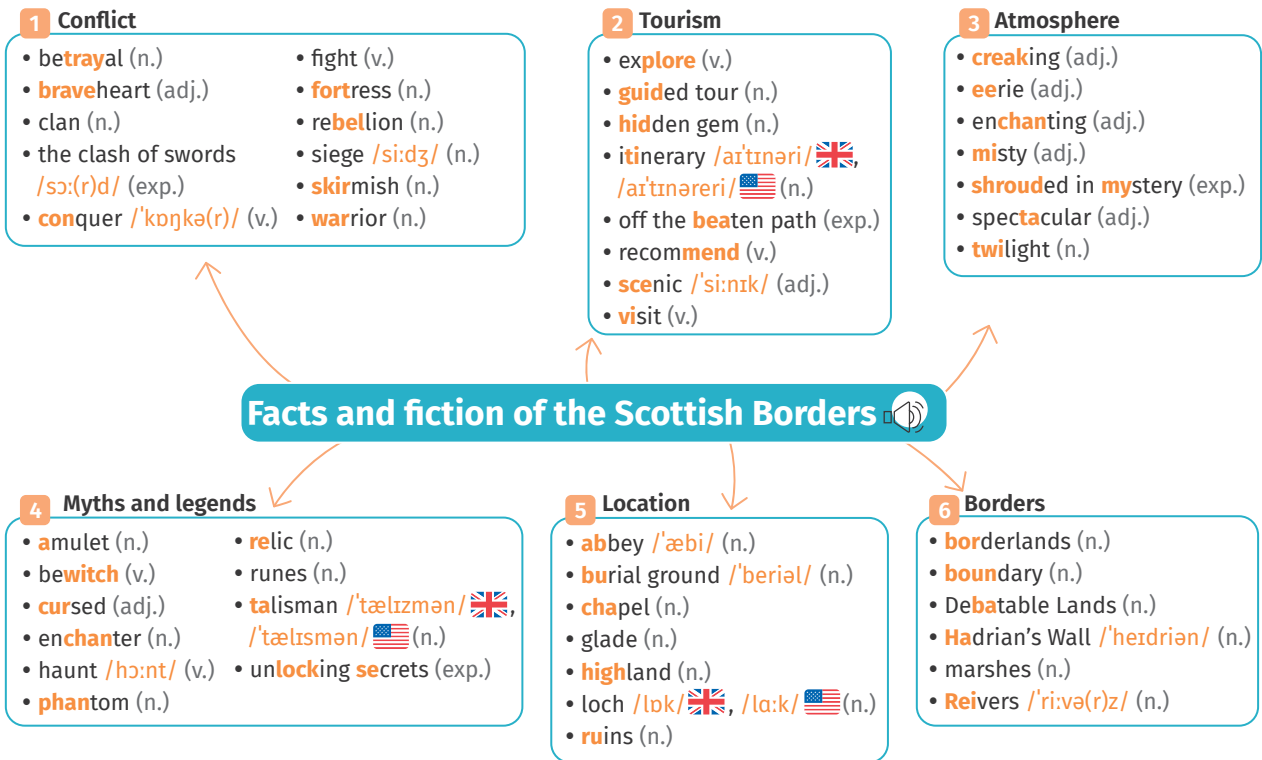
Did you know that in some villages of the Scottish Borders, you can stand with one foot in Scotland and the other in England? The border runs right through fields, rivers, and even a few houses! For centuries, this line changed again and again after battles and treaties. No wonder people living there created so many strange stories about life *between two worlds!*

Get ready!

- 1 What comes to mind when you think of Scotland? List what you know about it (places, cities, symbols, landscapes, myths, etc.).
- 2 Look at the picture and describe the setting and atmosphere. How is the border represented?
- 3 Watch the video on the opposite page and find elements characterising the Scottish Borders.



Create a travel guide on myths and legends of the Scottish Borders.



Let's learn!

Choose three words from the mind map and write clues for each one. Then, in small groups, quiz each other!

Quote of the day



"After all, I believe that legends and myths are largely made of "truth", and indeed present aspects of it that can only be received in this mode."

– J. R. R. Tolkien

To what extent do you think myths reflect history? How can these stories help us understand reality?



[LLS.fr/ANG1Borders](https://www.lls.fr/ANG1Borders)

▲ Melrose Abbey in the Scottish Borders.

1 Milestones in Scottish history

1296

Invasion of Scotland by Edward I of England.



1314

Battle of Bannockburn leads to Scotland's victory against the English.

1320

Declaration of Arbroath affirms Scotland's independence.



1707

Acts of Union: The parliaments of England and Scotland merge, creating the Kingdom of Great Britain.

1603

Union of the Crowns: James VI of Scotland becomes James I of England.

1997

Devolution Referendum: Scotland votes in favour of establishing its own parliament.



2014

Scottish Independence Referendum: 55% choose to remain in the UK.

2 The wall that split Britain into two



▲ Lone tree on Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland.

3 The Anglo-Scottish border



Questions

- 1 What do the documents reveal about the history between England and Scotland?
- 2 How has Scottish identity and autonomy evolved over time? What challenges remain today?
- 3 Pick out geographical features or landmarks that have played a part in the region's history.

Background check

How have historical events shaped Scottish identity?



Let's learn!

Write three questions about what you've just learnt, and quiz your classmates.

During the late Middle Ages, specifically between the late 13th and late 15th centuries, Scotland and England were at war – and the people living in the border areas in both Scotland and England bore the brunt of it.

It was a dangerous time to live in the region, and life was hard. The frequent Anglo-Scottish wars meant that the border areas were often devastated by battles – and even when there wasn't a war ongoing, tensions were always high, leaving the constant threat of further warfare lingering.

What was the point in trying to farm on a piece of land if there was the possibility that it might be destroyed at any time? And besides, arable farming wasn't well-suited to the land in the area, much of which is hilly or open moorland. This type of land is much better for livestock farming, as it's suitable for grazing cattle rather than growing crops – and this made it easy for reivers, as cattle could be easily stolen and smuggled away. [...]

Reiving was a way of life, and a way of making a living. There were reivers on both sides of the border, and raids weren't necessarily only cross-border attacks: Scottish reivers were just as likely to raid other Scottish clans as they were English families. Anyone could be a victim of an attack by the Border Reivers, so long as they weren't direct family. [...]



▲ Riders take part in the town's Common Riding, one of the oldest Border festivals in Selkirk, Scotland, June 2023.

The legacy of the Border Reivers can still be seen in the annual festivals throughout the Scottish Border towns, with the Riding of the Marches (a ride out on horses around the town boundaries) offering a strong link to these towns' reiving heritage.

There are also a great many depictions of reivers in literature, most notably in Walter Scott's collection of Border Ballads, the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. In these, the Border Reiver is depicted as a heroic figure with a strong moral compass and a code of honour, who was a decent person at heart despite any bloodshed.

Carrie Sanderson, *Tartan Blog*, 2021.

PATH A B1

- 1-A Who were the Border Reivers, and why did they raid farms?
- 2-A What kind of land was found in the Scottish Borders? Why was farming difficult?
- 3-A How do Border towns remember the reivers today?

PATH B B1+

- 1-B What made the Scottish Borders especially vulnerable in the Middle Ages?
- 2-B What was the financial reason for reiving?
- 3-B How does the description of reivers in the last paragraph contrast with the rest of the text?

Let's talk this out!

- 4 Share your findings to summarise what aspects of the reivers' legacy are remembered today.
- 5 Why do you think literature and festivals still celebrate the reivers, despite the violence they caused?
- 6 In your opinion, are the Border Reivers more like mythical heroes or real historical figures?

Over to you!

Broadcasting the Border festival

You're a local reporter preparing a short radio ad to invite people to the Riding of the Marches festival. Explain why the festival is exciting, mention its link to the Border Reivers, and encourage listeners to come join the tradition!



Group 1 • The sinister tale of the Redcap

It's no surprise that a castle known as the “guardhouse of the bloodiest valley in Britain” has picked up some stories over the last 800 years. Hermitage Castle was built so close to the border between Scotland and England that just its construction almost caused a full scale war. These enormous walls were built to keep people out, but legend says that they also kept a very sinister creature in. The imposing mass of Hermitage Castle has changed greatly since the 13th century. The castle walls were less foreboding but the man living behind them was so wicked that his story still lingers. He was a member of the Soulis family, butlers to the King of Scots and Lords of Liddesdale. Soulis had been schooled in the dark arts and enjoyed nothing more than death and destruction. He had gained himself a helper for his nefarious deeds, the only creature that enjoyed bloodshed as much as he did. This small beast was called a Redcap, similar to a goblin but with a hat that needed to be soaked in blood to maintain its deep red colour. There was no better place to provide the Redcap with a steady supply of spilled blood than the frontier of the Scottish Borders. In return for the carnage that the Redcap required, it granted Soulis a magical ability. This lord of Hermitage Castle could not be harmed by steel or bound by rope. Soulis grew

bold thinking himself invincible. His crimes grew darker, and the Redcap grew happier while people from the surrounding area despaired. Eventually, the locals hatched a plan to rid themselves of Soulis forever. Together, they rose up and stormed Hermitage Castle to seize Soulis. [...]



▲ Robin Redcap captured at Hermitage Castle, Jacob Petersson.

Throughout it all, the Redcap has supposedly watched from the high walls of Hermitage Castle. It has been a long time since blood was spilled here though. The castle was rendered obsolete with the Union of the Crowns in 1603 and abandoned. If you hear a strange scrabbling noise or catch glimpse of a flash of red inside, then be wary. If that Redcap really is still around, then he must be getting pretty desperate.

Graeme Johncock, *Hidden Scotland*, 2022.

Group 2 • Haunted castles and ghost stories



▲ Jedburgh Castle Jail in the Scottish Borders.

LLS.fr/ANG1Haunted

A Brownie is a household spirit, or a hobgoblin, or else a type of fairy from Scottish folklore. People believed that every manor house had one and, in the kitchen, people would leave an empty seat next to the fire which was left unoccupied for that house's Brownie. Brownies were believed to be shy creatures that would hide away in the unused corners of the house, only coming out at night. At night they would roam the house while the owners slept, performing any necessary housework that was left to be completed. The Brownie of legend started as a tutelary spirit, similar to the Lares of ancient Roman folklore. These were a kind of guardian/protector spirit that were tied to a particular place or person. While the Lares of Roman tradition were protective spirits of deceased ancestors, Brownies were protective spirits of homes. [...] By the 19th century, Brownies were almost universally described as being short, hairy, wrinkled, and rotund. They're usually found either naked or wearing rags. Other physical descriptions depend on where in Scotland or England they hail



▲ Dobby the house elf in the *Harry Potter* movies adaptation (2001-2011).

from. [...] The Brownies of the Scottish Lowlands for example are said to lack a nose, instead having one single hold in the center of their face. [...] Folklore

states that Brownies are benevolent spirits that can be trusted, to a point. For the most part, they live to serve the household they live in, happy to do house and farm chores at night. In exchange, Brownies expect recompense in the form of offerings of food. Homeowners should leave an offering of milk or cream next to the hearth each night in a show of gratitude. Brownies are also said to be fans of foods like porridge. They are Scottish, after all. [...] The best way to safely get rid of a Brownie is to gift it human clothing. [...] Brownies have left a lasting impact on Scottish folklore and despite

the passage of time, the legacy of Brownies continues to endure. If they sound more than a little familiar, it should come as no surprise that the Brownie was J.K Rowling's chief inspiration for Dobby the house elf.

Robbie Mitchell, *Historic Mysteries*, February 2023.

Questions

You are in charge of one document.

- 1 What kind of supernatural being or story is described in your document?
- 2 How does this legend reflect the violence of life in the Scottish Borders?
- 3 What emotions or values are expressed through this story (fear, loyalty, revenge, belonging, etc.)? Justify with quotes.

Let's talk this out!

- 4 Present and share what your legend says about the Scottish Borders. Are they shown as a place of danger or connection?
- 5 Do you think these legends bring Scotland and England closer together, or keep the idea of division alive?
- 6 If you had to create a modern Border legend, what kind of spirit or ghost would appear today? What would it protect or haunt?

Exit ticket

Think up one line of dialogue a local might say about one of the legends.

Over to you!



Organise a legendary treasure hunt.

Create digital clues or an interactive map, develop *riddles* based on legends. For instance, "In an abbey where a heart is buried, look for a carved stone..." for Melrose Abbey. Share your *riddles* with your classmates!



1



2



3



4

- List of legends —
- 1 *The Fairy and the Miller's Wife*, Liana Paraschaki, 2022.
 - 2 *The Brownie's Coat*, George Douglas, 1901.
 - 3 *Thomas the Rhymer*, Charles John Tibitts, 1890.
 - 4 *The Wee Bannock*, Joanne Fong, 2022.
 - 5 *The Fearsome Redcaps of the Scottish Borders*, Kieran of Generally Spooky, 2019.



5

Questions

You are in charge of one legend.

- 1 Follow the link to the legend's website on LLS.fr/ANG1Folklore and make note of relevant information about your tale: location, atmosphere, characters, and new key words.
- 2 What are the main themes or values you can learn from the legend you studied?

Let's talk this out!

- 3 Share your tales. What legend do you think is the most interesting and why?
- 4 To what extent do the tales reflect the history of the Scottish Borders? Pick out elements from the stories to justify your answer.

Vers le Grand oral

LLCE

• **Voyages, territoires, frontières (Ancrage et héritage)**

Comment les légendes de la région des Borders reflètent-elles l'histoire d'une identité culturelle ?

AMC

• **Représentations (Représenter le monde et se représenter)**

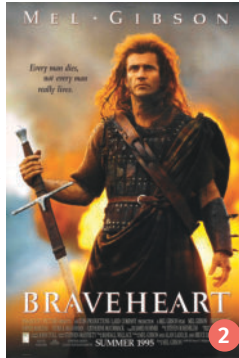
Comment les légendes des Borders éclairent-elles les dynamiques historiques et culturelles de la région ?

BAC



The Eagle

122 C.E.: Construction of Hadrian's Wall
Built by the Romans under Emperor Hadrian, this massive fortification marked the northern boundary of Roman Britain.



Braveheart

1296-1305: Wars of Scottish Independence
William Wallace led the Scots against English rule, achieving victory at the Battle of Stirling Bridge before being captured and executed, becoming a symbol of Scottish resistance.



Outlaw King

1306-1329: Reign of Robert the Bruce
After seizing the throne in 1306, Robert the Bruce waged a guerrilla war against England, securing Scotland's independence.



Mary Queen of Scots

1542-1586: Reign of Mary, Queen of Scots
Mary, Queen of Scots, had a troubled reign marked by conflicts with Protestant reformers and her rival, Queen Elizabeth I. Her son, James, later became the first monarch to rule both Scotland and England, uniting the two kingdoms.

- List of movies and series —
- 1 *The Eagle*, Kevin Macdonald, 2011.
 - 2 *Braveheart*, Mel Gibson, 1995.
 - 3 *Outlaw King*, David Mackenzie, 2018.
 - 4 *Mary Queen of Scots*, Josie Rourke, 2018.
 - 5 *Outlander*, Ronald D. Moore, 2014-.



Outlander

1745-1746: Jacobite Rising and Battle of Culloden
Led by Bonnie Prince Charlie, the Jacobite army sought to restore the Stuart monarchy but was crushed at Culloden, ending Highland clan power and leading to brutal British repression.

Over to you!



Speaking through time

Choose a historical character featured in one of the films or series. Research their life, then write a monologue from their point of view, reflecting on their experiences, challenges, and the choices they made. Use the film or series as inspiration, but also bring in your own research to make the character's voice authentic.

Les modaux et équivalents

| Modaux | Usage | Exemple |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Might</i> | Possibilité faible | <i>The legend might be true.</i> |
| <i>Would</i> | Habitude passée | <i>The reivers would attack at night.</i> |
| <i>Ought to</i> | Conseil ou obligation morale | <i>You ought to learn more about the myths.</i> |
| <i>Be able to</i> | Capacité (physique ou intellectuelle) | <i>They were able to defend the borderlands.</i> |
| <i>Be allowed to</i> | Permission | <i>Are we allowed to visit the site?</i> |

Grammar tips

Si nécessaire, prenez le temps de réviser le point de grammaire plus en détail.

► Précis grammatical

sur LLS.fr/ANG1PrecisGR



1 Complétez les phrases suivantes avec la forme qui convient: *might, would, ought to* ou *be able to*.

- The reivers ... steal cattle during the night.
- You ... visit Hermitage Castle; it's a fascinating place!
- The villagers ... not ... agree on what to do about the Redcap.
- They ... explore the ruins after getting permission.
- The children ... to sleep the night before visiting the castle.

2 Réécrivez les phrases suivantes en utilisant les modaux ou les formes lexicalisées qui conviennent.

- It's possible that the Kelpie still exists in the loch.
- In the past, the reivers attacked villages frequently.
- It's a good idea to learn more about Scottish Border myths.
- Today, people can explore the castle freely.
- Visiting the castle was possibly one of the best experiences of my life.

Se situer dans l'espace

En anglais, on a plusieurs manières d'exprimer où nous nous situons dans l'espace. Voici quelques exemples:

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>in the south</i> (au sud) | <i>over there</i> (là-bas) |
| <i>north of</i> (au nord de) | <i>at the far end</i> (au bout de) |
| <i>not [very] far from</i> (pas [très] loin de) | <i>round the corner</i> (au coin de la rue/tout près) |

3 Complétez les phrases suivantes avec l'expression qui convient: *north of, over there, round the corner, not (very) far from, in the south* ou *at the far end*.

- The villagers live ... of the city.
- The castle walls are just
- The Border Reivers often raided the area ... here.
- Hermitage Castle is ... of the green.
- The closest town is about five miles ... here.
- The ruins are just

Vocabulary in Progress

Idioms of the week

1. **Lang may yer lum reek** → A traditional Scottish blessing meaning “long may your chimney smoke”, a way to wish someone a long and prosperous life
2. **Whit’s for ye’ll no go by ye** → What’s meant to happen will happen
3. **Haste ye back** → Come back soon
4. **A wee birdie telt me** → “A little bird told me”, hinting at secret or mysterious information

4 Complétez les phrases suivantes avec l’expression idiomatique qui convient.

- a) When you visit Scotland’s castles, we’ll say, ... so you can discover more next time!
- b) Don’t worry if the weather changes your plans; remember, ...
- c) ... that the spirit of the Grey Lady still roams the halls of Hermitage Castle.
- d) As you embark on your journey through the myths of Scotland borders, let me wish you well with the traditional blessing: ...

5 Complétez les phrases suivantes avec le vocabulaire travaillé dans le chapitre.

- a) The old ... was said to be haunted, with strange noises heard at night, and an ... atmosphere that sent chills down your spine.
- b) The story of William Wallace, or ..., inspires many to learn about Scotland’s past and its heroic warriors.
- c) I ... a trip to the ... villages, which are ... and rarely visited by tourists.

6 Attribuez chaque mot à sa définition: *cursed*, *borderlands*, *amulet*.

- a) The wild and often disputed areas between two regions, especially near a border
- b) To be under the influence of a powerful negative force, often causing bad luck
- c) A magical charm that is believed to bring good luck or ward off evil

7 Décrivez l’image suivante à l’aide du vocabulaire de l’unité.



From French to English

La traduction de «terre»

Le mot français «terre» peut se traduire de plusieurs façons en anglais, selon le contexte. Lorsqu’il s’agit de la planète, on dira **the Earth** (avec une majuscule). Si l’on parle du sol ou de la surface, on utilisera plutôt **the ground** ou **the land**. Le mot **soil** est utilisé pour parler de la terre au sens agricole: *fertile soil*. Enfin, **land** peut aussi désigner un territoire ou une patrie.

8 La traduction de «terre» • Traduisez les phrases suivantes en anglais.

- a) La Terre est en danger à cause du changement climatique.
- b) Mes parents sont attachés à leur terre natale.
- c) Le sol est sec, il faut arroser la terre.
- d) Elle a glissé et est tombée par terre.
- e) Les deux royaumes se disputaient cette terre depuis des siècles.

Music of English

L’accent écossais

Les Écossais prononcent le <r> partout où il est présent dans l’orthographe. Parfois, ce <r> est un peu «roulé».

La diphtongue que l’on trouve dans des mots comme *goat* et *boat* se prononce avec un son proche de «peau» en français: /o/. Et celle de *face* et *cake* se prononce avec un son proche de «été» en français: /e/.

Dans l’accent écossais, les oppositions entre voyelles courtes et longues disparaissent. Il n’y a qu’une manière de prononcer les voyelles: /u/, /ɔ/, /a/.

9 Regardez la vidéo [LLS.fr/ANG1Scottish](https://lls.fr/ANG1Scottish), puis entraînez-vous à prononcer les phrases suivantes avec un accent écossais. Enregistrez-vous sur [LLS.fr/LaboAudio](https://lls.fr/LaboAudio).

- a) My favourite Scottish dish is a soup called Cullen Skink.
- b) The Scottish hills are covered in heather.
- c) The thistle is the national flower of Scotland.

The Scottish Idioms Relay

In teams, pick one Scottish idiom, then create and act out a short scene to illustrate the idiom, without using it directly. The first opposing team to guess it gets one point!

Final Project

The scenario

You are a professional tour guide working for a company that specialises in immersive experiences of Scotland's most mysterious and magical places. Your job is to bring the myths and legends of the Scottish Borders to life for travelers from around the world.

Main project



Create a travel guide.

Your task is to design an engaging travel brochure that highlights two or three mythical or historical places, explains their stories, and gives tips for experiencing these sites today. Include text and visuals to make it attractive. Remember, your guide should convince readers to visit these places!



Let's do it!

- **Gather your notes** from the chapter and select examples of myths, legends, and historical facts that you want to include in your guide.
- **Go online and research the site** to provide practical details: location, opening hours, entry fees, guided tours, events, etc.
- **Pick the photos** that will illustrate your guide. Images should make people want to see these places with their own eyes!
- **Before writing**, select and organise the elements to make your guide clear and appealing.

| | Niveau A2 | Niveau A2+ | Niveau B1 | Niveau B1+ | Vers B2 |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| Réalisation de la tâche | <input type="checkbox"/> Contenu très pauvre, hors sujet ou plagiat | <input type="checkbox"/> Discours bref, des éléments descriptifs | <input type="checkbox"/> Texte assez long, phrases articulées simplement | <input type="checkbox"/> Texte complet, phrases complexes | <input type="checkbox"/> Contenu riche, personnel et créatif, production de phrases complexes et usage pertinent de l'humour |
| Cohérence et organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> Pas ou peu d'organisation du texte | <input type="checkbox"/> Des efforts d'organisation, quelques mots de liaisons, pas ou peu de paragraphes | <input type="checkbox"/> Texte assez articulé, utilisation de mots de liaison, des paragraphes distincts | <input type="checkbox"/> Texte structuré en paragraphes, hiérarchisation des idées | |
| Recevabilité linguistique | <input type="checkbox"/> Langue très simple, souvent erronée, calques du français | <input type="checkbox"/> Phrases simples, erreurs élémentaires, réemploi du vocabulaire de l'unité | <input type="checkbox"/> Erreurs non gênantes à la compréhension, bon réemploi du vocabulaire de l'unité | <input type="checkbox"/> Peu d'erreurs, réemploi pertinent du vocabulaire de l'unité | <input type="checkbox"/> Usage d'expressions idiomatiques et de structures complexes |
| Contenus culturels | <input type="checkbox"/> Pas ou peu de contenu culturel | <input type="checkbox"/> Quelques références à ce qui a été vu dans l'unité | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploitation cohérente des contenus culturels de l'unité | <input type="checkbox"/> Des références à l'unité et des connaissances personnelles | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobilisation autonome de contenus culturels variés |

Concevoir une brochure touristique

► Structurez le contenu

- Organisez les informations en sections claires.
- Trouvez un titre accrocheur pour capter l'attention.
- Présentez la région (paysages, sites historiques, lieux à visiter, activités) et ses légendes.
- Mentionnez les informations pratiques (transports, horaires des sites et des visites guidées, suggestions d'hôtels ou de restaurants, etc.).
- Ajoutez des visuels attractifs pour montrer la beauté de la région.

► Réalisez la mise en page

- Utilisez une mise en page équilibrée avec des titres, des sous-titres et des paragraphes courts.
- Choisissez une palette de couleurs et une typographie lisibles.
- Intégrez des images et/ou des illustrations pour rendre la brochure plus attrayante.

► Rédigez avec clarté et concision

- Utilisez un ton enthousiaste et évitez les phrases trop longues.
- Privilégiez la voix active.
- Utilisez l'impératif.
- Plongez le lecteur dans l'ambiance du lieu avec un vocabulaire évocateur.

Step into a world of legends and magic!

Get ready to discover Scotland's enchanted frontier!

Cross the border and enter the realm of myths...



Alternative project

Create a video guide.

Create a travel video where you guide viewers through two mythical or historical sites, sharing practical tips for visiting today. Use visuals, anecdotes, and lively presentation to make your guide dynamic and convince viewers to explore these legendary places themselves!



Let's do it!

- **Gather your notes** from the chapter and select examples of myths, legends, and historical facts that you want to include in your video.
- **Go online and research** the mythical or historical sites to find realistic details
- **Tell the story behind each place:** include some mysterious elements to keep the presentation exciting.
- **Provide practical tips for visiting** and share essential information, such as how to get to the places, opening hours, ticket prices, and any special events or tours available.
- **Use visuals to enhance your presentation:** include images, maps, or short video clips of the sites to help your audience visualise the places.
- **Make your presentation captivating:** add personal anecdotes. Use an enthusiastic tone.