

MUSIC

Cape Breton's Diversity in Unity

Songs from Cape Breton's Gaelic Song Tradition

The following materials provide a teaching resource for elementary and secondary Music, Gaelic and Language and Culture courses, and Social Studies. The suggestions for teaching, learning and assessment have been adapted from Nova Scotia Curriculum documents, and they support the *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Arts Education Curriculum* (1999), as well as the *Essential Graduation Learnings*.

The Activities described are directly related to the [Gaelic song repertoire](#) found on the [Beaton Institute's *Music: Cape Breton's Diversity in Unity*](#), as well as the supplementary materials contained on the website. Although they are divided into elementary and secondary topics, they can be adapted to any grade level.

Included at the end of this document is the list of **Nova Scotia curriculum documents** as well as additional materials that are contained on the **Authorized Learning Resources** list for Nova Scotia schools.

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Music

Foundation for Atlantic Canada Arts Education Curriculum (1999) articulates three understandings, or processes, that are evident in all arts disciplines: dance, drama, music and visual arts. These understandings/processes are:

- Creating, Making and Presenting
- Understanding and Connecting Contexts of Time, Place and Community
- Perceiving and Responding

General Curriculum Outcomes (GCOs) in each of these areas express those things that students must know and are able to do at the end of each grade level. The suggestions provided here give teachers ideas for using the [Gaelic song repertoire](#) on this website to achieve these outcomes.

While they are categorized according to elementary and secondary curriculum, it is understood that many of the ideas can be adapted to any age/grade level, depending on the background of the students.

It must also be noted that while this Educators' Resource Guide concentrates on one arts discipline - music - it will become evident that extensions to other arts disciplines, such as dance, drama and visual arts, are inherent throughout. The list of resources that appear on page note those Nova Scotia curriculum documents and texts that will be helpful for teachers as they plan activities for their students.

Elementary

“Musical skills and concepts are best experienced and then identified and reinforced through a wide range of activities and approaches.” (Music, Primary – 6, 2002).

By using the Gaelic songs provided on this website, the following skills and concepts can be reinforced in music class. Although these elements appear in most of the Gaelic songs listed, specific songs are referenced beside the skill that is best highlighted in it.

Melody

- Echo singing ([Ged a Sheòl Mi Air M’Aineol](#))
- Pitch Direction ([Dhè Bhethel](#))
- Relationship of melody to chordal accompaniment ([Òran Do Cheap Breatainn](#))

Rhythm & Duration

- Steady beats in music and other sources ([Tha Mi Sgìth On Tìm Seo ‘N Dè](#))
- Keeping a steady beat ([Òran Nam Fasan](#))
- Patterns of sounds in music and other source: poetry ([Òran Do Cheap Breatainn](#))
- Beat vs. Rhythm ([Ged a Sheòl Mi Air M’Aineol](#))
- Universal patterns and rhythms ([Tuireadh Nan Hiortach](#))
- Notes have different durations ([Òran Do Cheap Breatainn](#))
- Time signatures ([Tha Mi Sgìth On Tìm Seo ‘N Dè](#))
- Measured rhythms ([Òran Nam Mocaisean](#))

Harmony and Texture

- Harmony vs. Unison ([‘Illean Bithibh Sunndach](#))
- Partner songs and counter melodies ([Ged a Sheòl Mi Air M’Aineol](#))
- Choral accompaniment ([‘Illean Bithibh Sunndach](#))
- Major and minor chords ([Òganaich An Òr-Fhuilte Bhuidhe](#))

Form

- Verse and chorus ([Tha Mi Sgìth On Tìm Seo ‘N Dè](#))
- Repeated and contrasting phrases ([Òran Nam Mocaisean](#))
- Theme ([Òran Do Cheap Breatainn](#))
- Free form ([Òran Nam Fasan](#))

Tempo

- Fast and slow in music and other sources ([Òran Nam Mocaisean](#))
- Tempo related to expression in music ([Tuireadh Nan Hiortach](#))
- Tempo related to beat ([Ged a Sheòl Mi Air M’Aineol](#))

GCO 1: Students will be expected to explore, challenge, develop, and express ideas, using the skills, language, techniques, and processes of the arts.

GCO 2: Students will be expected to create and/or present, collaboratively and independently, expressive products in the arts for a range of audiences and purposes.

- Have students choose a Gaelic song from the repertoire. As a group, have them take turns acting as leaders and followers in creating actions to keep a steady beat. As teacher, choose three contrasting songs and have the students listen to them and compare the tempo of each. Discuss the most appropriate actions for each, based on the tempo and purpose of the song. Add percussion instruments to reinforce with the students the beat of the songs. Three contrasting songs you might consider are: [*Ged A Sheòl Mi Air M'Aineol*](#) (a milling song), [*Làithean Sona M'Òige*](#) (a lament), and [*Fuadach Nan Gàidheal*](#) (also a lament).
- Choose a Gaelic song and teach the chorus to the class. Write the chorus on a large piece of paper or a slide. Discuss with the students the use of “vocables” in this song, e.g, “Hoil-iu hill-eo ho-ro eileadh” in [*Moch 'Sa Mhadainn Rinn Mi Gluasad*](#). In Gaelic repertoire, vocables are not words but rather sounds created to fill in spaces. Using the notation for the Gaelic songs found on this website, have the students find other examples of vocables. As a class, perform the song as a group. Record students singing so they can hear themselves singing in Gaelic.
- As a class or working in smaller groups, have students choose one of the Gaelic songs. Listen to the song, read the English translation and listen to the song once more. Have students illustrate the text. Present their drawings to their classmates (having the classmates also listen to the Gaelic song that has inspired the drawings). From this activity students will notice the great detail that is put into the making of Gaelic songs.
- Have students create a soundscape that describes what is happening in one of the songs found on the website. Many of the songs are about sailing over the ocean, ([*Tuireadh Nan Hiortach*](#), [*Illean Bithibh Sundach*](#)) while others talk about the Scottish Highlanders being evicted from their land and homes ([*Fuadach Nan Gàidheal*](#)). Students should first listen to the tone of the song, read the words, then in groups create a soundscape detailing various aspects of the Gaelic song.
- Discuss with the students a **milling frolic**. Provide them with information on what a milling frolic is, why it occurs, and what types of songs are sung at this event. Students can also research this information themselves, by using the following website offered by the [*Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum*](#).
- As a class, have students learn the chorus to a Gaelic milling song such as the ones listed below. Have them follow the notation, joining in on the chorus. You can recreate a milling frolic in the classroom. Have a blanket/bed sheet handy. Place the blanket on the

table and have students hold it with two hands, moving it in and out to the beat and tempo of the milling song. Examples of milling songs:

- [*Tha Mi Sgìth On Tìm Seo 'N Dè*](#)
 - [*Uilean Bithibh Sundach*](#)
 - [*Dh'Òlainn Deoch À Làimh Mo Rùin*](#)
- As a class listen to songs that demonstrate **puirt-a-beul**. Puirt-a-beul in Gaelic simply means “music of the mouth” or mouth music. If Gaels did not have instruments, they would sing songs as an accompaniment for dancing. This is another example of “vocables” (see above). Have a step dancer come into the classroom and show your students some simple strathspey, jig, and reel steps to accompany puirt-a-beul. Students might also enjoy experimenting with singing puirt-a-beul!
 - Often **puirt-a-beul** was sung for dancing, especially if there wasn't a fiddler close by. Fiddlers usually learned these tunes by ear, and sometimes they were eventually written out in notation. Today, many fiddle tunes have Gaelic songs to match, and vice versa. Have students research popular fiddle tunes and see if they can find a matching Gaelic song. Students can compare tempo, rhythm, key signature, etc. Invite a local fiddler to come into your class to play some tunes that demonstrate puirt-a-beul.
 - Use the following types of tunes and puirt-a-beul to demonstrate and reinforce time signatures:
 - March – 3/4
 - Strathspey – 4/4
 - Slow-air – 4/4
 - Jig – 6/8
 - Reel – 4/4
 - Reference [Cape Breton's Magazine](#) online for more information on the Gaelic song tradition in Nova Scotia, including milling songs, puirt-a-beul, laments, stories, notations, biographies, etc.

GCO 3: Students will be expected to demonstrate critical awareness of and value for the role of arts in creating and reflecting culture.

GCO 4: Students will be expected to respect the contributions to the arts of individuals and cultural groups in local and global contexts and to value the arts as a record of human experience and expression.

- Discuss, as a class, the impact of the Gaelic culture on Nova Scotia and Canada. Point out the contributions of Gaelic-speaking people to encourage musicians to continue to play Gaelic music. Ask the students for names of artists/groups who are making a living from playing this type of music (eg., Mary Jane Lamond, The Rankin Family). Discuss the *Celtic Colours International Festival* and the *East Coast Music Awards* in terms of their impact on Gaelic culture at home and abroad.
- As a class, discuss the *East Coast Music Awards* in terms of Gaelic Culture and their impact on the tourism industry in Nova Scotia. Have students research the most recent awards and identify those artists / groups that promote Gaelic language and culture, such as Mary Jane Lamond, The Rankin Family, The Barra MacNeils, Natalie MacMaster, etc.
- In groups, have students select a Gaelic song from the collection and using the notation, have them try to perform the chorus and/or verses. Students can use any instrument to complete this task. Talk about differences in chordal accompaniment, melody, key signatures, and harmony. Have students perform the song for the class while accompanying the Gaelic song of choice.
- In groups, have students choose four or five Gaelic songs from the website. Have them read the English lyrics. Discuss the themes that emerge in these songs. Extension activity: Have students create words for their own song (in English) about a place that you love. Remind students to write descriptively.

Common themes found in the Gaelic song tradition provided on this website:

Lost love/lament

- [*A Mhàiri Bhòidheach*](#)
- [*Cumha*](#)
- [*Làithean Sona M'Òige*](#)
- [*Òganaich An Òr-Fhuilt Bhuidhe*](#)

Love of one's land

- [*An Innis Àigh*](#)
- [*Canada A Thìr An Àigh*](#)
- [*Dh'Òlainn Deoch À Làimh Mo Rùin*](#)
- [*Eilean Gorm Nam Beanntan Àrd*](#)
- [*Illean Bithibh Sunndach*](#)
- [*Òran Do Cheap Breatainn*](#)

War

- [*A Fhleasgaich Uasail*](#)
- [*Ged A Sheòl Mi Air M'Aineol*](#)

Describing someone

- [*Mo Nighean Dubh*](#)
- [*Òran Nam Fasan*](#)

Eviction of homeland

- [*Fuadach Nan Gàidheal*](#)
- [*Tuireadh Nan Hiortach*](#)

GCO 7: Students will be expected to understand the role of technologies in creating and responding to expressive works.

- Have the students research and discuss how technology can help or hinder the Gaelic song tradition. Students can research different types of recording devices that have allowed for the preservation of Gaelic songs. How has recording changed over the past century, and what affect has this had on the preservation of the Gaelic culture in general, and the Gaelic song tradition in particular?
- Discuss with the students how the internet can have both a positive and negative effect on Gaelic culture.
- Discuss Gaelic singing tradition with the students. How did songs get passed down (and later written) from generation to generation? Why is it important to record and digitize these songs?

GCO 8: Students will be expected to analyze the relationship between artistic intent and the expressive work.

- Invite a local Gaelic song composer/musician to perform for the class and have them discuss and share their experiences with performing, composing, and recording their music.
- Have a cèilidh in your classroom. Invite local fiddlers, piano players, pipers, guitar players, etc. Have students “jam” with these artists. Have students join in on melody/harmony/chord to the tunes being played.
- Discuss with the students the importance of performing Gaelic songs and fiddle tunes. Have them talk about what goes into creating a performance. Students, individually or in groups, can undertake a project to conceive, develop, and produce a musical work (e.g., writing music to the chorus of a Gaelic song).

Secondary

As previously noted, many of the activities described in the elementary curriculum can be adapted for students in grades 7 to 12, depending on the background of the students. The following activities are specific to secondary music curriculum documents that are referenced in the resources list found on [page 19](#).

GCO 1: Students will be expected to explore, challenge, develop, and express ideas using the skills, languages, techniques, and processes of the arts.

GCO 2: Students will be expected to create and/or present, collaboratively and independently, expressive products in the arts for a range of audiences and purposes.

- Choose one of the Gaelic songs and discuss the phrasing in it. Invite the students to write or improvise an answering phrase to a phrase in the Gaelic song, keeping in mind the mood of the piece. Choose a contrasting Gaelic song and repeat the exercise. How has the mood of the song affected the improvised answer? Discuss the following concepts while doing the exercise: antecedent/consequent phrase, motif, rhythm, structure.
- Use one of the Gaelic songs to teach or reinforce theme and variation. Have the students select a phrase or group of phrases, and use the following musical tools to create variations: augmentation/diminution, fragmentation, major/minor/modal structures, or inversion.
- Have students explore ornamentation in the Gaelic songs and how it reflects different styles of music and performance.
- Reinforce basic theory and ear-training skills by using the songs contained on the website.
- Have the students compose a four- to eight-bar phrase in a given key and meter in a style similar to one of the Gaelic songs. Then have students find classmates who have composed complementary phrases and put them together to create larger structures.
- Using specific repertoire in band, choir or other music classes, find examples of techniques and ideas contained in some of the Gaelic song repertoire from the site.

GCO 3: Students will be expected to demonstrate critical awareness of and value for the role of the arts in creating and reflecting culture.

GCO 4: Students will be expected to respect the contributions to the arts of individuals and cultural groups in local and global contexts.

- Have the students research the cultural/historical background of Celtic music. Compare it to other types of music, such as Acadian or Mi'kmaw music. Research the cultural/historical background of songs from other cultures found in Nova Scotia.
- Invite to the class members of the community who are active in Celtic music and have them demonstrate and explore aspects of their tradition. In preparation, have the students listen to/view appropriate recordings or videos and create questions. If students in the class perform Celtic music, have them join in with the demonstration by accompanying or playing with the guest.
- Videotape/record and watch segments of the East Coast Music Awards show that highlight Celtic music. Discuss the presentation regarding references to Celtic culture represented, categories, instrumentation, etc.
- Invite the class to brainstorm and discuss the various ways music contributes to the well-being and identity of a community. Students can record reflections on the presence of music in their lives and what their lives would be like without music. Compare these feelings to the early Gaelic-speaking settlers who came to Nova Scotia many years ago. How did music affect their lives?
- Discuss with the class how music enhances the emotional context of ceremonial occasions, such as weddings, funerals, etc. Following up on this discussion, have students review the Gaelic songs on this website and discuss the ceremonies that would be appropriate for each, e.g. laments at funerals, jigs and reels at weddings, etc.

GCO 7: Students will be expected to understand the role of technologies in creating and responding to expressive works.

GCO 8: Students will be expected to analyse the relationship between artistic intent and the expressive work.

- Have the students listen to a contemporary recording of a Celtic tune, such as one by Ashley MacIsaac. How has technology affected contemporary interpretations of traditional repertoire? Discuss their feelings towards this change. How has it affected the preservation of Celtic culture?
- Have students discuss interpretation in music. Consider composer's intent as it relates to a performer's interpretation.
- Select one of the songs and have the students perform it as a class. When rehearsing it, discuss and experiment with phrasing and contour in order to explore the expressive potential of the work.
- Reflect on how different audiences influence a composer's work, and an artist's interpretation of it.
- Find a contrasting interpretation of one of the Gaelic songs on this website. In pairs, have the students discuss their views on the interpretations as they relate to the composer's intent. Additional research may be required. The students' findings can be presented to the class and they should be encouraged to justify their comments.
- Have students use notation programs or sequencers to transcribe a work and change the instruments, tempo markings, dynamics, and articulations. They can describe the effect of these changes following the activity.

Gaelic Language

The Gaelic songs which have been digitized for this website can be used in Gaelic language classes to reinforce speech, reading, writing, and understanding/making a connection to the Celtic culture.

“Gaelic songs can be divided into three groups: work songs, puirt-a-beul (mouth music), and free-style songs.” (*Celebrating our Celtic Culture, 2008*)

Students will have the opportunity to experience these three types of Gaelic song through the lesson ideas that follow.

Elementary

GCO: Students will be able to make connections between the spoken and written word in Gaelic.

- Discuss with students their past experiences with Gaelic singing. Some students may have heard the songs on this site before; perhaps someone might know a Gaelic song already.
- Over time, have the students listen to all the songs in the repertoire list and as a class pick their favourite. Learn the song and perform it for other classes.
- Have the students act out a song by creating movement pieces that display actions mentioned in the song.
- Discuss what is meant by the term “**tradition.**” Talk about traditions their family may have and relate these traditions to the Gaelic singing tradition. (Songs are passed down from one generation to the next).
- Discuss songs that talk about leaving your homeland and moving to a new place. Students can discuss feelings associated with this and listen to selected songs. Have students write their own songs about a place that they love. Have them imagine what it would feel like if they had to leave that place and never see it again. The following songs are laments for lost land/leaving one’s homeland, as well as songs about one’s love for their land:
 - [*An Innis Àigh*](#)
 - [*Canada a Thùr An Àigh*](#)
 - [*Dh’Òlainn Deoch À Làimh Mo Rùin*](#)
 - [*Eilean Gorm Nam Beanntan Àrd*](#)
 - [*Illean Bithibh Sunndach*](#)
 - [*Òran Do Cheap Breatainn*](#)
- Recreate a milling frolic while listening to songs from the website, particularly the milling songs: [*Tha Mi Sgith On Tìm Seo ‘N Dè*](#), [*Illean Bithibh Sunndach*](#), [*Dh’Òlainn Deoch À Làimh Mo Rùin*](#).
- To demonstrate [puirt-a-beul](#), invite a stepdancer from the community to visit your classroom. Have this person teach your students some simple strathspey, jig, and reel steps. As students dance to puirt-a-beul, they will see the relationship between fiddle/pipe music and Gaelic song.

- Use the songs in the repertoire list to help with language development.
- Using the lyrics, have the students look for words that are familiar and ask them to underline them (place names, colours, clothing, etc).
- Study songs for phrases and expressions giving the students time and opportunity to hear, repeat and use the language in the songs
- Use drawings to depict songs meanings (Gaelic songs are very descriptive). Have the students listen to a Gaelic song, read the words in English, and draw pictures that depict events mentioned in it or their interpretations of the song.
- Provide opportunity for the students to record themselves singing and then listen to it as a class so they can hear themselves singing Gaelic!
- Create a profile of a Gaelic singer by gathering information from the internet or by interviewing someone who sings in Gaelic.

GCO: Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for and understanding of, and make connections to, Gaelic culture through various contexts and expressions of Gaelic language.

- Pose Gaelic questions about the songs using the following: Co? De? Cuine? Caite?
- Teach the students a chorus to one of the Gaelic songs by rote. Later provide them with a printed version of the chorus so they can see Gaelic in print. Have the students connect their singing to the words you've written.
- Create a puppet show that expresses what is happening in a selected song.
- As a “Jig Saw” puzzle activity, have the students work in groups, one group per song. Have students read the song, listen to it, then discuss what they think it is about/themes. Each person in the group will then return to their “home” group (made up of one person from each of the other groups). Have students explain their songs to the group, looking for common themes.
- Invite in a native Gaelic speaker to the class and interview him/her about their life as a child growing up with Gaelic. Was Gaelic song a part of their life? Have the speaker sing a Gaelic song and, if possible, teach it to the class.

- Organize a cèilidh or a milling frolic in your classroom. You may want the students to perform at the cèilidh.
- Lead the students in discussions on the importance of keeping the Gaelic song tradition alive. Discuss/strategize ways of keeping the tradition alive and strong in Nova Scotia.
- Create a song booklet using songs found on this website and songs known in your community. Categorize your songs into themes or types of songs, i.e., milling, sailing, laments, working, historic songs, etc.
- Assign each student a Gaelic song. Have them create a visual representation of that song. Student may want to use the following media: collage, diorama, photograph, or drawing.

Secondary

GCO: Students will use Gaelic to communicate and interact effectively.

- Listen to a selected Gaelic song without looking at Gaelic/English lyrics. After listening to it, discuss as a class or in small groups what is being talked about in the song, looking for keywords or phrases that you've previously discussed in class.
- Practice question and answer exercises (in Gaelic) with the students using the songs in the repertoire list for motivation. Be sure to use the following question forms: Caite? Cuine? Co? De? Carson? As a beginning, you may want to use the following specific songs that have questions and answers in them: [An Innis Àigh](#) and [Poit-Dhubh MhicFhraing](#).
- Study the “blas” of the Gaelic singers. Study the songs for new expressions, idioms, ideas, and use of intonation.
- Have students research biographies of Gaelic singers looking particularly at places of birth and connecting this to “blas”, accent/pronunciation, etc. which might be noticeable in their Gaelic singing.

GCO: Students will create and experience works reflective of the Gaelic language and culture.

- Listen to a number of songs on this site to determine their purpose. Many are **worksongs**. Can you tell which ones? Examples of some work songs found on this site are: [Daolagan Cholarado](#), [Dh'Òlainn Deoch À Làimh Mo Rùin](#), [Ged A Sheòl Mi Air M'Aineol](#). Other songs on the list are **laments**. Listen/read the lyrics and determine in small groups or as a class why these laments were written. The following laments could be used as examples: [Làithean Sona M'Òige](#), [Tuireadh Nan Hiortach](#), [Cumha](#), [Eilean Gorm Nam Beanntan Àrd](#).
- Have the students in groups compose a contemporary Gaelic song for a specific task that is done today. As class, think of everyday activities that you do and compose your song to match the beat of that activity. Example – jogging, washing the dishes, vacuuming, etc.
- Listen to and illustrate a specific Gaelic song. For example, listen to a milling song, and draw either what you think the song is about or simply express the rhythm/feel of the song on paper. Next listen to a lament, and represent that song visually. Discuss the comparison as a class.

- Select a Gaelic action song to learn and act it out in order to convey meaning to an audience. For an example, you may consider [Creach Na Samhna](#), which is a Gaelic song about activities being done on a Halloween night.

GCO: Students will demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the Gaelic culture within Nova Scotia and the wider world.

- Brainstorm/discuss Nova Scotian artists who sing Gaelic songs. Research a musical group or individual singer who has recorded/made famous a Gaelic song.
- Have the students interview a Gaelic singer. Some guiding questions could include: Do you sing only Gaelic songs? How did you learn the song? What is a milling song? Do you write your own songs? Can you make a living by singing Gaelic songs? What are most of your songs about? What role did the songs play in the lives of the composers? What role does it play in your life?
- Have the students compile a list of place names heard in the Gaelic songs found on this website. Compare these names to place names in Nova Scotia/Scotland. Are there similarities? Why do you think this is so? A great place to look for Gaelic place names is in the lament songs. Many people wrote these types of songs to express their sadness for leaving their homeland.
- Observe similarities and differences in the Gaelic songs found on this website.
- Some students may have seen or heard a performance in Gaelic. Others may know a Gaelic song already. Discuss with students their past experiences with Gaelic singing.
- Study themes found in the Gaelic songs, e.g. leaving your homeland, missing a loved one, eviction, sailing, war, funny stories, etc.
- Have students research various types of Gaelic songs. Have students write a comparison of the songs, in terms of their tempo, purpose, and description.
- To explore [puirt-a-beul](#) further, invite a step dancer from the community in to visit your classroom. Have this person teach your students some simple strathspey, jig, and reel steps. As students dance to puirt-a-beul, they will see the connection between fiddle/pipe music and Gaelic song.

Gaelic Cultural Studies 11

GCO: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the Gaels through a study of their history.

- Investigate the eviction of the highlanders from their homeland – the **Highland Clearances** – by studying the following Gaelic songs:
 - [*Tuireadh Nan Hiortach*](#)
 - [*Illean Bithibh Sunndach*](#)
 - [*Fuadach Nan Gàideal*](#)
- Study place names mentioned in the Gaelic songs and compare them to those found in Nova Scotia. What do you notice? Why is this so?
- Have the students research the Scottish Halloween tradition called **Oidhche Shamhna**. As part of the research, have them listen to the song, [*Creach Na Samhna*](#), and read the English lyrics.
- Have the students research the act of psalm singing and the reasons for doing this. Play for them the Gaelic song, [*Dhè Bhethel*](#), so that students can hear an example of psalm singing.
- Institutions such as museums (community, provincial, national), archives, galleries, etc. continue to play an important role in the preservation of identity and important artifacts that provide insight history and culture. Have the students discuss why this is important for any society. Then have them identify institutions in their community, province and country that are doing with work. You may wish to invite to class a museum curator or archivist. If possible, plan a field trip to a museum, and discuss with the curator the workings of the institution. For this unit, you may want to look specifically at how the institution is preserving Celtic Culture.

GCO: Students will be expected to examine the role of oral traditions and literature in the expression of Gaelic culture.

- Have a class discussion on the importance of keeping the Gaelic song tradition alive. Discuss/strategize ways of keeping the tradition alive and strong in Nova Scotia.

- Discuss what is meant by the term ***tradition***. Talk about traditions their family may have and relate these traditions to the Gaelic song tradition. (Songs are passed down from one generation to the next).
- Brainstorm/discuss Nova Scotian artists who sing Gaelic songs. Research a musical group or individual singer who has recorded/made famous a Gaelic song.

GCO: Students will be expected to explore and express thoughts, experiences, and feelings through Gaelic arts.

- Invite in a native Gaelic speaker to the classroom, interview him/her about their life as a child growing up with Gaelic. Was Gaelic song a part of their life? Have the speaker sing a Gaelic song/teach the class a song.
- Have the students create a profile of a Gaelic singer; and gather information from the internet or by conducting an interview.
- If there are Gaelic speaking students in the class, have them create a display of cultural artifacts that have played an important role in their lives. They should accompany the display with didactics that provide important information about the significance of each. From this display, you could assign a project for students to research their own cultural roots and include specific artifacts – real or photos – that tell their “cultural story.”

Additional Resources

Nova Scotia Curriculum

Music Primary – 6 (2000)
Music 7 and Music 8 – Implementation Draft (2009)
Music 10 and Music 11 (2008)
Music 12 (2008)
Advanced Music 11 and Advanced Music 12 (2008)
Gaelic 10
Gaelic 11
Gaelic 12
Gaelic Cultural Studies
Celebrating our Celtic Culture (2009)
Cultural Industries (2001)

ALR Resources

Aboriginal Peoples: Building for the Future (22883)
A Fiddle for Angus (18698)
Celebrate Our Diversity (16646)
Celtic Reverie (25177)
Creativity and Music Education (16648)
Finale 2010: The Arts of Music Notation (51407)
Keys to Music Rudiments (21255)
Music Works (12828)
Nova Scotia Piper (13382)
Rise Again! The Story of Cape Breton Island (25628)
Roots and Branches (16650)
A Stone on Their Calm: A Cape Breton Saga (25260)
Famhair argus dain Ghaidhlig eile/Giant and other Gaelic poems (25570)
Nancy's Wedding Feast and Other Tasty Tales (25258)
The Blue Mountains and Other Gaelic Stories from Cape Breton (25413)
World Music Cultural Traditions (12833)
World Music: A Cultural Legacy (23970)