

KERNEWEK DRE LYTHER

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Adjectives with singular nouns, yw, particle a

BRETEN² VYGHAN

Breten² Vyghan yw bro² geltek. Rann an hweghkorn frynkek yw. Rewlys yw gans Pow Frynk. Yann yw Breton. Ev a² gews Bretonek. Ev a² gews Frynkek ynwedh. Bretonek yw y² vammyeth. Byttegyns ny² gews Bretonek marnas gans y² gowetha. Yann a² dhysk Kernewek dre lyther. Ev a skrif lytherow dhe Yowann yn Kernow. Yowann yw y² gesskrifer, ha'y² goweth.

Gerva

Nouns are normally shown in the first state (i.e. unmutated). They are masculine unless marked (f) .

Breten² Vyghan	Brittany	gans	with, by
rann (f)	part	y²	his
hweghkorn	hexagon	kowetha	friends
frynkek	French	dre lyther	by letter
rewlys yw	it is governed	a skrif	writes
Pow Frynk	France	lytherow	letters
Yann	Breton for John	dhe²	to
Bretonek	Breton language	kesskrifer	penfriend, correspondent
Frynkek	French language	ha'y²	and his
byttegyns	however	koweth	friend
ny² gews	does not speak		
marnas	except		
ny... marnas	only		

Govynnnow

All the answers can be copied from the passage. Write complete sentences.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) Pyth yw Breten ² Vyghan ? | 5) Pandr'a ² dhysk Yann? |
| 2) Pyth yw Yann? | (What does Yann learn ?) |
| 3) Pyth yw y ² vammyeth? | 6) Pandr'a skrif Yann? |
| 4) P'eur (when) kews ev Bretonek? | 7) Piw (who) yw y ² gesskrifer? |

Gramasek

A. Position of adjectives (describing words).

We have met the following:

Breten² Veur	Great Britain
bro² geltek	Celtic country
Breten² Vyghan	Brittany
hweghkorn frynkek	French hexagon

These examples show how in Cornish the adjective follows the noun it describes. Here are five nouns, and five adjectives:

Nouns: **kesskrifer** correspondent, **koweth** comrade, friend, **kothman** friend, **Kernow** Cornishman, **Breton** Breton.

Adjective: **keltek** Celtic, **kernevek** Cornish, **byghan** small, **meur** great, **frynkek** French.

Exercise 1. Translate the following into Cornish. Remember to put the noun before the adjective that describes it, and that usually there is no word for "a".

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1) a Celtic comrade | 5) a Cornish friend | 8) a small friend |
| 2) a French correspondent | 6) a great comrade | 9) a great Breton |
| 3) a great Cornishman | 7) a French friend | |
| 4) a small Breton | | |

B. Adjectives with feminine nouns. All the above are masculine. If we put adjectives with feminine nouns in the singular, then the adjective takes second state mutation. Note that in Cornish all nouns, even those referring to sexless inanimate objects are either masculine or feminine.

Here are five feminine nouns:

benyn woman, **rann** part, **mamm** mother, **hwoer** sister, **myrgh** daughter.

Exercise 2. Translate the following into Cornish, remembering:

- (a) the word for "a" is rarely used
(b) the noun comes first.
(c) the adjective takes second state mutation.

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1) a Cornish woman | 4) a great sister | 8) a French woman |
| 2) a little woman | 5) a Celtic woman | 9) a French mother |
| 3) a small part | 6) a little daughter | 10) a great part |
| | 7) a little sister | |

C. The particle “a²”. You will have noticed that the word “a²” precedes most of the verbs in the reading passage. These sentences start with the subject, a noun or pronoun and are described as “nominal”. In such sentences the verb stays the same if the sentence is affirmative, no matter what “person” the subject is. The particle “a²” itself has no English meaning and is not translated but it causes second state mutation in the following verb.

Exercise 3. Translate the following into Cornish, taking care to insert the “a²” in front of each verb.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) He lives in Cornwall. | 3) Yann learns Cornish. |
| 2) He speaks Cornish | 4) He writes letters. |

D. yw (is) This is the third person singular of the verb “to be”. It can mean “he is”, “she is”, or “it is”. When used in this way it is placed after the complement. (In the sentence “He is a Breton”, “a Breton” is the complement.)

e.g. **Kernow yw** He is a Cornishman. **Breton yw** He is a Breton.

Exercise 4. Translate into Cornish:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1) He is a great Cornishman. | 6) He is his correspondent. |
| 2) He is a friend. | 7) She is a Cornish woman. |
| 3) He is a member of the Cornish Language Fellowship. | 8) She is a great woman. |
| 4) He is a comrade. | 9) She is his daughter. |
| 5) He is his friend. | 10) She is his sister. |

Background note. Many Cornish people think of Cornwall as separate from England. Similarly many Bretons think of Brittany as separate from France. For this reason the passage describes Brittany as part of the “French Hexagon” rather than of France itself.