

KERNEWEK DRE LYTHER

Dyskans Onan

Kynsa Dyskans

Mutations and Indefinite Article

KERNOW

Kernow yw konna tir orth penn Breten² Veur. Kernow yw bro geltek. Yowann yw Kernow. Ev a drig yn Kernow. Ev a gews Sowsnek. Ev a gews Kernewek ynwedh. Pyth yw mammyeth Yowann? Sowsnek yw mammyeth Yowann. Fatell dhysk Yowann Kernewek? Yowann yw esel a Gowethas an Yeth Kernewek. Ev a dhe glass rag dyski Kernewek. Prag y tysk ev Kernewek? Drefenn y vos Kernow!

Gerva (Vocabulary)

Kernow	Cornwall, Cornishman	pyth?	what
yw	is	mammyeth (f)	John's mother tongue
konna tir	peninsula	Yowann	
orth penn	at the end (of)	Fatell² dhysk	How does Yowann
Breten² Veur (f)	Gt. Britain	Yowann?	learn?
bro (f)	country	esel	member
keltek	Celtic	Kowethas an yeth	Cornish Language
Yowann	John	(f) kernewek	Fellowship
ev	he	Ev a dhe² glass	He goes to a class
yn	in	rag dyski	(in order) to learn
a² gews	speaks	Prag y⁵ tysk ev	Why does he learn
Sowsnek	English	Kernewek?	Cornish?
a² drig	lives	Drefenn y² vos	Because he is a
Kernewek	Cornish	Kernow!	Cornishman!
ynwedh	also	benyn (f)	woman
		bras	great

All the nouns marked (f) are feminine. The others are masculine.

Pronunciation note: The word **dhe** meaning "to" is (exceptionally) pronounced exactly as the English word "the" (not "thee").

Govynnnow (Questions)

All the answers can be found in the passage, and just copied down. All except number 6 should be complete sentences.

- 1) **Pyth yw Kernow?**
- 2) **Pyth yw Yowann?**
- 3) **Ple (Where) trig Yowann?**
- 4) **Pyth yw mammyeth Yowann?**
- 5) **Fatell dhysk Yowann Kernewek?**
- 6) **Prag y tysk ev Kernewek?**

Gramasek (Grammar)

A. Mutations. In Cornish, many words change their first letter, and this change depends on the word coming before it. The changes are called “mutations.” The basic unchanged form as shown in the dictionary is called “First State,” and there are four possible sets of mutations which are numbered 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th state. They are described as follows:

- 1st state = basic dictionary form. 2nd state = soft mutation.
3rd state = aspirate (breathed) mutation. 4th state = hard mutation.
5th state = mixed mutation.

However, these states are usually referred to by their numbers. A table of mutations comes with this lesson. A blank space on the table indicates that no change takes place. A dash shows that the letter drops out and the second letter becomes the initial one. Note: K, P and T do not soften to G, B and D respectively when they follow S or TH at the end of the previous word. They remain unchanged. Likewise K does not change to the 3rd state (H) when followed by L, N, or R. (You will appreciate that Hl, Hn and Hr would be rather difficult to say!). You will see now why some words in the vocabulary have a figure after them. The figure shows the mutation state of the following word, so, “**a² gews**” shows that “**gews**” is in second state. Look at the table to find the first state of this word. It is “**kews**.”

Exercise 1. Write down the first state of the word following the numbered word.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| 1) An² vro. | 5) Ev a² gews. | 9) Prag y⁵ tysk ev? |
| 2) Breten² deg. | 6) Fatell² dhysk. | 10) Drefenn y² vos Kernewek. |
| 3) bro² geltek. | 7) An² Gernewes (Cornishwoman) | |
| 4) Ev a² drig. | 8) Ev a dhe² glass. | |

Exercise 2. Here are some more to practise on. Write down the first state as before .

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1) dhe² dre (to town) | 5) an² venyn (the woman) | 9) yn⁵ fras (greatly) |
| 2) y² goweth (his friend) | 6) an² dus (the men.) | 10) ow⁴ tos (coming) |
| 3) ow³ howeth (my friend) | 7) dha² das (your father) | |
| 4) dhe² wir (truly) | 8) ow³ thas (my father) | |

It is impossible to use a dictionary unless you convert a mutated word back to its unmutated, first state form before looking it up. The mutated forms are not shown. Always check with the table until you are perfectly familiar with all the mutations.

B. Indefinite Article. In English, this is the word “a” in front of a noun e.g. “a peninsula,” “a Cornishman.” You will see from the passage that it is not normally used in Cornish so that the Cornish for “a peninsula” is just “**konna tir**” and “a Cornishman” is just “**Kernow**.” (In the old Cornish texts **unn** was sometimes used to mean “a” but this is not usual in Revived Cornish).

Exercise 3. Using the words in exercises 1 and 2, translate the following into Cornish. Don’t forget that the words must be in first state.

- 1) A town. (2) A friend. (3) A woman. (4) A father. (5) A class.

Mutation Table

1 Unmutated	2 Soft	3 Breathed	4 Hard	5 Mixed	6 Mixed after "th"
B	V		P	F	V
Ch	J				
D	Dh		T	T	T
G + a G + e G + i G + y	-		K	H	H
G + l G + r	-		K		
Gw	W		Kw	Hw	W
G + o G + u G + ro G + ru	W		K	Hw	W
K	G	H			
M	V			F	V
P	B	F			
T	D	Th			