

## KERNEWEK DRE LYTHER

### Rager (Introduction.)

“Kernewek dre Lyther” began in 1983 and has helped many students to succeed in the examinations of the Cornish Language Board, the majority with distinction. Many have reached the highest grade and been made Bards of the Gorsedd of Cornwall.

For the first four years, courses were only in Unified Cornish but in 1987 the “phonemic” spelling, now called “Kernewek Kemmyn”, with modified pronunciation, based on the research of Dr. Ken George and described in his book “The Pronunciation and Spelling of Revived Cornish.” was introduced. The KDL courses were all converted to the new system and almost all students are now learning this system though we are still able to offer Unified Cornish to those who want to learn it. The reasons for the changes are explained rather technically in Dr George’s book mentioned above and they are further explained and defended against recent criticisms in “Kernewek Kemmyn, Cornish for the Twenty-first century” by Paul Dunbar and Ken George, published in 1997.

The course was initiated and organised on behalf of the Cornish Language Board by Ray Edwards at the request of Dr Ken George who in 1983 was the secretary of the Education sub-committee of the Board.

A cassette in the new pronunciation has been made to accompany the courses and detailed pronunciation instructions are included.

Before 1988 there were three grades of examination and the courses correspond with these three grades. In 1988 the second grade was divided into two parts to be taken separately. The original second grade K.D.L. course has not been divided into two to correspond with this but it has been re-named the “Second/Third Grade”. The advanced course, previously described as Third Grade is now the Fourth Grade.

All the K.D.L. courses put together consist of eighty lessons. The first twenty five cover the first grade and are followed by a number of past first grade exam. papers. Lessons twenty six to fifty cover the second/third grade and these likewise are followed by a number of past papers. Lessons fifty one to eighty cover the fourth grade and consist of reading/study programmes to improve general knowledge of, and ability to read and write the language, with reading programmes for the set texts. Students also work slowly through a number of past fourth grade papers answering questions on the history and back ground of Cornish as well as ones involving the language.

It will be appreciated that teaching the spoken language is never a strong point of any correspondence course and all students who have access to classes, Yeth an Werin groups or anywhere where they can practice spoken Cornish are urged to take full advantage of them. We also advise students to do further reading in order to gain more vocabulary. Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek (The Cornish Language Fellowship) publish a monthly magazine called *An Gannas* which usually contains stories and articles for beginners. Also Dyllansow KDL (KDL Publications, 6 Halton Rd, Sutton Coldfield, B73 6NP), Kesva an Taves Kernewek (65 Churchtown, Gwinnear, Hayle, Cornwall, TR27 5JL) and good bookshops can provide dictionaries, vocabularies and short easy stories to help. The KDL website has *Gerva Kynsa dhe Dressa Gradh* which is free to download.

Now to the nitty-gritty of the course:

Stationery. You will need three substantial exercise books or loose leaf folders, plus a quantity of loose leaf paper in another folder. Two of the books are for a Cornish-English and English-Cornish “gerva” (vocabulary). Do not use the small note books sometimes used in schools as “vocab. books.” They are far too small. If you use fixed sheet books, you will need to divide them into alphabetical sections. If you enter words alphabetically according to the first two letters, you will reach the fourth grade before your “gervaow” become too cumbersome to use efficiently. The table below shows the percentage of pages we suggest you allow for each letter.

Corn-Eng. (Q, X and Z are not in use.)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	W	Y
7	4	1	8	4	2	9	5	1	1	12	5	6	3	3	7	2	7	5	1	1	3	3

Eng-Corn.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	XYZ
6	6	8	6	2	6	2	6	2	2	2	4	4	2	2	6	2	4	10	6	2	6	6	2

The third book is for translation and re-translation as explained below. On the remaining loose leaf sheets you will send your lesson work to K.D.L. who will return it to you marked, to study and to file in your folder.

Dyskansow. Each “dyskans” (lesson) in the first and second/third grade courses consists of a reading passage in Kernewek (Cornish) with a “gerva” and a number of “govynnadow” (questions), usually ten. Following this is a grammar section (“gramasek”). Each new point to be learned has an exercise which will help you to understand and learn it. Don't be frightened by the word “grammar.” There is a glossary of all the grammatical terms used, with examples in English. At the end of most of the lessons is a “skrif,” that is a topic on which to write a composition or essay. Every fifth lesson is a revision lesson with revision exercises. The reading passage and the “govynnadow” have been recorded on the cassette.

Procedure. Each lesson will give you a fair amount of work which cannot be rushed through, and will take a fair amount of time.

Step 1. Study the reading passage and the “gerva.” In lesson 1 (Dyskans onan) all the words are listed and you will have little difficulty in working out the meaning of the passage. In subsequent lessons, all new words are listed in the “gerva.”

Step 2. When you understand the passage fairly well, play the passage only on the cassette two or three times, following the text, and practise reading it aloud yourself.

Step 3. Copy the “gerva” alphabetically into your own vocabulary books,

Step 4. Translate the reading passage carefully on to the left hand page of your re-translation book.

Step 5. After a rest, or, better still, the next day, re-translate your English back into “Kernewek” on the opposite, right hand page of your book. The only help you are allowed for this is your own vocab. books, so put everything else away. When you have finished (and only then) check and mark your re-translation with the original. You may, of course, discover

errors in your first “trelyans” (translation) into “Sowsnek” (English) . It is better to regard your “trelyansow” (translations) and “dastrelyansow” (re-translations) as your own private study. However, if you find difficulty or feel you need to have them checked, use loose leaf folders instead of books and send them to K.D.L. with your other work. It is possible to have different versions from the original, which are both good “Kernewek” and without change of meaning.

Step 6. Look at the “govynnadow.” In the early lessons these are very easy. The answer can usually be copied word for word from the reading passage. Answer these on loose leaf paper to send to K.D.L.

Step 7. Play the questions and answers on the cassette. A gap is left before and after each answer. Try to say each answer aloud, or read your written answer after hearing the question, and again after the recorded answer, imitating the pronunciation on the tape. Do this several times until the questions and the answers are familiar.

Step 8. Study the “Gramasek,” and do the exercises on loose leaf paper and send to K.D.L.

These eight steps should be followed for every first and second/third grade lesson, except the revision lessons which have no reading passage, “govynnadow” or corresponding recording. Beginning at lesson five (“dyskans pyp”) most lessons have a “skrif” to write at the end. This should be at least ten sentences long, and longer as you gain confidence. *Write it on alternate lines to leave room for comments and/or corrections.*

When you have completed the eight steps for “dyskans onan” send your work on loose leaf paper to K.D.L. and get on with “dyskans dew” (lesson 2) “Dyskans onan” will be returned to you as soon as possible with the lesson papers for “dyskans tri” (and you can guess that one for yourself!)

If you have any problem, explain it to K.D.L. and we will give you all the help we can.

One thing more. K.D.L. is not just a correspondence course. Its aim is to link up lovers of “Kernow” and “Kernewek” wherever they may be by writing letters to each other in “Kernewek.” If you would like to write to someone, give K.D.L. whatever details you think are relevant. Names and addresses of new students are published in “An Kesskrifer” the quarterly news letter of K.D.L.