

(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 vammeyth. 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) .

Breten ² Vyghan	= Brittany	gans	= with, by
rann (f)	= part	y ²	= his
hweghkorn	= hexagon	kowetha	= friends
frynkek	= French	dre lyther	= by letter
rewlys <i>yw</i>	= it is governed	a skrif	= writes
Pow Frynk	= France	lytherow	= letters
Yann	= (Breton for "John")	dhe ²	= to
Bretonek	= Breton (language)	kesskrifer	= penfriend, correspondent
Frynkek	= French (language)		
byttegyns	= however	ha'y ²	= and his
ny ² gews	= does not speak	koweth	= friend
marnas	= except		
(ny... marnas)	= only		

Govynnadow

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

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

Gramasek

Position of adjectives (describing words) We have met the following:

Breten ² Veur	= Great Britain
bro ² geltek	= Celtic country
Breten ² 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.

Adjectives keltek = Celtic, kernewek = 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”.

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|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) a Celtic comrade | 5) a Cornish friend | 8) a small friend |
| 2) a French correspondent | 6) a great comrade | 9) a Cornish correspondent |
| 3) a great Cornishman | 7) a French friend | 10) a great Breton |
| 4) a small Breton | | |

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

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.

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

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:

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|---|-----------------------------|
| 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.