



Language and Culture Show and Tell: Swedish

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Worksheet

1. Linnaeus

Linnaeus is, to be truthful, *not* primarily famous because of the Lapland journey which we focused on earlier. But what is his real claim to fame? Do a quick google search, or go to the Linnaean Society in London's homepages, and see what you come up with! Can you understand what it is about? Technically this is 'history of science', so might not be something we are so familiar with. But can you think of an easy way to describe what his contribution to science, and the world in general was?

2. Language

In the video, a few Swedish words cropped up. Do you remember any of them?

English	Swedish (svenska)
summer	
blue	
	berg
	sten
	sjö
sun	
wild strawberries	

We also learnt that Swedish is good at making new words by combining existing words. Shall we see if we can make some new ones? Could you for example make up a Swedish equivalent of:

"summer strawberries"

"mountain lake"

"lake blue"

"sun forest"

I am not promising all of these technically 'exist', but they could do, couldn't they?
 Now you know, you could also make up your own ones. If you, say, wanted to write a Nordic crime story, you would never really run out of potential names for the characters in the story...



And lastly, let's learn to count to ten. We said earlier that numbers are often quite similar across the languages. So let's see – can you arrange the Swedish numbers next to the English ones?

one		
two		
three		
four		
five		
six		
seven		
eight		
nine		
ten		

3. Landscape and nature

The video looks at ways in which **nature** and **landscape** are present in Swedish culture, and some of the ways in which it seems to be something valuable. **Can you think of an example of how nature feature in your own culture, either in Britain or in another culture you know well?** Is it important in any way, or part of normal life somehow? It might be in a song, or an activity, or a tradition, or something else from history or the present day! If you have people around you that are happy to talk, perhaps ask them what they would say, and compare with your own example? Some of our habits and behaviours we are so used to that we don't think much about them: it can be quite fun to stop and think about why we do certain things sometimes, and what those things tell us about who we are!

If you want one last Swedish "nature" object, you could follow this link to a very popular summer hymn, which is sung every year in June when the schools break up: "Den blomstertid nu kommer" – the flower time now comes. But be near the volume button 30s in – this isn't perhaps quite the most traditional version of it...:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suV_MdF1O0



Key to the exercises

1.

Linnaeus is, as we mentioned earlier, the ‘father of taxonomy’, that is a particular way to name and categorise plants (and minerals and mammals too). Before Linnaeus, there was no real good system in place for systematically order all the species that everyone kept discovering. Linnaeus, and this is his one great achievement, worked out a system for how this could be done, by using specific aspects of the plants to categorise them. He published this system as ‘Systema Naturae’ first in 1735. As he and others kept finding new species to enter however, and he had to keep publishing new volumes – his last was the 12th edition in 1766-68 – now in three volumes! The Linnean system remains in plant names today, though the categorisation itself has been further developed.

2.

English	Swedish (svenska)
summer	sommar
blue	blå
mountain	berg
stone	sten
lake	sjö
sun	sol 🌞
wild strawberries	smultron

“summer strawberries” - sommarsmultron

“mountain lake” - bergsjö

“lake blue” - sjöblå

“sun forest” - “solskog” (this one is an invention, but works...)

one	ett	
two	två	
three	tre	
four	fyra	
five	fem	
six	sex	
seven	sju	
eight	åtta	
nine	nio	
ten	tio	