



Unit 1:

*The Causes, Course and Consequences of
the Great Irish Famine*

JUNIOR CYCLE LESSON PLANS



Junior Cycle Lesson Plans

UNIT 1: THE CAUSES, COURSE AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE GREAT IRISH FAMINE

GENERAL OVERVIEW: In this series of activity-based lessons students will gain a deeper understanding of the concepts of cause and consequence as well as learning about the main events leading up to, during and after the Great Irish Famine (1845-1852). Students will apply their understanding of these concepts and events to analyse and interpret a selection of maps, documents and images.

Students will be asked to consider why the effects of the Famine were felt to varying degrees in different parts of Ireland. Students will further be asked to consider the long-term impacts of the Famine and demonstrate understanding in a series of assessment-for-learning tasks.

The levels of detail presented in the maps and the richness of the historical sources offer considerable scope for students to develop their critical thinking skills. They are encouraged to form judgements based on evidence and practice enquiry, critical thinking, evaluation and creative skills.

Subject:	Junior Cert History	Subject:	Junior Cycle History
Unit:	Studies of Change (Social Change)	Strand:	1 (The Nature of History) 2 (The History of Ireland)
Topic:	From Farm to Factory Special Study: The Famine	Topic:	The Great Irish Famine
		Statements of Learning Links	SOL: 3, 8, 16, 18, 24

Required Time: 4-5, 40-minute class periods

Curricular Links: Geography, English, Art, Business Studies

AIMS: *Knowledge: Students should develop an understanding of*

- o Life in Ireland in the mid-nineteenth century
- o The main causes of the Famine (1845-1852)
- o The consequences of the Famine

Concepts: *Students should develop an understanding and the ability to apply the following procedural and substantive concepts*

- o Source
- o Evidence
- o Chronology
- o Opinion/Fact
- o Bias/Objectivity
- o Propaganda
- o Cause and Consequence

Skills: *Students should develop the following research and writing skills*

- o Locate historical information from a variety of sources such as primary and secondary written sources, maps and images
- o Select relevant information from the sources to answer historical questions
- o Record information by note taking, categorizing and summarising
- o Examine the information critically, distinguishing between fact and opinion and detecting inconsistencies and bias
- o Synthesise information from a selection of sources to predict and anticipate, create narratives, lines of argument or explanations
- o Present and communicate findings in a variety of ways, e.g. written, graphic, oral

LEARNING OUTCOMES: *by the end of these lessons students will be able to*

- o Describe the impact of famine and emigration on Irish society (**S2 E2 LO2.7**)
- o Identify the different groups/classes of people in rural Ireland in the mid 19th century (**S2 E2 LO2.9**)
- o Discuss how and why the great Irish Famine is commemorated (**S1 E1 LO1.3**)
- o Debate the usefulness and limitations of different types of sources of historical evidence, such as written, cartographic, oral and tactile evidence (**S1 E1 LO1.6**)
- o Effectively interrogate a map to extract historical information (**S1 E1 LO1.4**)
- o Be reflexive, critical and discriminating in response to a range of printed, visual and cartographic texts (**S1. E2. LO.10**)
- o Make connections between local and national history of the Famine in Ireland (**S2 E2 LO2.11**)
- o Clearly explain the connections between people and places (**S2 E2 LO.8, SOL16**)
- o Clearly and confidentially communicate their understanding of the concepts and events using a variety of different media (**SOL3**)
- o Justify orally and in writing their opinions about issues relating to the Famine (**SOL1**)
- o Use their imagination to consider the experiences of different people in 19th rural Ireland.
- o Work effectively with others in a range of roles (**Key Skill: Working with others**)
- o Locate and access additional material relating to the topic

Junior Cycle History Specification: **S** = Strand , **E** = Element, **LO** = Learning Outcome, **SOL** = Statement of Learning

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING: *will be based on*

- o Sharing learning goals with the students
- o In-class peer assessment
- o Student self assessment sheets

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING: *will be based on*

- o Informal teacher observation of student responses
- o Teacher observation of student ability to access and use the relevant resources during the lessons
- o Teacher observation of the accuracy of the information depicted in individual and group tasks.
- o Differentiated questioning
- o The application of the assessment criteria provided in the individual lesson plans for the group work tasks. Elements such as effective group work, delivery, accuracy and relevance of content are included in the assessment criteria.
- o Homework assignments suggested in the lesson plans.

Lesson 1 & 2: Ireland before the Famine (1 -2 class periods)

KEY QUESTIONS:

SUMMARY: During this lesson(s), students will learn about the primary causes of the famine though an examination of the lives of four [fictional] people associated with, and affected by, the Great Famine. The activity-based lesson guides students in focused reading and the location and interpretation of information about the Anglo-Irish Landlord, The Large Tenant Farmer, the Small Tenant Farmer and the Cottier. Students practice the skills of information recording, classification and summarising as well as developing communication and collaboration skills.

- *What were the main groups living in rural Ireland before the Famine?*
- *What were the main causes of the Famine in Ireland?*

LEARNING OUTCOMES By the end of this lesson students should have ...	PART 1: OVERVIEW/STARTER	PART 2: STUDENT LED LEARNING	PART 3: REVIEW/ PLENARY
○ Explained the main causes of the Great Irish Famine ○ Become familiar with the groups associated with and affected by the Great Irish Famine ○ Identified, explained and recorded key words ○ Depicted a concept symbolically ○ Recorded information by summarising ○ Presented information in graphic format ○ Worked effectively as part of a group ○ Made predictions based on an understanding of the facts	Explain that the targets for this lesson are to be able to explain some of the main reasons why Famine began in Ireland in 1845, and the different groups in Irish society that were affected by it. Spend some time surveying the class about prior knowledge of the Famine It may be useful to begin by projecting a powerpoint slide featuring the four types of houses in Ireland before the famine (1st class houses – 4th class houses) and ask students to suggest the type of person that lived in each house and why. The brief activity will lead to the provision of any background information that might be required prior to the student group task.	Step 1: Direct students to the first two pages of the Student Worksheet for Lesson 1 and assign one of the following identities to each student: <i>Anglo-Irish Landlord, Large Tenant Farmer, Small Tenant Farmer, Cottier.</i> Step 2: Students locate the relevant <i>Character Autobiography</i> in the Worksheet and read it carefully, underlining anything interesting or surprising, or any unfamiliar words. Step 3: At the end of the allotted time the students locate the other students in the class with the same identity and form 'identity groups' of Landlords, Cottiers etc. Step 4: Each group appoints a chairperson to oversee a discussion about how to fill in the <i>Character Profile Sheet</i> for their assigned character. Step 5: All students complete the relevant <i>Character Profile</i>. Step 6: The class is reorganised into new groups of four. Each should include one Landlord, one Large and one Small Tenant Farmer and one Cottier. Step 7: All group members contribute to the group discussion as the character they created in their original identity groups. Step 8: The group discussion, with the Landlord as chairperson, will have two parts: (a) Each group member introduces themselves - in character - to the other students. They should explain why the symbol on <i>Character Profile Sheet</i> was chosen to represent their character. (b) Working together, the group fills in the <i>Predicting the Famine Worksheet</i>. Each member of the group adds at least one thing that concerns their character and the reason for the concern. Step 9: Taking into account all of the concerns, the group discuss what might happen in the future (<i>Predicted Outcome</i>) if each concern becomes a reality.	Ask two students to act as scribes and stand at the white board, ready to write Ask for feedback from an appointed spokesperson from each group Students are free to agree, question or elaborate during the feedback session. Direct the scribes to write down any feedback that relates directly to the causes of the Famine. The result will be a list of the main causes of the famine, and the basis for a homework task/ essay.

REQUIRED MATERIAL FOR LESSON 1 : Atlas of the Irish Revolution Student Worksheets, Unit 1: Lesson 1.

LINKS WITH OTHER SUBJECTS : English

Lesson 3: The Great Hunger (1-2 class periods)

Summary: During this lesson(s), students interrogate a selection of primary and secondary source material relating to the effects of the Famine - particularly in the south west. They are asked to think critically about the reliability of the different sources and extract evidence to make judgements about the impact of the Famine. Using their dictionary skills, students also locate and explain a series of words and phrases relating to the Famine before choosing one of two individual tasks.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- o What were the main causes of death during the Famine?
- o What relief or assistance did people receive during the Famine?

LEARNING OUTCOMES By the end of this lesson students should have ...	PART 1: OVERVIEW/STARTER	PART 2: STUDENT LED LEARNING	PART 3: REVIEW/ PLENARY:
- o Explained the concepts of Famine relief, Workhouse, Poor Law, famine fever and destitution - o Examined the impact of the Great Irish Famine in different parts of Ireland. - o Empathised with the suffering of victims of the Famine - o Identified and defined key words - o Evaluated the reliability of a primary source document - o Detected bias and subjectivity in a primary source - o Presented information in visual or written format - o Worked effectively as part of a group	Begin by explaining that the targets for this lesson are to examine the effects of the Great Famine - o To examine primary source material and extract evidence about the effects of the famine in Ireland. - o To compare different sources based on their levels of reliability Provide as much background/ context for the documents as required before students begin the task.	Task 1: Direct the students to the relevant pages of the Student Worksheet for Lesson 3 and give them time to examine the document before organising the class into pairs Step 1: Using the worksheet provided, students work together to define some of the more archaic language used in Document A and find modern synonyms. Step 2: At the conclusion of the allotted time, each pair compares their answers with another as the teacher moves between groups assessing understanding. Step 3: Individually, students complete the first five comprehension questions based on Document A. After surveying the answers, field a class discussion about the reliability and objectivity of the journalist. Students apply what they have learned during the discussion to answer questions 6 and 7 about the reliability of the source. Step 4: Question 8 is a creative and imaginative task and should be completed individually for homework. Task 2: Working in pairs, students read documents B-E in the Student Worksheet and complete the source analysis grid that follows. Step 1: Ask each pair to compare their answers with another, before appointing a spokesperson from each group of 4 to present feedback to the class. Step 2:	Compare student assessment of reliability during a class discussion. Invite volunteers to offer a summary of the effects of the famine using information they gleaned from reading the sources. Encourage Volunteers to use as much of the detail they recorded in the 'interesting/surprising words of facts' column as possible.
REQUIRED MATERIAL FOR LESSON 3 : Atlas of the Irish Revolution Student Worksheets, Unit 1 / Dictionary			
LINKS WITH OTHER SUBJECTS : English and Art			

Lesson 4: The Consequences of the Great Irish Famine (1class period)

KEY QUESTIONS:

Summary: During this lesson(s), students examine five *Atlas of the Irish Revolution* maps depicting the effects of the famine on a county level. Working in pairs, students answer questions based on their interpretation of the data depicted in the maps. The topic gains relevancy for the students when they use to maps to identify the extent to which their own county was affected by the Famine.

LEARNING OUTCOMES By the end of this lesson students should have ...	PART 1: OVERVIEW/STARTER	PART 2: STUDENT LED LEARNING	PART 3: REVIEW/ PLENARY:
○ Explained the primary consequences of the Famine ○ Understood the effects of the famine on a national and local level ○ Developed an understanding of the substantive concept of 'cause and consequence.' ○ Recorded and synthesized information from a selection of different sources ○ Practised map-reading skills ○ Presented information in a written format ○ Practised numeracy skills	Begin by explaining that the targets for this lesson are to be able to list and explain the main consequences of the Great Irish Famine. Project Map 3, Document F in isolation. This depicts the percentage of deaths as a proportion of total deaths during the famine. The students write down their first impressions of what they see. Survey the class for observations. This should lead into a discussion of how the enormous death rates were not the only consequences of the watershed event in Irish history.	Step 1: Direct the students to the maps and the captions in relevant maps in the student worksheet and allocate five minutes to examine them closely. Step 2: Working in pairs, students complete comprehension questions 1-8 based on the maps. Step 3: When the allocated time has passed, each pair should compare their answers with the pair of students in front, the teacher will move between the groups to assess understanding Step 4: The final question is a research and writing assignment based on the effects of the famine in their own county. Students choose one of the following tasks: <i>Write an account of the effects of the Famine in your own county. This should include facts and statistics from Documents G-H as well as information discovered during your own research.</i> OR <i>Research the story of one emigrant from your own county who left Ireland during the Famine. Write three diary entries from the point of view of that person. The first should be written before they emigrated, the second should be written while on</i> <i>Teachers may decide to assign the short map-based writing tasks as homework or to extend the task, using it as a starting point for a project fulfilling the requirements of</i> Classroom-Based Assessment 2: The Past in My Place <i>Alternatively, the teacher may decide to focus on emigration based on Document G. Using the maps, together with the online sources listed on the accompanying list, the students might undertake a simple project on a young person who emigrated from Ireland during or after the Famine. This may be extended to fulfill the requirements of</i> Classroom-Based Assessment 1: A Young Person in Time	Draw three columns on the board and label them Cause, Course, Consequences Students approach the board and add to the diagram where they can
REQUIRED MATERIAL FOR LESSON 4: Atlas of the Irish Revolution Student Worksheets, projector			
LINKS WITH OTHER SUBJECTS :		English	

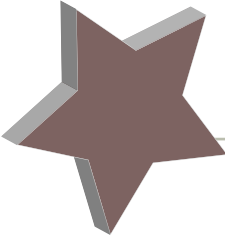
Lesson 5: Reviewing the Famine

KEY QUESTIONS:

Summary: During this lesson, students will engage in two activity-based learning tasks to review and reinforce what they have learned out the Famine in previous lessons. The requirement to complete an informative poster demands that students practice summarising and writing concisely.

o *What were the causes, course and consequences of the Famine?*

LEARNING OUTCOMES By the end of this lesson students should have ...	PART 1: OVERVIEW/STARTER	PART 3: STUDENT LED LEARNING	PART 4: REVIEW/ PLENARY:
○ Gained an understanding of the key concepts associated with the Great Irish Famine. ○ Summarised the primary causes, the course and the main consequences of the Famine in Ireland ○ Developed an ability to apply the procedural concept of chronology and the substantive concept of 'cause and consequence'. ○ Presented information in graphic format. ○ Employed numeracy and literacy skills ○ Worked effectively as part of a group.	Begin by explaining that the targets for this lesson are to be able to identify and explain some of the key words and concepts associated with the Famine. Explain the rules of <i>Key Word Bingo</i>, before nominating pairs of students to work together to match the definitions to the key words listed in the student worksheet.	Step 1: Working in pairs, students cut out the boxes in the student worksheet and match the key terms to the correct definitions. Step 2: Once they are satisfied with the matches, each pair should compare their choices with another pair of students. Step 3: Remaining in these groups of four, students choose any twelve of the key words and place them randomly into the boxes of the <i>Bingo Grid</i> in the student worksheet. In the meantime, the teacher will nominate one student to act as the Bingo Caller. Step 4: Once every group is ready, the Bingo Caller will choose definitions at random and read them to the class. If a group thinks that the definition matches any of the words on their grid, they will use a coloured pen to mark the box. Step 5: The winner is determined when one group of players complete the winning bingo pattern. The pattern can be: A) A line of 3 words covered [vertical, horizontal or diagonal] B) A full house [when all the words in the grid are covered] C) Word Map: All the words beneath the symbol of the map are covered	To conclude, direct the students to the poster template on the next page of the student worksheet. This requires students to distill their knowledge and choose succinct sentences and phrases to included in each of the three spaces for Causes, Course and Consequences of the Famine. Completion of the graphic may be assigned as a homework task or as a group task for students to complete their study of the Famine.
REQUIRED MATERIAL FOR LESSON 5 : Atlas of the Irish Revolution Student Worksheets, Unit 1, scissors			
LINKS WITH OTHER SUBJECTS :			English



GLOSSARY OF KEY WORDS: SOLUTION

ARREARS

A LEGAL TERM FOR PART OF A DEBT. i.e., RENT THAT IS OVERDUE

POOR LAW ACT

INTRODUCED FOR IRELAND IN 1838, THIS ACT ALLOWED FOR A SYSTEM TO SUPPLY RELIEF TO THE POOR.

BOARD OF GUARDIANS

WHEN THE IRISH POOR LAW ACT WAS INTRODUCED IN 1838, A BOARD OF GUARDIANS WAS ELECTED TO RUN THE AFFAIRS OF THE WORKHOUSES WITHIN EACH DESIGNATED AREA.

POOR RATES

EVERY PERSON LIVING WITHIN A LOCAL ELECTORAL DIVISION PAID THESE RATES FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE WORKHOUSE.

COFFIN SHIPS

THE NAME GIVEN TO THE SHIPS THAT CARRIED IRISH EMIGRANTS ESCAPING THE EFFECTS OF THE FAMINE. THEY WERE CROWDED AND DISEASE-RIDDEN

CLEARANCES

LANDLORDS WERE REQUIRED TO PAY THE POOR RATE FOR THOSE WITH A HOLDING VALUED AT UNDER £4. AS THE FAMINE PROGRESSED, MANY LANDLORDS DECIDED TO CLEAR THESE TENANTS FROM THEIR ESTATES.

CONACRE

A SYSTEM WHEREBY LAND WAS RENTED ON AN 'ELEVEN-MONTH' BASIS, WITH THE CONTRACT RENEWED FROM YEAR TO YEAR. IT GAVE THE TENANT NO LEGAL ENTITLEMENT TO THE HOLDING.

SUBDIVISION

A FAVOURED METHOD OF LAND DIVISION IN PRE-FAMINE IRISH SOCIETY WHEREBY LAND WAS DIVIDED INTO SMALLER PIECES

COTTIERS

A CLASS OF PEOPLE WHO GENERALLY OWNED LITTLE MORE THAN HALF AN ACRE OF LAND.

TITHES

AN ANNUAL PAYMENT OF ONE TENTH OF PRODUCE, PAID TO THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH. THEY WERE GREATLY RESENTED BY ALL DENOMINATIONS.

DESTITUTE

THE CONDITION OF BEING VERY POOR AND WITHOUT RESOURCES

WORKHOUSE

A PLACE WHERE THE POOR AND DESTITUTE COULD FIND ACCOMMODATION AND SHELTER IN RETURN FOR CARRYING OUT BASIC DUTIES. CONDITIONS OF ENTRY INTO THE WORKHOUSE WERE STRICT AND IT WAS SEEN AS THE LAST RESORT OF THE DESTITUTE.

EMIGRATION

THE ACT OF LEAVING ONE'S OWN COUNTRY TO SETTLE PERMANENTLY IN ANOTHER; MOVING ABROAD.

FAMINE ROADS

PART OF THE WORK SCHEMES SET UP, THE POOR DID TOUGH PHYSICAL LABOR ALL DAY BUILDING THESE ROADS IN ORDER TO EARN MONEY TO BUY FOOD.

EVICTION

A LANDLORD'S LEGAL REMOVAL OF A TENANT FROM HIS RENTAL PROPERTY. EVICTION MAY OCCUR WHEN RENT HAS NOT BEEN PAID.

POTATO BLIGHT

A DESTRUCTIVE FUNGAL DISEASE OF POTATOES WHICH CAUSES THE TUBERS TO ROT.

FAMINE

A SEVERE SHORTAGE OF FOOD, AS THROUGH CROP FAILURE OR OVERPOPULATION, CAUSING ILLNESS OR DEATH FOR A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE.

MIDDLEMEN

MEN WHO RENTED LAND FROM A LANDLORD AND IN TURN SUBLET THE LAND, OFTEN AT A HIGHER PRICE.

GREGORY ACT 1848

ACCORDING TO THIS ACT, HOLDERS OF MORE THAN A $\frac{1}{4}$ OF AN ACRE OF LAND COULD NOT BE DEEMED DESTITUTE AND ENTITLED TO RELIEF. RESULTED IN THOUSANDS OF IMPOVERISHED COTTIERS SURRENDERING THEIR LAND.

LAISSEZ-FAIRE

TRANSLATION: TO LEAVE ALONE

AN ECONOMIC POLICY WHICH MEANT THAT GOVERNMENT DID NOT INTERFERE IN BUSINESS MARKETS OR THE ECONOMY IN GENERAL. IT PROVED DISASTROUS DURING THE FAMINE