

Unit 2:

Irishwomen's Campaign for the Vote, 1870-1914

TEACHERS HANDBOOK



Transition Year Unit: Irishwomen's Campaign for the Vote, 1870-1914

MODULE OUTLINE AND PROJECT GUIDELINES

2018 marked a centenary since women (albeit a limited few) were first granted the right to vote in Ireland. During this Transition Year Unit, which is focused on the campaign for female suffrage in Ireland, 1870-1914, students will examine the various attempts by Irish women to challenge the laws and customs which prevented them from participating in politics, commerce and education. The lobbying and protests of women such as Isabella Tod, Anna Haslam and Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, resulted in gradual changes, culminating in the election of Sinn Féin candidate, Countess Markievicz in 1918.

A comparative analysis of the rights and freedoms of women in the nineteenth century and women today will engage students and encourage investment in the research project, which forms the focal point of the module. The recent determination in the realms of academia and media to reinsert the female voice into the history of the Irish revolutionary period, 1912-23, provides ample source material for students to research and present projects on an aspect or personality associated with the Irish female suffrage campaign. There is also wealth of relevant digital material available for students to access, providing opportunities for deeper student engagement with the period.

This module guides students through the history of the suffrage campaign in an active learning context and through an examination of maps, documents and images drawn primarily from the Atlas of the Irish Revolution. For those considering taking History or Geography for Leaving Cert, the unit will provide a foundation in more advanced project work, document handling, critical thinking, and writing skills. This teaching unit is also strongly placed to help students develop the 'Key Skills for Senior Cycle' identified by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment as 'Information Processing', 'Communicating'; 'Being Personally Effective', 'Working with Others' and 'Critical and Creative Thinking'.

This unit is divided into eight parts (see below), each of which aims to increase knowledge, present historical and procedural concepts and develop particular skill sets.

AREAS OF STUDY:

Top-Up and Tasters: Bridging learning gaps and stimulating interest in Leaving Certificate Courses.

DURATION OF THE UNIT:

This outline is based on a typical Transition Year module/unit drawn from the Subject Sampling Layer of the Transition Year Curriculum: three, 40 minute classes per week for seven weeks.

Parts 2-5 of the eight-part teaching unit will require one or two classes for teacher presentation, source analysis and discussion, and written analysis.

One single class per week will be required for research, project preparation and, later, project presentation and personal assessment.

As access to computers and availability of guest speakers will inform the duration of the unit, teachers may adapt the content to their requirements, either expanding on or reducing the material as necessary.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

- o To inspire an interest in history
- o To broaden understanding of the Irish Suffrage Movement
- o To create a deeper understanding of the work of the historian
- o To give students hands-on experience of working with, and thinking critical ly about, primary and secondary source material
- o To guide students in the analysis of maps as historical sources
- o To develop students' recording, sequencing and summarising skills
- o To develop research and digital literacy skills
- o To facilitate group work and collaborative project work
- o To develop presentation and communication skills

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit students should have:

- o A greater understanding of the work of the historian
- o A broader understanding of the campaign for female suffrage in Ireland
- o Put into practice historical research skills
- o Gained experience in working with primary and secondary source material
- o Learned to identify bias and to question the reliability of a source
- o Worked effectively as part of a group
- o Engaged with digital learning tools
- o Transformed data from one form to another
- o Depicted visually and in written format the results of their research
- o Confidently communicated the results of their research in a variety of media.
- o Engaged in peer and self assessment

MODULE OUTLINE

PART 1: Introduction: (2 class periods)

Outline the content of the History Module Explain the expectations and learning outcomes to the class Present the guidelines and assessment criteria for the group projects

Introducing the Project

Step 1: The Teacher will explain the premise of the project is that the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht wishes to mark the anniversary of women being granted the right to vote in Ireland with the launch of a new website dedicated to influential Irish women, 1900-2000.

The department has invited applications from writers, historians, graphic designers, poets, musicians and photographers to contribute a page to this website.

The webpage must include:

- 1. A biography of a named woman in Irish history, 1900-2000, who has made a significant contribution in the areas of politics, art, scholarship, literature, science, education or justice
- 2. A section of the web page devoted to an analysis of the significance of this woman's contribution
- 3. A selection of images or drawings that encapsulate that contribution
- 4. At least four quotations from primary or secondary sources relating to the historical character
- 5. A piece of music or poetry that celebrates the spirit, motivations and/ or legacy of the historical character or a short documentary outlining the personality and achievements of the historical character

The teacher may decide to designate groups of four/five or allow students to organise their own groups.

Step 2: First Group Meeting. In groups of not more than five, students should:

- Nominate a chairperson to oversee the project and chair group discussions
- Discuss possibilities for the subject of their webpage
- Discuss possibilities for the content of their webpage: text, documentary, music etc.
- Identify their individual strengths and provisionally assign different elements of the webpage design to different students

For homework, students individually conduct research into significant female personalities of the twentieth century. Each student should return to the next class with at least two suggestions about a subject for their webpage.

Step 3: Second Group Meeting 2.

- The chairperson will oversee a group discussion in which each member makes a case for their suggested historical personality
- At the conclusion of each presentation, the other members of the group may ask questions or make comments
- When all students have made the case for their chosen character, the group should vote on one historical personality
- The group should nominate a scribe, who will complete the Project Proposal Form on the next page
- All group members should have an input into preparing the proposal and sign the commitment at the end of the document.
- Once the proposal has been approved, the project may proceed

Depending on the extent to which the class requires guidance on research, writing and digital skills, the teacher may decide to divide the teaching unit into two classes on the Suffrage Movement and one class of project work per week rather than the structure outlined below.

PART 2: Women in the nineteenth century (1-2 class periods)

Survey the class to assess prior knowledge of the changing role of women in Ireland in the 19th and twentieth centuries.

Using the '*True or False Worksheet*' in the student project book as a starting point, examine the limitations on women as a result of the laws and customs of the time. Working in pairs, the students should indicate whether they think each statement is true or false by placing a tick in the relevant column on the right. Once complete, the teacher reads or projects the correct answers. The students use the left hand columns in the worksheet to insert the correct answers. A class discussion may follow based on which answers the students found most surprising and a comparison with the rights of women in Ireland today.

To finish the introductory classes the teacher may choose to play a short Youtube video of Emma Watson's UN speech about gender equality today: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-iFl4qhBsE</u> as the basis for a comparative analysis.

PART 3: Working with the Sources (1-2 class periods)

During these classes, the teacher should reintroduce the concepts of bias, propaganda and reliability when interrogating sources, paying particular attention to online sources.

Students should read documents A and B and complete the comprehension questions that follow. Presenting opposing views about traditional gender roles, these documents should provoke debate about the difficulties encountered by women who attempted to challenge prevailing gender roles in politics and society. As an exercise in imaginative creativity and empathy, students are encouraged to write a poem in response to Document A from the perspective of a nineteenthcentury feminist

PART 4: Tracing the phases of the Irish Suffrage Movement (5-6 class periods)

Phase 1: The origins of the Campaign for Irishwomen's Suffrage

The teacher will explain why the campaign for women's rights gained momentum in the late nineteenth century.

- 1. Women were increasingly better educated and more aware of their disadvantaged position.
- 2. Influence of suffrage campaigns abroad, particularly in the USA since the 1840s.
- 3. Reform in other areas such as the abolition of slavery, the right to form trade unions, Catholic Emancipation and the Poor Law Acts.
- 4. The Reform Act of 1832 which expressly excluded women from the franchise by using the words 'male person'. Prior to this women were excluded only by custom and tradition.

The second lesson will examine the early stage of campaign for women's rights in Ireland with particular focus on the personalities of Isabella Tod and Thomas and Anna Haslam. Documents C-E and the comprehension questions which follow offer students an opportunity to work with primary sources relevant to first wave of feminism in Ireland. The final question asks students to engage in a short research task. Working individually or in pairs, students should research the life of Isabella Tod and write their findings into the newspaper template provided. The teacher should take the opportunity to advise on the strategies for research with an emphasis on the reliability and value of different types of historical sources. The limited space provided in the template requires students to prioritise salient information and to practice writing concisely.

Phase 2: The Irish Women's Franchise League and the Power of Propaganda

Documents F-I examine the origins and development of The Irish Women's Franchise League. The variety of documents affords the teacher an opportunity to examine them comparatively in terms of their strengths and weaknesses as historical sources. The content of the sources will assist students in defining the aims and methods of the IWFL, as well as the experience of being a member of the organisation. The comprehension questions that follow also guide the students in developing an understanding of how the second phase of the campaign for women's rights differed from the first.

In the second lesson, students will engage with the concept of propaganda. An excellent starter website can be accessed at: <u>https://designschool.canva.com/blog/</u><u>examples-of-propaganda/</u>

After an explanatory introduction, the teacher will divide the class into groups of four. Each team represents a design team appointed by the Committee of the Irish Women's Franchise League. Using the template provided in the Student Project Book, each design team must create:

- 1. A sash for members to wear at the next open-air meeting
- 2. A lapel pin for distribution to the public
- 3. A placard for use during a protest meeting outside Government Buildings
- 4. An eye-catching advertisement for a suffrage meeting at the offices of the IWFL

Together, each group should agree on a slogan which will appear on the memorabilia and in the advertisement. The slogan should be short, memorable and raise awareness about the objectives of the IWFL. (Docs F&G)

Once the slogan has been agreed, each group member should choose one of the design tasks and create preliminary designs to bring back to the group. When the group has examined all of the preliminary designs and is happy that the four design tasks share a similar theme and style, the individual members should complete their designs for presentation to the IWFA Committee in the next class.

At the presentation stage, group members should present their own work, with a group leader providing details about how the individual pieces of propaganda all relate the same message and how the group worked together. The remaining class members will represent the committee and vote on the most effective propaganda.

The teacher may choose to use the Peer Assessment templates in the Student Project book or assign different evaluation criteria. Students should be made aware of the assessment criteria before beginning the design project.

Phase 3: The Militant Phase of the Campaign

In these classes students will be introduced to some of the methods used by the suffragettes between 1912 and 1914 and some of the critics of the movement. They will examine reproduced extracts from the suffragist *Irish Citizen* (1912-1920), a 1912 anti-suffragist article in D.P. Moran's *The Leader* and a cartoon entitled 'Votes and Violence' published in the *Daily Mirror* on 2 July 1909. These sources which present the movement from different perspectives, encourage students to find evidence of bias, identify different viewpoints and place the suffrage movement within the wider context of the Home Rule movement in 1912.

Depending on the extent to which students studied the Home Rule Movement in Junior Cycle, the teacher may need to provide background details on John Redmond and the Home Rule bill of 1912.

Students begin by reading the sources and answering the simple comprehensions questions that follow.

The next part of the task requires students to engage in analysis of political cartoons. The Student Worksheet provided in the Project Pack will guide students in their analysis.

Phase 4: The Campaign for the Vote on the Eve of the First World War

The last lesson in part 4 of the module examines divisions in the Suffrage movement on the eve of the First World War. Students will engage with a map from the *Atlas of the Irish Revolution* entitled 'The Suffrage Geography of Ireland', two IWFL propaganda posters and an extract from a lecture by Countess Markievicz. The sources provide an excellent starting point for examining the reasons for dissension among different feminist groups. Students should first complete the comprehension questions which follow the printed sources. The task which follows asks students to consider the reasons for support of, and opposition to the Irishwomen's Suffrage movement.

The task which follows asks students to assess comments by representatives of different groups, both in favour of and opposed to the suffrage movement. In the task which follows students are asked to identify the levels of support or opposition and explain the possible reasons for the different viewpoints among the commentators. The exercise is an effective means to demonstrating that different interest groups can express divergent but equally stringent opinions on the same topic.

Step 1: Divide the class into teams of four and instruct the teams to cut out the individual quotes in the Student Project Book. Students discuss whether they express a pro or anti-suffrage opinion and, once agreed, place the quotes in the appropriate place on the graph on the next page.

Depending on time and the ability levels of the class, you may decide to exclude the names of the speakers from the quotations and add a step to the task by projecting the names and asking students to guess the identity of the speakers of each quote.

- *Step 2:* Field a class discussion on the placement of the quotations and why the particular people identified might have been pro or anti-suffrage. Ask different groups to justify the placement of their quotations.
- Step 3: The last part of this task involves preparing and preforming a role play. Each group of four should choose one student to take on the role of a character in the anti-suffrage column, and one student to take on the role of one a character in the pro-suffrage column. The other two students will work as researchers and help the actors to prepare the scene. The groups should script a debate between the two characters.
- *Step 4:* In the next class each group will perform their scene. Before the actors begin, one of the researchers should explain the chosen setting and the background to the conversation. After each performance, the other members of the class should prepare two of the following responses.
 - An observation about the credibility of the actors' performance
 - A comment about evidence of research and preparation
 - A suggestion what about what might have happened next
 - A question about the team's chosen characters

PART 5: The Establishment of Cumann na mBan (1-2 classes)

In order to highlight the tensions between nationalism and feminism after 1914, students will encounter four sources relating to the formation of Cumann na mBan and the conflict between the new organisation and the Irish Women's Franchise League.

It may be necessary to provide some background on the Irish Volunteer movement and/or the Bureau of Military History prior to introducing the students to the primary sources, Q-T.

Individually or in pairs, students should examine the documents and answer the comprehension questions 1-10 that follow. These questions guide the students in extracting evidence from the primary source documents, and identifying the points of clash between the suffrage and nationalist women in 1914-15.

Lastly, Q. 11 asks students to use a Venn diagram to identify the similarities and differences between the two movements. Ideally, this task should be completed in pairs. Each pair should then compare their answers with another pair of students, before relaying their answers to the class during the plenary session.

PART 6: In Class Project Work: (2 class periods)

All materials collected to be brought to class Teacher facilitation of group preparation for presentation

PART 7: Project Presentation: (1-2 class periods)

Guidelines for project presentation should be outlined for the class in advance.

PART 8: *Review: (1 class period)*

Peer assessment and self-assessment

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

This unit offers the opportunity to put into practice a wide variety of teaching and learning strategies.

Atlas of the Irish Revolution Map: The interrogation and analysis of the cartographic representation of the different suffrage societies in 1913

Primary Source Material: materials from the National Library of Ireland, the Bureau of Military History and variety of contemporary newspapers provide a deep well of sources from which to glean an insight into the period

Group Work: The students will participate in group and pair-work during many of the classes. In groups they will examine source material in the Student Document Packs and engage in debate and discussion and plan and execute their research project

Negotiated Learning: The students will submit for approval a proposal for their own design project. They will take responsibility for their own research and project work

ICT: Much of the project work may be conducted using ICT

Visiting Speakers: To have a historian visit the class would offer a further insight into the work of the historian and the processes of locating source material

Assessment:

Teachers will engage in both summative and formative assessment.

Throughout the module there will be ongoing assessment through oral questioning and discussion. Students are assessed on their participation and engagement in class. This is worth a percentage of their overall grade.

The main form of assessment is the project based on a *Remarkable Woman of the Twentieth Century* and the student presentation of that project. The projects will be completed in groups of four or five. Together students compile and submit a proposal for the project within the deadline set by the teacher. The students will also engage in peer assessment during the presentation stages. The teacher will decide on the weighing of marks for each of the peer assessment criteria

At the conclusion of the module students should also complete the student self-assessment sheet on the final page of the project pack. This is also worth a percentage of the final grade.

Links to Other Subjects:

There are numerous possibilities for linking to other subjects in the Transition Year programme.

- **1. Communications** would build up expertise in the oral presentation of a project and the construction of a presentation
- **2. Geography** Curriculum could also look at the concept of historical geography and biographical mapping
- **3. Art** would build on the concept of symbolism when designing suffrage memorabilia.
- **4. English:** The writing assignments complement English in that the students are tasked with poetry analysis and composition as well as debate and creative writing. Obviously literacy skills are necessary for the writing up of the project in a logical and well-structured manner.

EVALUATION:

Students' responses during class time will give immediate feedback to the teacher about their levels of enthusiasm and engagement. This should be a key factor in determining the success or otherwise of a section of the module. One of the central aims of the module is to enthuse the students about history generally and Women's History in particular, and if they are not enjoying the class then it is not fulfilling the objective.

True or False

For each of the 12 statements below about Irishwomen in the late 19th century, indicate whether you think the statement is true or false by placing a v in the relevant column on the right.

TRUE	TRUE		TRUE	FALSE
		Irishwomen had legal custody of their children only until they were seven years of age.		
		Irishwomen were permitted to attend university if their family could afford to send them.		
		When a woman got married, all of her inherited and/or earned property came under her husband's control to dispose of as he pleased.		
		In 1870, the dominant source of employment for unmarried women of the poorer classes was in domestic service.		
		In the 19th century, only men could vote in parliamentary elections and sit in the House of Commons.		
		Men and women who worked in factories and shops were paid equal wages for the same work.		
		Middle-class women were expected to remain at home or work as a governess until they married.		
		In 1870, it was not uncommon to see middle class Irishwomen working in professions such as medicine or law.		
		On average, women earned up to two-thirds less than men for work of equal value.		
		In 1871, 43 percent of all women between 15 and 45 were married.		
		According to the law, children would always be brought up in the religion of their father.		
		Women were permitted to be members of public boards or local authorities.		
		Women in 19th century Ireland were encouraged to study mathematics and the science subjects.		
		On the death of a parent, property and titles were divided equally between sons and daughters.		
		Divorce was considerably more difficult for a wife to obtain than it was for a husband because the law treated women as the more guilty party.		
		Women were considered physically and emotionally weaker yet morally superior to men, which meant that they were best suited to the domestic rather than to the political or public spheres.		
		To enhance the likelihood of finding a husband, middle-class women were coached in what were known as 'accomplishments': a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages.		