

Unit 3:

Working and Living Conditions in Dublin, 1900-1913

JUNIOR CYCLE WORKSHEETS

UNIT 3:

Working and Living conditions in Ireland, 1900-1913

IRELAND AT THE TIME OF THE 1911 CENSUS:

The population of Ireland in 1911 was 3.14 million people. Data from the official **census** taken in that year provides a wealth of information about what Ireland was like in the first decade of the twentieth century. It recorded, for example, that 260,694 people (or 8.3% of the population) were **illiterate**. Dublin had the lowest rate of illiteracy at 3.8%. Just under 90% of the population in 1911 described themselves as Catholic and less than a fifth (17.6%) of the population could speak Irish. Less than Only 3.5% of people in Leinster could speak the language compared to over a third in Connacht. More than half (54.1%) of the population in Galway spoke Irish in 1911.

The census also provides evidence of mortality rates, housing, family sizes and the types of work that people did in 1911. Nearly half of workers in Ireland were employed in agriculture, over a quarter worked in manufacturing jobs and one in ten workers worked as a domestic servant. The data from the census reveals a strong contrast between life in the city and life in the early twentieth century.

The 'A' form was the basic household census return, filled in and signed by the head of the household. The information recorded included names, ages, gender, occupation, marital status, religion, county of birth and literacy

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Ireland was mostly an agricultural country and the majority of the rural population either owned or worked as labourers on farms. The only significant industry was concentrated in the northeast of the country. The combination of northeast Ulster's proximity to coalfields of northern England and Scotland, and its strong tradition domestic linen weaving formed the basis for industrialisation. In the late nineteenth century the area around Belfast known as the 'linen triangle' saw large-scale investment in spinning and weaving mills. By 1900 over 60,000 Ulster workers were employed in the linen industry.

BELFAST

At the turn of the century, Belfast was a thriving Victorian city with 75% its workforce employed in industry. English engineer, Edward Harland and G.W. Wolff contributed enormously to the industrial growth in Belfast when they opened their first shipyard 1853. They adopted the latest technology and forged crucial links to Liverpool's White Star line. In the 1880s Harland and Wolff began to construct trans-Atlantic cruise liners. The *Majestic* was launched in 1889, while The *Titanic*, which was the biggest ship ever built at that time, was launched in 1912.

Fifteen thousand workers were employed in Belfast shipyards in 1911 and many more found employment with local companies that made materials such as engines and ropes for the shipyards. Belfast's attractiveness to **migrants** seeking work, saw the population of the city soar from 75,308 in 1841 to 387,000 in 1911.

For the first time Belfast's population exceeded that of Dublin which was almost 305,000. The city continued to expand as hundreds of small terraced houses were built for the workers of the busy mills, factories and shipyards.

TOWNS AND CITIES IN SOUTHERN IRELAND

There were stark economic differences between the northern and southern cities in post-Famine Ireland. While some cities and towns in Leinster and Munster had agricultural industries such as brewing, distilling and grain milling, most southern cities tended to be hubs of commerce, transport or administration rather than centres of manufacturing. In the late nineteenth century major port-cities such as Cork became commercial rather than industrial centres where there was an increase in the number of shops selling food, drink and British-imported goods. Smaller post-Famine towns and cities stagnated. Those with populations under 10,000 suffered most severely as many were drawn to Ulster, Britain or America to find work.

DUBLIN

Unlike industrialised Belfast, Dublin was the hub of the country's administration, home of the civil service and the various boards which governed the country. Jacob's Biscuits, Jameson's Whiskey and Guinness's Stout represented the majority of city's manufacturing industry.

In 1900 Dublin was a city of sharp social divisions. The more prosperous southside of the city including the new suburbs of Rathmines, Rathgar, Pembroke and Monkstown were home to the professional, business and administrative **elite**.

As the destination for thousands of famine migrants searching for work, Dublin's population increased by 31% between 1841 and 1911. This led to intense competition for housing among the expanding urban poor. The **dilapidated** Georgian houses in the centre of the city, abandoned by their original owners, were purchased by landlords who converted them into multiple, single-room dwellings. By 1911, there were 26,000 people living in these overcrowded **tenement** buildings in some of the worst **slums** in Europe.

The tenements were neglected by landlords and typically suffered from leaky roofs, sagging ceilings, broken windows, cracked walls and general decay. Tenement life was also dangerous. On 2 September 1913, for example, seven people were killed when two tenement houses in Church Street collapsed. The greatest threat to live, however, was illness. Overcrowding, poor diet and **unsanitary** conditions meant that contagious diseases like **tuberculosis** and dysentery were common and in 1900 Dublin had the highest infant mortality in the United Kingdom.

The large **influx** of migrants also meant that the city had a vast oversupply of **unskilled workers**. As a port city, Dublin was a centre for the distribution of cargo. 7,000 of Dublin's 30,000 unskilled workers were employed on a casual day-to-day basis as dockers or carters. They loaded and unloaded cargo from the ships and distributed it throughout the city. Unemployment rates were sometimes as high as 20% which gave employers enormous power. They paid low wages, hired and fired people at will and **'blacklisted'** workers if they were suspected of organising protests for better pay and conditions.

TASK 1:

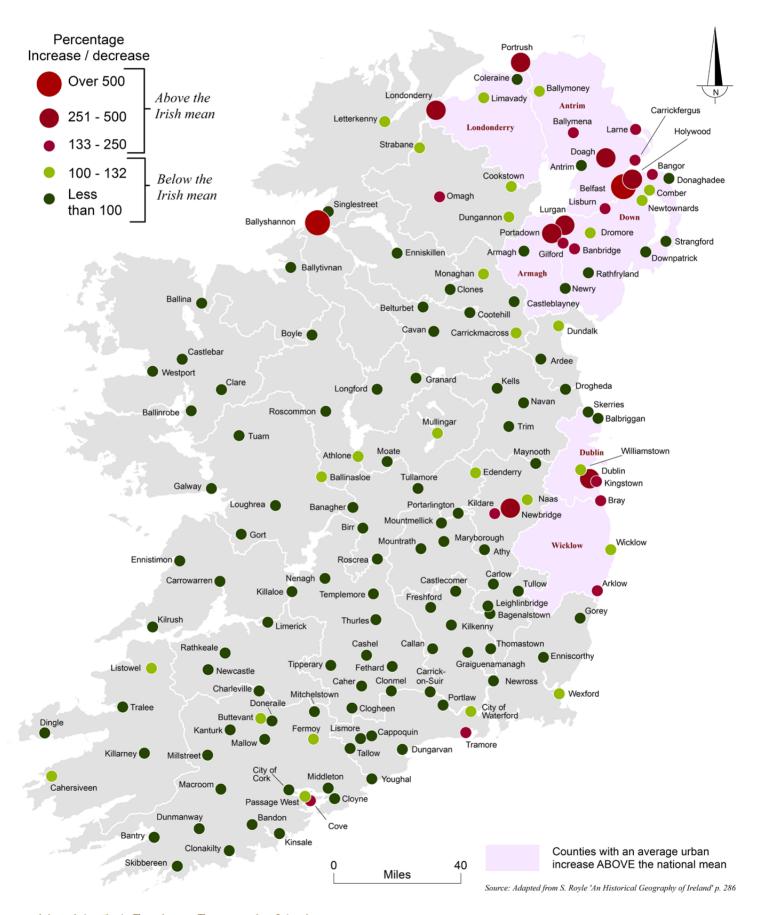
Match the key words from the text with the correct definitions.

(a)	census	(1)	Not hygienic or clean
(b)	Illiterate	(2)	The activity of buying and selling, especially on a large scale
(c)	mortality rates	(3)	An official count or survey of a population
(d)	agriculture	(4)	The management of public affairs
(e)	manufacturing	(5)	People who move from one place to another to find work or better living conditions
(f)	rural	(6)	A room or a set of rooms forming a separate residence within a house
(g)	industrialisation	(7)	Relating to the countryside or county life
(h)	urban	(8)	The number of deaths in a given area or time period
(i)	migrants	(9)	The science or occupation of farming crops or livestock
(j)	commerce	(10)	Relating to a city or town
(k)	administration	(11)	Action taken to deny employment to someone suspected of unacceptable behaviour
(l)	stagnated	(12)	An infectious bacterial disease that affects the lungs
(m)	slums	(13)	A select group that is superior in terms of ability or qualities
(n)	tenement	(14)	Making goods by machinery on a large scale
(o)	unsanitary	(15)	The arrival or entry of large numbers of people or things
(p)	elite	(16)	Large-scale introduction of manufacturing into an area
(q)	influx	(17)	Workers that do not have any special skill or training
(r)	dilapidated	(18)	Unable to read and write
(s)	tuberculosis	(19)	A squalid, overcrowded urban area inhabited by very poor people
(t)	unskilled workers	(20)	To stop developing or moving; to become inactive or dull
(u)	blacklisted	(21)	Something that is in in a state of disrepair or ruin as a result of age or neglect

а	b	С	d	е	f	g	h	i	j	k	ι	m	n	o	р	q	r	S	t	u

- Document A -

Map showing the population of Irish towns in 1911 as a percentage of their 1841 populations



- Document B - Belfast's High Street in the early 1900s



- Document C -Blossom Gate, Kilmallock, County Limerick, 1909

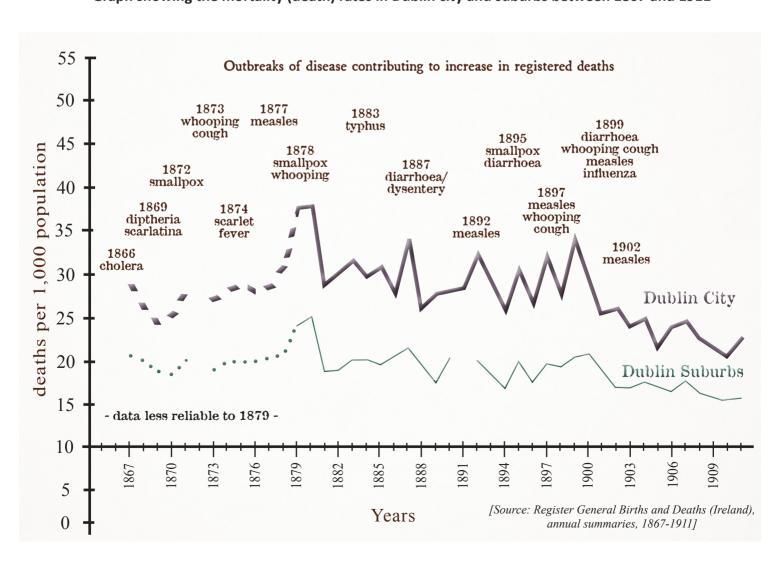


- Document D - Table showing population and housing in Dublin 1821-1911

The table below shows the population of Dublin city between 1821 when the first census was taken, and 1911. Dublin city's boundaries were extended in 1900 when three suburban townships were added.

	Year		Population	Total Houses	Inhabited	Uninhabited	Building
1821			178,603	14,803	14,029	734	40
1831			204,155	17,083	16,042	889	152
1841			232,726	21,771	20,109	1,561	101
1851			258,369	* 24,284	22,224	1,918	122
1861			254,808	* 24,585	* 22,935	1,550	100
1871			246,326	25,042	23,896	1,059	87
1881			249,602	27,587	24,211	3,060	316
1891	•••		245,001	29,368	25,764	3,448	156
1901	•••	5	(a) 260,810	-	26,927	-	- 10 m
		1	(b) 290,638	35,460	32,061	3,195	204
1911		1	(a) 265,649	-	28,406	-	-
		t	(b) 304,802	37,597	35,477	1,934	186
(a	Excludes City ex City in	cludin	tutions ng suburbs ng suburbs		Inqui Classes	rce: Dublin Housing Inquiry into the Housing Condin the City of Dublin, Fishttp://archive.org/details/o	itions of the Workin her & Unwin, Lond

- Document E Graph showing the mortality (death) rates in Dublin city and suburbs between 1867 and 1911





Analysis Questions

Document A

1.	According to the map, what province recorded the highest percentage rise in urban population between 1841 and 1911? (Doc A)
2.	Can you suggest a reason for the rise in population in that province? (Doc A)
3.	Why do you think Cove (Cobh) in Cork experienced an increase in population above the Irish mean (average) during and after the Famine? (Doc A)
4.	What (if any) towns in your own county had a smaller population in 1911 than in 1841? (Doc A)
5.	Do you think that the information in the map backs up the following statement: "Other than in the north-east, the Industrial Revolution did not reach Ireland". Explain your answer.
Do	ocuments B and C
6.	Is there any evidence in the photograph (Doc B) that Belfast was a prosperous city in 1900? Give at least two examples.
7.	Can you find any evidence to suggest that Belfast had strong ties to Britain? (Doc B)
8.	Identify at least three forms of transport used in Belfast in 1900?
9.	Imagine you are standing in Belfast's High Street in the early 1900s. Describe what you hear?



10.	Based on the photograph, what was the main method of transporting goods in the town of Kilmallock in 1909? (<i>Doc C</i>)
11.	Can you find any evidence that Kilmallock was a fairly prosperous commercial town in 1909? (Doc C)
Dod	cument D and E
12.	According to the table, by how much did Dublin's population increase between 1841 and 1851?
13.	Can you suggest why the population increased during those years?
14.	Based on the data in Document B, calculate the increase in Dublin city's population between 1851 and 1911? (including suburbs)
15.	How many new houses were built in Dublin between 1891 and 1911?
16.	What year between 1876 and 1911 saw the highest death rate in Dublin city?
17.	What infectious diseases caused a spike in the death rates in Dublin between 1895 and 1900?
18.	Suggest two reasons why the mortality rates were much higher in the city than in the suburbs.
- 19.	Do you think that Documents D and E would be valuable sources for a historian? Explain your answer.
-	

Edited article from the *Freeman's Journal* of 9 November 1910 giving details of a hearing about the housing conditions of the poor in Dublin

SPECTACLES AND EYEGLASSES

COMBINING

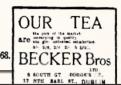
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W. K. Cahill, Optician, "Kitalina Addition of the Communication of the Communication

The Freeman's Tournal

10. 764] IRELAND'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER, 9th, 1910



POLICE COURTS

DUBLIN'S HOUSING PROBLEM

Mr. Mcinerney, K.C., presiding in the Northern Police Court yesterday, addressing Mr. James Brady, solicitor, stated his attention was called to the difficulty the School Attendance Inspectors in Dublin have in getting children to attend school. [This] had its origin in ... the number of ejectments (evictions) which took place weekly ... In connection with this His Worship read the following statement from the annual report of the Dublin School Attendance Committee: ...

"To secure the regular attendance of the children reared under such conditions [in tenements] is not a matter of easy accomplishment, and the task of the inspectors in such surroundings is not an enviable one. They might accomplish their mission if the occupiers of the tenement houses were permanent residents, but the greater proportion of them are A KIND OF FLOAT-ING POPULATION, depending on chance for a living and, unable to pay their weekly rent, are ejected and move to some other district ...



there are upwards of two hundred and fifty ejectments cases disposed of in the police courts weekly.

That, continued His Worship, represented 13,000 persons a year. That only represented individual cases and, of course, involved families and a great number of children. "Is it possible", asked His Worship, "that there is that number of cases?

Mr Brady: - "Well it is, sir, I think, to an extent."

Mr. Macinerney: - "The report of the Public Health Committee gives particulars of the extent to which the tenement system prevails in Dublin". There were 21,702 families in one room each in Dublin. Was that possible?, asked his Worship.

Mr. Brady: - "It is sir, I think ... Many of the ejectments are caused as a consequence of the insanitary conditions of the dwellings. In order to make them sanitary and to comply with the by-laws, the Corporation has issued summonses [to the landlords] for the purpose of having them remedied and the people have to be ejected

I visited the houses and saw exactly the conditions under which the people lived ... the rooms in some of the [large houses] are as big as this court but are divided by partitions ... They all knew that house rent in Dublin is high. If they were able to build on the outskirts of the city cottages for the people, your lordship would be relieved of a great amount of work which has been thrown on you by these ejectment cases. Of course, I dare say landlords endeavour to do the best they can, but unfortunately, the fact remains that these hovels exist. And as long as they exist, there will be crime and everything that follows in its path." Mr. Mcinerney: - "I would like if we could begin to do something ... until the slums are cleared out the city [will] be full of ill-health and disease and crime and drunkenness.

- Document H -

REPOR

Extracts from a report by a Departmental Committee appointed after the Church Street disaster to inquire into the Housing Conditions of the Working Classes in the City of Dublin in 1913

[Source: Dublin Housing Inquiry, (1914), Report of Inquiry into the Housing Conditions of the Working Classes in the City of Dublin, Fisher & Unwin, London]

http://archive.org/details/op1256386-1001

The Report defined tenement houses as follows:

"... houses that (for the most part) were originally built to accommodate and provide for one family and, as a rule, they face a thoroughfare of the city ... [they] are exceedingly old structures, and are more or less in an advanced state of decay ... These tenement houses are to be found all over the city, and quite close to the most fashionable parts, but some areas such as Railway Street, Corporation Street, Cumberland Street, Francis Street, The Coombe, Chamber Street, Cork Street, portion of Gardiner Street, Dominick Street and many others, may be said to be entirely devoted to them".

The Report also divided the tenement houses into three categories:

- Class A: Those which appeared structurally sound. (1,518)
- Class B: Those so decayed as to be on the borderline of being unfit for human habitation. (2,288)
- Class C: Those unfit for human habitation and incapable of begin rendered fit for habitation. (1,518)

It was estimated that 27,052 people resided in Class A houses, 37,552 people lived in Class B houses, and 23,710 lived in Class C houses.

Using testimony from 76 witnesses, their own inspections and information from the Census Returns of 1911, the authors of an enquiry into housing conditions in Dublin in 1914 made the following observations:

63% of the 304,802 people living in Dublin, belonged to the working class.

The total number of labouring class and their dependents in Dublin, (excluding domestic servants) was 194,250 in 1913.

In 1840 there were 353 tenement houses in Dublin city. By 1913, there was a total of 5,322 tenement houses in the city.

45% of the working class population lived in tenement houses. That amounted to 118,000 people or 25,822 families.

Of the 25,822 families living in tenement houses, 20,108 lived in one room.

There was an average of 22 persons per tenement house.

A further 10,000 lived in second and third class housing, and 32,000 lived in dwellings provided by companies and the corporation.

Inspections of tenements by the authors of the report, led to the following observations:

- We visited one house that we found to be occupied by 98 persons, another by 74, and a third by 73.
- The entrance to all tenement houses is by a common door off [the] street, and in most cases the door is never shut, day or night.
- Generally, the only water supply of the house is furnished by a single water tap which is in the yard.
- The common closet [toilet] accommodation is to be found in the yard [and is also used by] ... anyone who likes to come in off the street, and is, of course, common to both sexes. We cannot conceive how any self-respecting male or female could be expected to use accommodation such as we have seen.
- In some cases, the roof of the tenement house appears good in front but the backs of the houses are very dilapidated and almost ruinous.
- The passages, landings and stairs are, in many cases, cramped and narrow and the woodwork defective.
- The floors of the rooms are often out of repair, and ...
 fireplaces in the rooms are small open ones, unsuited for
 general use
- It is no uncommon thing to find halls and landings, yards and closets of the houses in a filthy condition.

- Document I -

Extract from the Bureau of Military History Witness Statement (906) submitted on 8 December 1953 by James Larkin, T.D. His father was James Larkin, founder of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union of Ireland.



BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S.906

Witness: James Larkin T.D.

Dublin of the first decade of the century was not a city to take pride in. It was a city of economic and social degradation ... and for the mass of workers, a city of dire poverty, inhuman housing conditions, and a feeling of living outside the bounds of civilised society. The workers lacked organisations to defend and protect them, they lacked faith in themselves, they lacked leaders of courage and honesty ...

Some 300,000 people lived in Dublin. It was a city of few industries, wherein the people made a livelihood by handling the country's exports and imports, and in the service of the gentry. The old crafts were dying, the craftsmen living in a narrow limited, insecure life, their main hope and purpose to keep themselves above the swarming mass of casual, unskilled workers.

Those 50,000 unskilled workers were dependent on casual work at the docks, in transport and in the building trade and in

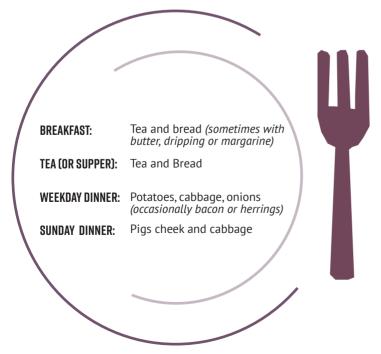
the limited number of factories and workshops. The unskilled worker depended for his few days casual work each week on the favour of the employer, the foremen or the stevedore, and his economic existence and the welfare and security of his family was in the final analysis determined by the slum landlord, the publican and the pawnbroker.

The unskilled workers of the city not only competed among themselves for the available jobs but were under continuous pressure from the never ending influx of labourers from the countryside who with their inherent memories of the Famine, their servility and readiness to work for any wages and under any conditions were a ready means by which the employers could keep any impertinent town worker in his place. For his family the unskilled worker could not provide either decency of living or security for the future, and the outlets for his children were the British Army for his sons and the fortunate chance of a job in "service" for his daughters.

This was the Dublin of the first decade of the twentieth century, a Dublin of brutal, soul destroying poverty; of horrible housing; of disease and ignorance; of inhumanity and slavery; of desperate, helpless unorganised workers...

- Document J-

Typical Weekly Budget and Typical Weekly Diet of unskilled labourers in Dublin in 1913



In the weeks when men could not find work, or fuel prices rose, there was no option but to 'do without'.

RENT	2s 6d
FUEL & LIGHT	2s 0d
Bread	4s 0d
TEA	0s 9d
Sugar	0s 8d
MILK (USUALLY CONDENSED)	0s 6d
BUTTER (DRIPPING, MARGARINE)	1s 6d
POTATOES OR OTHER VEGETABLES	1s 0d
MEAT/ FISH/ BACON	2s 0d
Total	14s 11
Weekly Wages	18s 0d
BALANCE	3s 1d



ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

Document G 1. Is the *Freeman's Journal* article a primary or a secondary source? 2. Other than the threat of disease, what difficulties did the children of tenement families face in 1910? (Doc G) 3. What two official documents did Mr Brady and Mr McInerney use as evidence during the court proceedings? 4. How many eviction cases did the police hear every week during 1910? 5. Why did Mr McInerney want to clear out the slums? **Document H** 6. For what purpose was Document H created? 7. According to Document H, what areas of Dublin city were most heavily populated by tenements? 8. Based on the evidence in Document H, calculate the percentage of the tenement population living in houses that were deemed 'unfit for human habitation' in 1913. 7. Document H is very factual, but is there any evidence of the authors' opinion in the report? 8. Based on documents G and H choose three adjectives that best describe life in a Dublin tenement, 1911-1913. **Document I** 9. According to James Larkin, what 3 things did the workers lack in the first decade of the century?

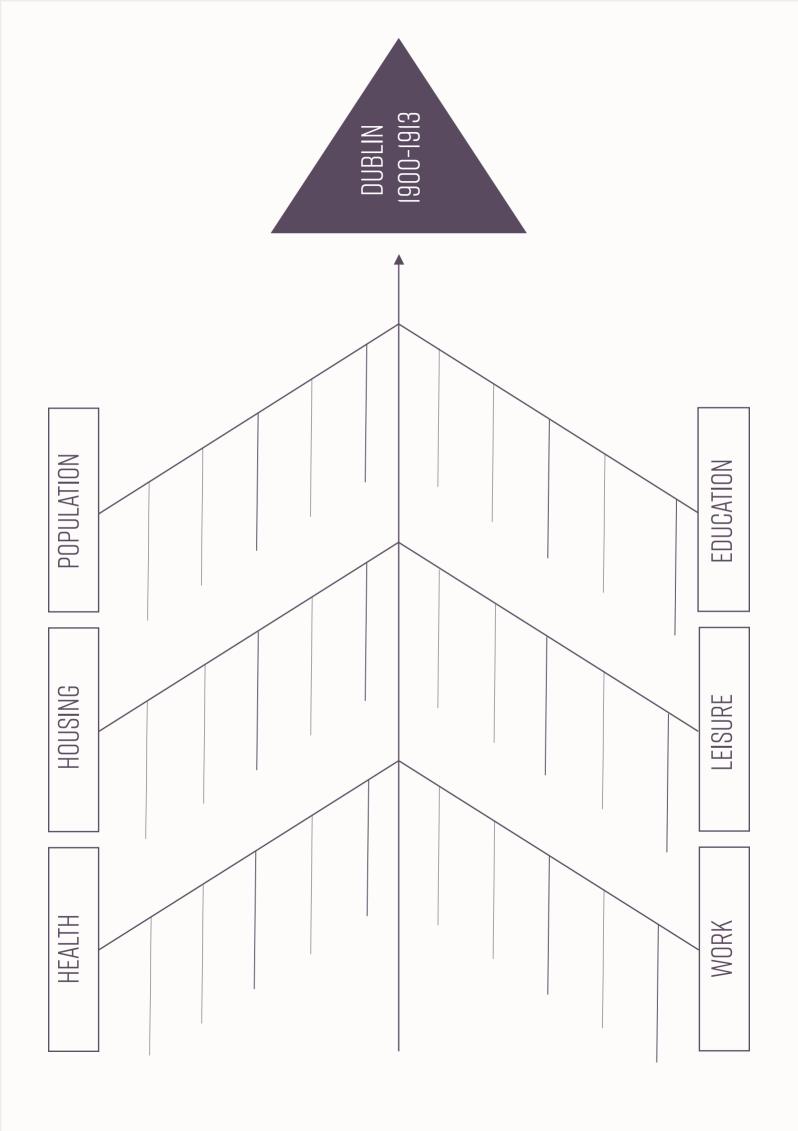
10. Where might the unskilled/casual labourers find work in Dublin?

	reasons why the life of a casual labourer in Dublin in 1910 was difficult. (Doc I)
12. Do you tl and 1910	hink that James Larkin felt strongly about the social conditions in Dublin between 1900 0? Provide evidence from the Document I in your answer?
Documen	as the typical wage of an unskilled worker in Dublin in 1913?
14. How wo	ould you describe the diet of the unskilled worker and his family in 1913?
	SK 1:
Your Ta	ASK 1:

- Step 1: Using the documents in this worksheet for inspiration, think of a picture that sums up the conditions of the working poor in Dublin in 1913.
- Step 2: Create the image. It might be a drawing, a photograph, collage or a computer-generated image.
- Step 3: Paste the imagine into the Instagram template in this worksheet,

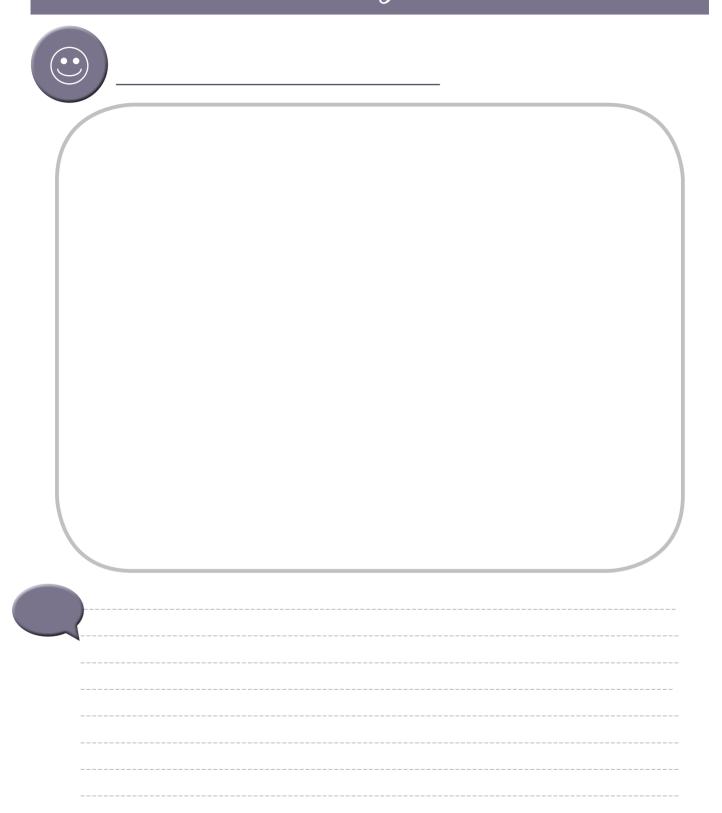
tenement districts taking photographs of different people, places and things.

- Step 4: Add a caption and two hashtags
- Step 5: Share your instagram with at least three other students who will provide a comment/ feedback on your post.



Instagram















YOUR TASK 3

During 2013, the centenary of the 1913 Strike and lockout, No. 14, Henrietta Street was given new life as a tourist attraction. *The Dublin Tenement Experience* allowed visitors to experience tenement life in all its squalor. Actors from ANU productions provided what the *Irish Times* called 'an incredible, emotional' glimpse into the life of two families during the 1913 Lockout.'

14 Henrietta Street

This year, a new production company plans to build on and expand the original project. Your class has been asked to assist with the research by extracting information from the 1911 census. When the census was taken, the Georgian buildings on Henrietta Street on the north side of Dublin, once home to the city's wealthy lawyers, were multi-occupancy tenement dwellings. The fifteen houses on the street contained 835 people about whom the census contains detailed information. The transcriptions, original returns per household and statistical forms can be found at:

http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/Inns_Quay/Henrietta_Street/

PART 1. BASE GROUPS

- Step 1: Your teacher will organise the class into groups of four. Each group will be assigned four of the seventeen households/families in No 14, Henrietta Street in 1911.
- Step 2: Using the link above, access the census returns for No 14 Henrietta Street in 1911 and locate your four assigned households.
- Step 3: Each member of the group should take responsibility for **one** of the households and take note of the number of rooms occupied, the number of people, their names, ages, gender, places of birth, religion and occupations.
- Step 4: Working together, the group should examine all of the data relating to their four households to identify:
 - a. The household with the highest number of rooms
 - b. The household with the highest number of people living in the fewest rooms
 - c. The total number of children (under age fifteen) in the four households
 - d. The total number of people over sixty in the four households
 - e. The two most common occupations
 - f. The most common religion
 - q. The total number of people born outside of Dublin city.
 - h. Any other interesting or surprising facts

PART 2. EXPERT GROUPS

- Step 5: The teacher will reorganise the class into new expert groups of 5/6 students.
- Step 6: Each member of the expert group should originate from a different base group, bringing the calculations (a) (h) with them.
- Step 7: Comparing the data of all group members, make the same calculations as before for all of the households in 14, Henrietta Street.
- Step 8: Expert groups should also record at least one interesting or surprising fact about the tenement building and its inhabitants discovered during their research.
- Step 9: A spokesperson for each group will feed back their findings to the class.
- Step 10: As a class, discuss which three families you represent in the new theatre production in No 14 Henrietta Street and why.

PART 3. INDIVIDUAL CHALLENGE

Step 11: The last step in this task is an individual challenge.

Design a poster advertising the new historical production at 14, Henrietta Street.

Use the graphic (Document K) on the next page as the centrepiece for your poster.

The poster should also include:



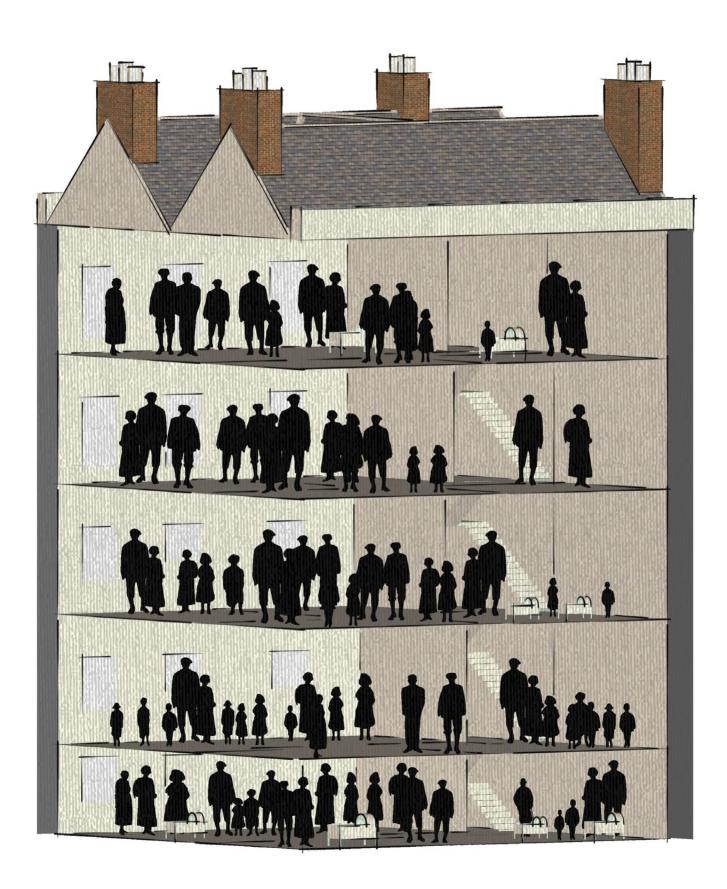
The dates and times of the performances	9
The entry fee	
The names of the historical families/households depicted in	the production
At least three facts about life in a Dublin tenement in 1911	

Any other text/graphics that will persuade/ encourage an audience to attend

- Document K -

The Crowded Conditions in No. 14 Henrietta Street, 1911

The once grand Georgian building housed seventeen families ranging in size from two to eleven people. Each of the 100 people listed in the 1911 census is represented by a silhouette



Using the documents in this worksheet as your source material, write an account of a day in the life of a young person living in No. 14 Henrietta Street in 1911. The brainstorm template below will help you to plan your essay.

