

Teaching matters

Articles and opinions on primary teaching, with tips and ideas for the classroom

1916 initiatives on Scoilnet

Engaging pupils beyond facts

The Easter Rising of 1916 is getting a lot of attention in our classrooms as well as the national media. For the month of January, 9 of the 10 most clicked-on resources on the Scoilnet portal site related to the theme of the Easter Rising. While the events of 1916 are important to study, it is also important that we take our pupils beyond the facts and engage with the skills of working as an historian. Scoilnet has developed a number of initiatives as part of the DES response to 1916 that will do just that while also helping to engage the attention and imagination of children so that they may understand the events of 100 years ago.



The Irish flag

www.scoilnet.ie/irishflag

This site traces the evolution of the Irish tricolour flag through a series of stories also presented in a timeline. Starting in the 1840's, the stories begin with Thomas Meagher and move through the revolutionary period of 1916 to 1922 before examining how the flag was adopted as our national flag and how it is interpreted in arts and culture. With over 17,000 words the site is not short of content and follows months of research by retired post primary teacher, Dr Pat Callan.

To make it applicable to primary classes, a series of specific lesson plans have been written for the site by Susan Kenny

(Corpus Christi Primary, Moyross) that link with the SESE and SPHE curriculums. The lesson plans cover – The story of the tricolour; the events that led to Ireland having its own flag; protocol around the flag; the flag as a symbol of pride; walking debate where children 'agree' or 'disagree' with specific statements about the flag.



Proclamation for a new generation

www.scoilnet.ie/proclamationtemplate

The object of this project is to help pupils gain an understanding of The Proclamation through an 'action learning' project which invites schools to write a new proclamation for 2016, that reflects the values and aspirations of the current generation.

Schools may choose to write one proclamation for the whole school or have each class create its own. One of these proclamations can be added to the Scoilnet site and all proclamations submitted will be publicly available to view.

Each school submitting a proclamation will need to nominate a teacher who will log onto a secure section of Scoilnet with their Scoilnet account. Once logged on, a link to add the proclamation will be obvious on their Scoilnet dashboard. The teacher will cut and paste the agreed text into a form, which will generate the schools' proclamation.

Each new proclamation should be of a maximum length of 600 words. It can be written in Gaeilge, English, or in any other

language spoken or studied in the school.

A copy of the schools' proclamation will be available to download in PDF format.

Ancestry project

www.scoilnet.ie/duchas

Schools are invited to engage in a project that traces a family tree back to 1916. This is intended to give students a real experience of researching archival material and to afford them an opportunity to find out more about the conditions in which people lived in 1916. This project has links to a number of curricular areas, including SPHE, SESE history and SESE geography.

The project can focus on a family tree of a student, group of students, past student, teacher, principal, a local community figure or anyone else considered appropriate. It is a matter for schools and teachers to determine which figures are appropriate for selection.

Students' 1916 ancestry projects can be uploaded to Scoilnet by any teacher using a Scoilnet account. In order to upload, the projects need to be saved as either a PDF or a PowerPoint and there is a generous file size limit of 50mb. As the projects will be universally accessible on the web teachers need to be mindful of copyright – especially in relation to the use of images.

There is no school limit to the number of projects that can be uploaded and all projects will be searchable by school.

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