

Unit 17 Divided Ireland: why has it been so hard to achieve peace in Ireland?

About the unit

This unit introduces pupils to aspects of the political history of Ireland in the twentieth century. It considers the causes of the partition of Ireland, and how key events in Irish history have been interpreted and represented in different ways by the two communities. The reasons for the outbreak of violence in 1968–9 and the subsequent peace moves are also examined.

This unit is expected to take 8–11 hours. There is scope to adjust some of the teaching activities to take account of time constraints in different schools.

Where the unit fits in

Some links can be made with unit 8 ‘The civil wars’ and unit 9 ‘From Glorious Revolution to the ’45’ that cover aspects of British history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Use of visual sources is also covered by unit 7 ‘Images of an age’ and unit 15 ‘Black peoples of America’.

Expectations

At the end of this unit

most pupils will: demonstrate knowledge of how Ireland was divided in the twentieth century and how within Northern Ireland there were two communities, each of which contained hostile elements; through the evaluation of sources begin to analyse the different ways the two communities in Northern Ireland interpret and represent the distant past; describe links between aspects of seventeenth-century history and modern attitudes; establish a chronologically accurate account of the political crisis in Ireland 1912–22; describe the causes of the partition of Ireland; explain some of the causes of the outbreak of violence in Northern Ireland 1968–9; produce a well-structured answer to the key question

some pupils will not have made so much progress and will: use sources to demonstrate knowledge of some of the differences between the two communities in Northern Ireland in the twentieth century and some of the ways they view the past; identify some links between distant history and modern attitudes; correctly match descriptions of cause and effect relating to the political crisis in Ireland 1912–22; describe some of the motives that led Lloyd George to partition Ireland; combine information from different sources when producing extended writing

some pupils will have progressed further and will: demonstrate detailed knowledge of aspects of twentieth-century political history in Ireland and Northern Ireland, including partition and its consequences; evaluate and use sources of information to analyse the way modern communities interpret and represent the distant past; describe links between aspects of seventeenth-century history and modern attitudes; explain why there was a political crisis in Ireland 1912–22; explain the complex and interrelated causes of the partition of Ireland and the outbreak of violence in Northern Ireland 1968–9; select, organise and use relevant information when writing a well structured answer to the key question

Prior learning

It is helpful if pupils have:

- studied some aspects of Irish history in their work on 1066–1900
- considered questions of interpretation, causation and significance
- made links across historical periods

Language for learning

Through the activities in this unit pupils will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- the political history of Ireland, *eg Nationalist, Unionist, Catholic, Protestant, civil rights, minority, human rights*

Speaking and listening – through the activities pupils could:

- follow an argument, demonstration, etc, making notes which are then used in another task

Reading – through the activities pupils could:

- pick out useful information and critically evaluate how the whole piece is presented
- recognise the author’s standpoint and how it affects the meaning

Writing – through the activities pupils could:

- structure paragraphs to develop points, by using evidence, additional facts
- organise content into complete text with the relationship between points/paragraphs clearly signalled

Resources

Resources include:

- pictures of political wall paintings from Northern Ireland
- information sheets on aspects of seventeenth-century history
- demographic data on the proportion of Catholics and Protestants in different parts of Ireland on the eve of partition
- video, library books, and ICT resources relating to the causes of the 1968–9 crisis
- children's version of the UN Declaration of Human Rights
- ICT: timeline software to be used to allow pupils to organise their knowledge of events and people and provide relevant commentary
- websites provide vivid examples of the various organisations' differing interpretations of events, eg <http://larkspirit.com>; wwwvms.utexas.edu/~jdana/irehist.html; www.grandorange.org.uk; www.fait.org/

Out-of-school learning

There are opportunities for pupils to carry out further research using local libraries, television programmes and newspapers.

Future learning

This unit could prepare pupils for aspects of GCSE History. Aspects of this unit will complement the work on twentieth-century conflicts in unit 18 'Twentieth-century conflicts'.

Why is the past so important to some people in Ireland?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some of the key features defining the two communities in Northern Ireland and their traditions • some key events from Irish history • to show that these events are represented and interpreted differently by each community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine and discuss political wall paintings from Northern Ireland. Ask pupils to identify what they do and do not understand about the paintings. Ask pupils to identify any evidence that the past is important to those who produced the wall paintings. • Provide and discuss factsheet on Nationalists and Unionists, giving simple information about aims, views, key ideas and symbols of each community. • Return to the study of the wall paintings and ask pupils to use the factsheets to identify whether each painting is from a Nationalist or Unionist area and to identify some historical characters/events/symbols that seem important to each community. • Ask pupils to consider why seventeenth-century events are still important to some people in Ireland today. Tell the story of the Plantation of Ulster. Provide information and sources on the massacres at Portadown 1641 and Drogheda 1649. Tell pupils that each event is still remembered with bitterness today. Ask them to work out which community has bitter memories of which event and how they chose to represent these events. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know that past history plays an important role in defining the two communities in Northern Ireland • understand that different groups represent and interpret the past differently | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities in this unit would particularly lend themselves to group discussion and explanatory talk. • Citizenship: important links with the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the UK and the need for mutual respect and understanding. Pupils also think about issues when analysing information and its sources. • A timeline would help to give a chronological framework to this unit. • An alternative starting point for this unit might be to tell the story of someone who is significant for both communities, eg <i>St Patrick</i>, <i>Cuchulainn</i>, or a controversial figure, eg <i>Oliver Cromwell</i>, <i>William of Orange</i>, and explore how the character is viewed by the two communities. • Key skills: these activities will provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate evidence of problem solving (analysing interpretations of history). • ICT: timeline software could be used. Images could be 'marked' or 'clipped' and pupils could annotate the images to explain their interpretations. A good source of images is www.ms.utexas.edu/~jdana/history/images.html |
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Why was Ireland partitioned?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to explain the role that key events and key individuals had in the partition of Ireland • to consider an event with complex causation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a timeline move quickly from the seventeenth century to the early twentieth century. • Provide a card sorting relating to the crisis in Ireland 1912–22. The cards are pairs, one an event, the other a cause, <i>eg Irish Home Rule Bill – Carson and UVF prepare to fight, execution of Easter rebel leaders – increased support for Sinn Féin</i>. The card sort establishes the existence of two armed hostile communities and the dilemma facing Lloyd George as British Prime Minister. • Having sorted pairs, pupils arrange them in chronological order. Discuss the reactions of the two communities at each stage of the developing crisis. Pupils could write out the reactions of Unionists and Nationalists on blank cards and match them up to the paired cards as a way of structuring this activity. • Pupils look at sources describing the violence of 1919–21. Ask pupils to use sources and information from the card sort to explain why Lloyd George decided that partition was necessary. • Pupils look at a map of Ulster with the percentage of Catholics and Protestants in each county and large town. Ask pupils to put themselves in the position of Lloyd George and decide where the line should be drawn. Compare these recommendations with what actually happened. • Ask pupils to summarise their findings on the reasons why Ireland was divided and to present findings on an annotated map of divided Ireland. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make links between events and the effect of these on the Unionists and Nationalists • explain the causes of partition • evaluate the role played by Lloyd George on partition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first activity aims to give pupils a sufficient background to twentieth-century Ireland without focusing on the events in great detail, although some teachers might wish to highlight any which have particular relevance to their pupils. • Language for learning: this is designed to help pupils develop skills of sorting, selecting and classifying information as a basis for discursive writing. Pupils pick out useful information from sources, critically evaluate it, recognising the author's standpoint and how it affects meaning. When following the discussion, pupils can make notes, which can be used in another task. • Citizenship: links with pupils work on the importance of resolving conflict fairly and thinking about, expressing and explaining views that are not their own. |
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Why were there violent protests in Northern Ireland in 1968–9?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about human and civil rights, how they work in practice, particularly issues of minority rights • about the main points of the UN Declaration of Human Rights • to analyse and evaluate the causes of the 1968–9 crisis in Northern Ireland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show pictures or video of demonstrations of 1968–9. Describe the short-term build-up to the violence that was used against the demonstrators, establishing Catholic/Nationalist support for the Civil Rights movement and Protestant/Unionist opposition. • Supply population figures by religious belief: Protestants and Catholics in Ireland; Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. <i>How can both groups in Northern Ireland feel threatened as a minority?</i> • Distribute a children's version of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Give out information sheets (data and sources) about discriminatory practices against Catholics in employment, education, housing, law and police, elections. Ask the pupils to work in small groups and identify which human right was infringed by which practice. Ask pupils to use this information to explain why many Catholics supported the Civil Rights movement. • Provide information about international developments in the 1960s, particularly the Civil Rights movement in the USA. Ask the pupils to identify any links between events in the USA and the emergence of the Civil Rights movement in Northern Ireland. • Ask the pupils to explain why many Protestants felt threatened in 1968–9 and were hostile to the Civil Rights movement. Ask them to recall knowledge from previous activities that explains Protestant fears. • Provide information on developments in the Free State/Republic of Ireland 1922–68. Ask the pupils to work out why some Protestants felt threatened by these developments. • Class discussion on why there was an explosion of violence in Northern Ireland 1968–9. Focus discussion on long- and short-term causes, links between causes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know what human and civil rights are and how they work in practice, particularly issues of minority rights • make links between Civil Rights movements around the world • explain several of the events in the 1960s that led to the crisis of 1968–9 • make links between the events and the history of Ireland • show an understanding of the complexity of the causes of the 1968–9 crisis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are available from UNESCO. • There are clearly links not only with the Civil Rights movement in the USA but also topics such as South Africa and the widespread unrest of the year 1968. Links to more contemporary situations could also be made. • Key skills: these activities will provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate evidence of problem solving (linking causes of events, drawing on previous work in order to do so). • ICT: pupils could use a spreadsheet application of Irish and Northern Irish population data. They could use the spreadsheet functions to test out some 'what if' scenarios of population increase. Pupils could interpret graphs and annotate them to explain why both groups feel they are a minority. |
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Why has it been so hard to achieve peace in Ireland?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about the key events in Northern Ireland 1968–98 • that peace movements were initiated from a variety of sources • about the outcomes of the different peace movements • to select, organise and use relevant information to produce a well-structured narrative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline key events from 1968 to 1998, possibly using a timeline and photographs, short video extracts, etc, to help pupils follow the narrative. • Tell the pupils that there were a number of peace moves during this period: some the result of government initiative (GB, Republic of Ireland and USA), some initiatives of private individuals, eg <i>Senator Gordon Wilson</i>, and some church initiatives, eg <i>Corrymeala Community</i>. • Put the pupils into groups and ask each group to research one different peace movement. Agree a structure for their research <i>What prompted the peace initiative? What did the movement do? What was the immediate effect of the movement? What was the long-term outcome for peace?</i> • Ask each group to present its findings to the class. This could be in any form, eg <i>a wall display, role play or a staged television interview</i>. • Discuss a structure for an answer to the question <i>Why has it been so hard to achieve peace in Ireland?</i> Build on the way they approached the work on the partition of Ireland earlier in the unit. • Ask the pupils to write a structured answer. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of the key events in Northern Ireland 1968–98 • demonstrate an understanding of the reasons for, and the outcomes of, a range of peace movements • present a reasoned discursive essay that draws on relevant knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language for learning: most pupils will have sufficient experience to enable them to write in the appropriate style and avoid narrative, but some may need help with keywords to link paragraphs and sentences. Paragraphs should be structured to develop points, by using evidence, additional facts. Pupils should organise content into a coherent account with the relationship between paragraphs clearly signalled. • Emphasise that republican and loyalist paramilitaries used violence but also that members of both communities explored non-violent resolutions of the conflict. • An additional activity for the end of the unit could be to give pupils several reasons (on cards) for studying aspects of the history of Ireland and to get them to select which reasons they see as the most important. This activity could be used to explore the relevance and wider significance of history. |
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