

JUNIOR
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NOTES

A new History Specification for Junior Cycle Students was introduced in schools in September 2018. The links between an exploration of Shannon Heritage sites and the Junior Cycle History Specification are concentrated on Strand 1 and Strand 2 of the History Specification. Teaching and learning is planned around engagement with a series of Learning Outcomes (available at www.curriculumonline.ie) which highlights both the skills a historian develops and the History of both Ireland and the Wider World. Students will for the first time now complete Classroom Based Assessments; one in 2nd Year (The Past in My Place) and another in 3rd Year (A Life in Time). Engaging with the History specification both in school and by considering repositories of historical information, is now a central part of the curriculum, making the work of bodies like Shannon Heritage even more important than ever before.

The notes below are suggestions for teachers who wish to plan around the sites mentioned in this publication.

Having looked at Strand 1 Learning Outcome 1.1 (on developing a sense of historical empathy by viewing people, issues and events encountered in their study of the past in their historical context) and Learning Outcome 1.3 (on appreciating cultural inheritance through recognising historically significant places and buildings): this context and sense of place is provided by visiting the Bunratty Castle and Folk Park and encountering historically accurate representations of Irish life over generations, particularly in the 19th and 20th centuries. Learning Outcome 2.7 asks students to investigate the causes, course and consequences, nationally and internationally, of the Great Famine, and examine the significance of the Irish Diaspora, and visiting pre-famine dwellings in the Folk Park could further support learning around this period in a visceral way. The changing experience of women in 20th Century Ireland (Learning Outcome 2.9) is yet another area where students could see for themselves the work done by women a century ago in Bunratty.



Bunratty Castle and Folk Park: a National Monument Gets the Junior Cycle Treatment

BY EOIN SHINNERS, PRINCIPAL, LIMERICK EDUCATE TOGETHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

In January 2019, Limerick Educate Together Secondary School partnered with Shannon Heritage to develop a project/theme-based learning initiative which saw teachers and students collaborate across different subjects on a common theme – Bunratty Castle and Folk Park. Project-based learning (PBL) prepares students for academic and career success, and readies young people to rise to the challenges of their lives and the world they will inherit. It provides schools

with a framework for project work over an extended period of time that engages students in solving a real-world problem or answering a complex question.

Teachers designed a framework that used Bunratty Castle and Folk Park as a starting point. Education is a key pillar of Shannon Heritage's engagement strategy providing a natural environment for children and young people to learn from its custodial and curatorial role. This in turn helps to reinforce and stimulate curiosity and imagination for local and wider environment. When Shannon Heritage approached us about engaging with the Junior Cycle curriculum using the historic Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, it was a no-brainer really.

The Bunratty Project demonstrated the potential for a school to look beyond the traditional curriculum and dig a little deeper. Students were assigned various tasks, many of which were blended or integrated with different subjects. Students in Limerick ETSS do not look at subjects in isolation. They use project-based learning approaches to integrate the curriculum and identify commonalities via Junior Cycle learning outcomes.

For example, during the Bunratty Project, we witnessed

- » History students studying the defensive features of the castle
- » Geography students examining features of a meandering river from the turrets of the castle.
- » Music students engaged in a music



Students having fun at Bunratty Castle

workshop with the World Famous Bunratty Castle Entertainers

- » Home Economics students tested their skill in the art of 19th Century bread-making with the Bean an Tí.
- » Science students gathered and tested soil samples
- » Woodwork students were researching the types of indigenous trees in the adjacent woodland.
- » Business students were profiling the tourist industry and its effect on the community of Bunratty.
- » Art students were engaged in a photography task.

Project-based learning helps students to develop deep content knowledge as well as critical thinking, creativity and communication skills in the context of doing an authentic, meaningful project. This type of teaching and learning initiative has unleashed a contagious, creative energy among the



Left: students and staff of Limerick Educate Together Secondary School; top: Entertainer Chris Rowley, Carrie Carrol, Niall O'Callaghan, MD Shannon Heritage; Jack Flanagan, Eoin Shinnars and entertainer Triona Walsh.

students and teachers. We are on point with the vision of the Junior Cycle and how it advocates for a balance between knowledge, skills and understanding in the curriculum. We have only scratched the surface of learning potential from Bunratty Castle and Folk Park and look forward to visiting its neighbours Craggaunowen and King John's Castle.

To book a Junior Cycle tour of any Shannon Heritage attraction, email reservations@shannonheritage.com or contact 061 711222

About Limerick Educate Together Secondary School (ETSS): As the city's newest secondary school, it is breaking ground in terms of how it approaches teaching and learning both in the classroom but more significantly, beyond it. Teachers are driven by three fundamental principles which underpin the vision and ethos of the school – curiosity, creativity and diversity. This leads to impressive student collaboration and innovation.

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When planning to make connections and comparisons between people, issues and events in different places and historical eras (Learning Outcome 1.11) consider the evolving History of a site like King John's Castle in Limerick. Looking at siege, conquest and settlement of centuries would also encourage consideration of Learning 1.5 and the interpretation of evidence, and of course the ability to develop historical judgements and show awareness of historical significance (Learning Outcome 1.7) would be underpinned by consideration of the relationship between the Castle and its surroundings. The Castle would also allow teachers and students to consider Learning Outcome 3.6 on life and death in medieval society. This medieval setting, in the middle of a city, might allow planning to look at Learning Outcome 2.1 on patterns of Irish settlement.

Music Workshops!

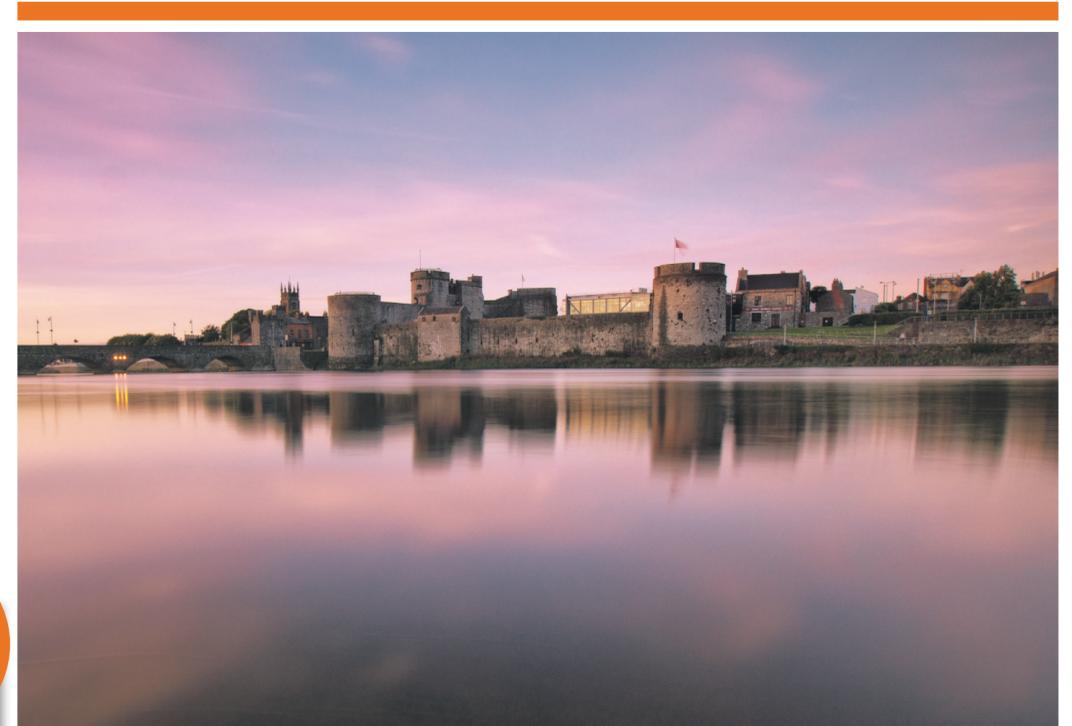
The world-famous Bunratty Castle entertainers have been industry leaders in their ensemble singing and instrumental performance since the establishment of the banquets in 1963 and have performed to over 5.5 million visitors. From Spring 2019 this troupe of highly qualified and experienced musicians are delivering workshops to children and young people. These take place between the Education Suite in the Folk Park and the Great Hall of Bunratty Castle. The two-hour sessions focus on the main strands of the music curriculum which are:

- » Listening and Responding
- » Performing
- » Composing.

Bringing this experience to children and young people is a truly unique and wonderful



opportunity. Using voice as the principal instrument, groups explore active music making in collaboration with the singers and musicians of the castle. Why learn about the great Irish harpist Turlough O'Carolan in a book when you can experience his music first hand? Determine the difference between a madrigal and a ballet and learn about the various Irish composers who have arranged music for the entertainers.



Limerick's treasure: King John's Castle

King John's Castle is amongst the most authentic 13th-century castles in Ireland. Built in a style that was quite radical for the era, it was the seat of a garrison until as late as 1922 when the last British soldiers marched out of the barracks in its courtyard. Today archaeologists have revealed many of the castle's secrets and its visitor centre has been revitalized as one of the most exciting attractions in Ireland.

The castle may well be the most contested fortress in Ireland and has endured more than its fair share of assaults and sieges. As the key to the crossing of the lower River Shannon and the citadel of the strategic city of Limerick, it has often stood at the hinge of Irish History. Generations of warriors and soldiers – from Norman knight to English archer to the musketeers and pikemen of the 17th-century – have made their homes within the battered fabric of its walls. All

have contributed to the legends and tales of heroism that are its legacy.

There is some debate whether King John's Castle is the appropriate name for this great fortress, especially since the monarch never visited Limerick. Most of the wall and towers, indeed, were not built until the reigns of the later English monarchs Henry III and Edward I. Surely, you could argue, it would be better called Limerick Castle because it played such a significant role in the city's turbulent history. Yet there are very few buildings in Ireland that are more deserving of recognition for their uniqueness. There is a resonance to the name King John's Castle that immediately conjures up images of medieval knights and stalwart spearmen mingling in the courtyard.

Today the castle is home to some of Ireland's most innovative and imaginative

historical exhibitions. The displays in the restored towers and the courtyard offer an interactive insight in the lives of the soldiers and craftsmen who made the castle what it was, while the modern visitor centre brings history to life through computer technology that would have been unimaginable even a few decades ago. The castle visit is as educational as it is enjoyable, and as appealing to children as it is to adults.

King John's Castle offers a range of educational tours from national school to third-level. In June 2019 we have adventure activities in the courtyard. Please contact reservations@shannonheritage.com or call 061 711222

* Extract from publication 'King John's Castle – A Pictorial Guide'.

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A visit to Craggaunowen would compliment teaching and learning around several Learning Outcomes from Strand 1. Learning Outcomes 1.5 (on the job of the historian, including how s/he finds and uses evidence to form historical judgements which may be revised and reinterpreted in the light of new evidence) might be considered when looking at the evolving view of pre-history in Ireland. 1.6 (on the usefulness and limitations of different types of primary and secondary sources of historical evidence, such as written, visual, aural, oral and tactile evidence; and appreciate the contribution of archaeology and new technology to historical enquiry) could compliment the developing view students have of archaeology in particular and 1.11 (on making connections and comparisons between people, issues and events in different places and historical eras) would underline the changing role of place like the Co. Clare site over many generations. As Craggaunowen is also home to Tim Severin's Brendan Voyage boat, links could be made to the Specification's reference to early Christian Ireland (Learning Outcome 2.6).



Craggaunowen: A Monument to The Bronze Age

Craggaunowen, in County Clare, offers an opportunity to experience everyday life during the Pre-Historic and early Christian periods in Ireland through its reconstructed and restored dwelling houses, farm sheds, hunting sites and many other period features. The concept was the idea of the late John Hunt, who was an advisor to Sotheby's in Medieval Art, and was described by art magazine The Connoisseur as 'one of the best known medievalists in Europe'. John Hunt bought the land at Craggaunowen, restored the castle, and began the construction of a modern museum display, including the reconstructed crannog and ringfort. He eventually gave the complex, with hope for its future development, to the Irish people.

THE BRENDAN VOYAGE
They say Columbus discovered America but Tim Severin would disagree. In June 1977 he landed at Peckford Island, Newfoundland having left Bandon, Co. Cork in May 1976. He travelled in a tiny, leather skinned wooden

boat, built using techniques and materials available in 6th Century Ireland. Mr Severin and his crew of 5 used the 1,200 year old Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis (The Voyage of St Brendan the Abbot) as their guide proving that St Brendan could indeed have discovered America 900 years before Christopher Columbus.

HISTORY BROUGHT TO LIFE THROUGH THE POWER OF NEW MEDIA
A modern story-telling platform is set to take primary school students across the country to the heart of Irish life over 1,000 years ago. Titled, the 'Tales of Craggaunowen,' the new digital education pack will bring students back to an era where survival was success in Ireland.

The programme will transfer to video the living history experience that unfolds at Craggaunowen. The Co. Clare visitor attraction is an award winning ancient Celtic settlement that offers unique attractions such



History: Steffan Leszywnsky giving a Wattle and Daub demonstration

as a restored Ringfort, Crannóg and medieval castle plus a team of enthusiastic animators who re-enact various activities from days gone by. The series dramatises the 'Living Past' experience that unfolds at Craggaunowen Park and Heritage Centre. Held on a USB or available to download, these videos will transport viewers into bygone eras, giving them an understanding of life in prehistoric and medieval Ireland. Students will gain a fascinating insight into real life experiences such as warfare, weaving, story-telling,

hunting, ancient construction techniques and farming. Pauline Lenihan, site manager at Craggaunowen, explains: "These videos bring this magnificent open-air Museum and the world that our ancestors inhabited all those centuries ago to life."

For more information and to book your tour of Craggaunowen visit www.shannonheritage.com. To book your class for a tour, please email reservations@shannonheritage.com or call 061 711222. Open from April to September.

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Malahide Castle and Newbridge House are intricately linked with the local communities and people which brings links with Learning Outcome 2.11 (on connecting local, personal or family history and wider national and/or international personalities, issues and events). Indeed, it is possible to plan for links between any of these sites and Learning Outcome 2.11. Students might demonstrate chronological awareness by creating and maintaining timelines to locate personalities, issues and events in their appropriate historical eras at these sites (Learning Outcome 1.10).



Malahide Castle and Gardens

School tour packages at Malahide Castle and Gardens and Newbridge House and Farm combine stimulating guided tours with energetic outdoor activities for various age groups.

At Malahide, explore the 800-year-old castle, hear tales of battles and banquets, and learn more about the infamous castle ghosts



with a guided tour designed specifically for primary school students.

There's plenty of fresh air to be had on the West Lawn as younger students complete

the magical woodland Fairy Trail, or see how many of the 20 different species of butterfly they can spot in Ireland's only Butterfly House.

Newbridge House and Farm

Newbridge House and Farm is tucked away on 365 acres of green parkland in Donabate, north county Dublin. Over 300 years old, the Georgian mansion is full of secrets and stories which our dedicated tour guides are waiting to share with your class. This traditional working farm is full of surprises from new born animals in spring to farm machinery of olden days. The award winning courtyard is an example of Victorian living and the working forge is an exciting place to see.

Visit the hatchery and see the chicks as they hatch, or go to the pond and see our ducks and swans as they splash around in their home. Our farm has almost every traditional breed of Irish horse and you can see them in the paddocks as they enjoy their day.

The traditional farm is home to pigs, goats, ducks, horses, donkeys, chicks, and of course birds and peacocks. Newbridge Farm is a working farm promoting compassionate farming methods, respect for all animals and sustainable biodiversity. These are important lessons which we are excited to share with our young visitors through the brand new interpretive area. Your school tour is self-guided and will take in all aspects of the farm. Enjoy a picnic in the walled garden. In the park and nearby playground there's plenty of room to run around, enjoy a picnic lunch and burn off some energy with outdoor activities.

For more information and to book your tour of Newbridge House and Farm or Malahide Castle, please email reservations@shannonheritage.com or call 061 711222



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Consideration of Learning Outcome 1.3 could also be facilitated by a visit to GPO Witness History. While looking at the History specification and the Learning Outcome 1.8 (on investigating a repository of historical evidence) the links to Learning Outcome 2.4 (on examining the rise and impact of nationalism and unionism in Ireland, including key events between 1911 and 1923) are clear to see. This is a good example of how Strand 1 underpins the content of Strand 2. While considering a repository of historical evidence, students might look at the 1916 Rising and how it is a key event in Irish History. This would emphasise the cultural inheritance we share. One might even say that 1916 and the period that followed was a contentious time, so a connection to Learning Outcome 1.2 might also be possible.

Junior Cycle for Teacher History
Department Email history@jct.ie and you can follow us on twitter @jcthistory



The GPO Courtyard

GPO Witness History: Bringing Irish History to Life

GPO Witness History visitor centre is located within the historic GPO in Dublin city centre. This interactive experience is a must see for all students as it tells the story of Irish History from the late 1800's to the present. Students of all ages are offered engaging and educational tours which are linked to the Primary Social Environmental and Scientific curriculum specifically around the strands of working as a historian, eras of change and conflict along with politics, conflict and society.

With major milestones of Irish history addressed, students will gain a conceptual understanding of the 1916 Easter Rising of which the GPO was headquarters, Irish War of Independence, Irish Civil War and the peace process in Northern Ireland. The GPO Witness History is an essential resource for any Junior Cycle History class, with specific strands being addressed in their entirety. For example Strand 2.4 - Examine the rise and impact of nationalism and unionism in Ireland including key events between 1911 and 1923.

The 'Thomas F. Meagher and the Irish Flag' exhibition in partnership with the Thomas F. Meagher Foundation was launched last year in the visitor centre. Students will learn about the history of the flag, Thomas F. Meagher and the Foundation which promotes pride in and respect for the Irish Flag and active citizenship. GPO Witness History also includes various flags which represent

Ireland's evolving identities over the years - the tricolour being one of several competing 'national flags' unfurled in 1916. GPO Witness History is constantly evolving and in April a new exhibition 'The War of Independence - Communication and Conflict' will launch. It will focus on the impact the War of Independence had on communication and the postal service during this turbulent period.

To book your tour, please email reservations@shannonheritage.com or call 061 711222



Learning: GPO Witness History is a rich interactive experience



Last year the Thomas F. Meagher Foundation worked with Shannon Heritage and GPO Witness History to install the first ever permanent exhibition on the Irish Flag. This exhibition includes the protocol of the Irish Flag which the Foundation were delighted to work on with the Department of An Taoiseach as part of the 2016 Commemoration Programme. This protocol is available as a pull-out poster on page 12/13 of this supplement. The Foundation is delighted to be working with Prospect Flags to ensure schools and community groups can show respect to the Irish Flag by replacing any worn out or faded Irish Flags. Prospect Flags can be contacted at (01) 4753452 or email ken@flagsireland.com and if you would like any further information on the protocol of the Irish Flag please do not hesitate to contact the Foundation on info@tfmfoundation.org or on the website thomasfmeagherfoundation.org

Washington Monument Plaque

This year when the Washington Monument reopens it will have a new feature, a very special feature for the many in America who see themselves as Irish and all the Irish who travel to Washington DC. The Thomas F. Meagher Foundation were delighted to work with the United States National Parks to ensure the Washington Monument will receive a commemorative plaque from the President of Ireland on behalf of the people of Ireland in recognition of the long and enduring relationship between Ireland and the United States. The plaque will be located among the 193 commemorative stones donated to honour George Washington located on the monument's interior walls. This is a great honour exemplified by the fact that only five plaques have been



At the handover of the special plaque created by the Thomas F. Meagher Foundation for the Washington Memorial



placed in the Monument in the last 75 years. The Washington Monument contains commemorative and memorial stones received from all 50 states; scores of fraternal and community organisations, cities and towns across America; and only 16 foreign countries. The majority of stones were received between 1849 and 1855, although the most recent new donation was accepted in 1982 (from the state of Alaska). Memorial stones are now accepted only in very rare circumstances, such as the admission of a new state to the union or replacement of a previously donated stone. The offer of a plaque from Ireland was accepted after ensuring it met proper criteria for inclusion in the Washington Monument, and review and approval by the director of the National Park Service. The plaque itself includes a replica of the 1916 proclamation and references Thomas F. Meagher and his legacy. Continuing their partnership with the GPO Witness History, the Thomas F. Meagher Foundation will be adding to their existing exhibition by placing a replica of the plaque for the Washington Monument there.

