

Key individuals of the Irish Revolution in 1926

Leaving Certificate History	Strand 3 Ireland, option 2 1919–66 Events and processes of change: establishment of the Irish Free State; evolving political parties North and South Society and culture: language and culture
Leaving Certificate History Learning Outcomes	1.2 Locate and select relevant source material and resources and identify appropriate repositories. 1.5 Evaluate source material through the process of historical analysis. 1.6 Situate their sources within wider historical contexts, events, ideas, and processes. 3.5 Assess the role of individuals, groups or organisations on the events or processes of change. 3.9 Analyse how cultural and social factors influenced the developments in this time period.
Learning Intentions	To be able to: • Locate and extract relevant historical information from the 1926 census record for an assigned individual • Cross-reference census evidence with a secondary source (Dictionary of Irish Biography) to build a fuller picture of an individual's political activities around 1925–27 • Assess the extent to which the outcomes of the Irish Revolution matched or diverged from the individual's own aspirations, using evidence from the census record and the Dictionary of Irish Biography (DIB) • Analyse the significance of language choice (Irish or English) on an individual's census form as evidence of their cultural and political identity • Present historical findings clearly to an audience, drawing on evidence from multiple sources



Senior Cycle History Lesson Plan

Key individuals of the Irish Revolution in 1926

Success Criteria	• I can extract at least three pieces of relevant information from my assigned individual's 1926 census record. • I can identify one significant political event or activity from my individual's DIB entry, c. 1925–27. • I can explain, using specific evidence, whether my individual's 1926 circumstances reflect or diverge from what they had hoped for from the Revolution. • I can explain what my individual's choice of Irish or English on their census form suggests about their cultural or political identity. • I can present my findings clearly within the time limit, referencing where each piece of evidence was found. • I can compare my individual's experience with at least one other individual's during the synthesis discussion.
Resources	National Archives of Ireland online census records, specifically the following household forms: Éamon De Valera Constance Markievicz [recorded as Constance Ní Mhurchadha] Kevin O'Higgins Hanna Sheehy Skeffington Dictionary of Irish Biography (DIB) entries for: Éamon De Valera, Constance Markievicz, Kevin O'Higgins, and Hanna Sheehy Skeffington. The 1926 Census Guidance Note for Teachers Internet access Access to digital devices
Inclusion	Working in small groups will help all students to decipher census records. Some students may prefer to work with the census record for Kevin O'Higgins or Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, which were filled out in English. For groups needing more support moving from fact-finding to interpretation, provide sentence starters, e.g. 'This matters because...', 'On the other hand...', 'This individual might be considered a winner/loser because...'

Senior Cycle History Lesson Plan

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Lesson Activities	At the start of any lesson using census records, teachers should make students aware of sensitivities around the personal nature of the data being used. See document <i>The 1926 Census in the Classroom – note for teachers</i> Starter: Check in with students' prior knowledge of the involvement of Éamon De Valera, Constance Markievicz, Hanna Sheehy Skeffington and Kevin O'Higgins in the Irish Revolution, with particular emphasis on identifying whether these individuals were on the pro-Treaty or anti-Treaty side during the Civil War. Ask students what they think each of these four figures was fighting <i>for</i> and what they wanted Irish independence to look like. Note predictions on the board to revisit later. 1. Divide students into pairs or small groups and assign one of the four revolutionaries, Éamon De Valera, Constance Markievicz, Hanna Sheehy Skeffington and Kevin O'Higgins, to each group. Provide each pair/group with the links to or print outs of the census record and Dictionary of Irish Biography (DIB) entry for each individual. Note that the records for De Valera and Markievicz were filled out in Irish, therefore ensure that the students assigned these records have some ability in the language, or work with the English-language returns only. 2. Each pair/group examines their census record and notes three pieces of relevant historical information (such as ages, address, occupation, marital status, employer, or family size). They then use the DIB entry record for their assigned individual to identify the political activities of the individual during the period roughly concurrent with the census, c. 1925–27. 3. Each pair/group prepares a short, structured presentation (approximately three mins) covering: • One fact from the census record • One significant event from the DIB entry for this period • The language used on the census form (and its significance) • A judgement on how far the individual's circumstances in 1926 reflect the outcome they had hoped for in the Revolution – what had they gained, what had they lost, and what had simply continued unchanged? • References to where they found specific information • Presentation feedback could be framed around Evidence (draws specific, accurate detail from both the census record and DIB entry), Interpretation (offers a reasoned judgement rather than description alone, and engages with complexity where relevant) and Communication (presents clearly and at an appropriate pace within the time limit) 4. While each group presents, the rest of the class take notes on how each person interacts with the others (for example, both Éamon de Valera and Constance Markievicz were founders of Fianna Fáil in 1927).
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Senior Cycle History Lesson Plan
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Plenary:	5. As a class, compare the four individuals using what each group had learned. Prompt questions could include: • How did gender shape each person's experience of this period? • Does language use on the census form tell us something about political identity, or just about the individual's background? • Did any person's life or experience complicate your understanding of civil war politics? • Name one thing their assigned individual's 1926 circumstances reveal about the gap between revolutionary aspiration and post-revolutionary reality (refer back to notes taken at the start of class on what individuals were fighting for)
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