

Working lives: case study of occupations in Lower Grattan Hill, Cork city, in 1926

Junior Cycle History	Strand One: The Nature of History • Developing historical consciousness • Working with evidence Strand Two: The history of Ireland • Exploring people, culture and ideas • Applying historical thinking
Junior Cycle History Learning Outcomes	Students should be able to: 1.8 investigate a repository of historical evidence such as a museum, library, heritage centre, digital or other archive or exhibition 1.11 make connections and comparisons between people, issues and events in different places and historical eras 2.9 explain how the experience of women in Irish society changed during the twentieth century
Learning Intentions	To be able to: • Locate and navigate the 1926 census return for Lower Grattan Hill, Cork city using the National Archives of Ireland online records • Extract and record evidence from a primary source (the census return) about the occupations of the street's residents in 1926 • Explain what the census evidence reveals about the working lives of women in Ireland in 1926, and how women's occupations have changed since • Make connections between the occupations recorded and the geography of the local area • Compare working life in 1926 with working life today, identifying occupations that have disappeared or emerged



Junior Cycle History Lesson Plan

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Success Criteria	• I can locate and navigate to the correct census return for Lower Grattan Hill using the National Archives online records. • I can complete a table recording the residents' occupations and how often each one occurs. • I can explain what the recording of many women as engaged in 'home duties' tells us about the role of women in 1926, and give one example of how this has changed. • I can link at least one occupation recorded on the street to a feature of the local area (e.g. a quay, mill, barracks or church). • I can identify at least one occupation from 1926 that no longer exists, and one that exists today but does not appear in the return. • I can write a short account of the street's working lives using evidence from my table.
Resources	National Archives of Ireland online census records ↗, specifically the search results for Lower Grattan Hill, Cork City ↗ The 1926 Census Guidance Note for Teachers ↗ 1926 Census – Learning Resource document ↗ Internet access Scoilnet Maps ↗ Access to digital devices
Before the Lesson	Teachers should be familiar with searching the 1926 census online to be able to support students. Teachers should familiarise themselves with Scoilnet Maps (or other online map software) for use in the classroom, particularly Lower Grattan Hill in Cork and the nearby features (e.g. the quay, military barracks, train station) that impact occupations.

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. This particularly applies to this lesson, where students may have connections to the street/townland under investigation. See document <i>The 1926 Census Guidance Note for Teachers</i> Starter: Check in with students' prior knowledge of what a census is. Students may have knowledge of participating in a census. 1. Teacher gives a brief overview of what a census is and of the 1926 census in particular as the first census of the Irish Free State. The document <i>1926 Census – Learning Resource</i> will be helpful here. 2. Organise students into groups of three and distribute the worksheet 'Occupations in 1926: residents of Lower Grattan Hill, Cork city'. When distributing it, remind students aloud that the residents recorded were real people, some with descendants living today. 3. Students work in small groups to research the answers to Q1–3 on the worksheet. They follow the instructions to navigate to the results page for Lower Grattan Hill on the online search. The questions require them to identify and analyse the occupations of those living on Lower Grattan Hill in 1926. Teachers should circulate to help with any occupations that are unclear, abbreviated or unfamiliar. Students should record these as they are written and ask, rather than guess. 4. Students may complete Q4 of the worksheet by themselves or as a group, where they write a short account of the working lives of those living in Lower Grattan Hill. 5. Before opening the plenary discussion, teachers should ask groups to briefly share their answers to Q2, particularly any occupations that were unfamiliar to them. The plenary should build on these responses, pushing students to compare 1926 patterns with women's working lives today, rather than opening the topic afresh.
Plenary	Students participate in a class discussion on how working lives have changed since 1926. What jobs existed in 1926 that no longer exist today? What jobs exist today that were not evident in 1926? What did you learn about the working lives of women in 1926 and how has that changed today?
Differentiation	Some students may find it easier to analyse just two households on the street rather than every household. For Q4 of the worksheet, the plenary questions could help students scaffold their responses. Students who finish early may research a second Cork street or area from the same census for comparison, or suggest why particular occupations cluster on this street (e.g. proximity to the quays or to specific workplaces).

Worksheet – occupations in 1926: residents of Lower Grattan Hill, Cork city

To find the [census return for Lower Grattan Hill, Cork City ↗](#) or search on the Census 1926 search page search

county: Cork;

Townland/street: Lower Grattan Hill; D

DED: Cork Number 3 Urban (North East Ward)

1. Examine the occupations of the residents of Lower Grattan Hill, Cork city on the night of 18 April 1926 and fill in the table below.

Name of occupation	Number of times occupation occurs	Occupation exists today, Y/N

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2. Many of the women living in Lower Grattan Hill recorded their occupation as 'home duties'.
What does this tell you about the role of women in Ireland in 1926?

3. Search for Lower Grattan Hill, Cork, on an online map (or, if available, a historic map of Cork from around 1926).
Can you link the occupations of those living on Lower Grattan Hill to any features near the street – for example a quay, mill, barracks or church?

4. Using your findings in the table above, write a short account of the working lives of the inhabitants of Lower Grattan Hill in 1926.