

Half-copy of the 1916 Proclamation

Junior Cycle

The study of historic objects will contribute to student achievement of the Statements of Learning for Junior Cycle, in particular:

Statement 3: creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts.

Statement 8: values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change.

Junior Certificate history

The study of historic objects is an essential component of the History Syllabus for Junior Certificate. Engagement with primary source material is vital to the achievement of course objectives, which include the acquisition of knowledge, concepts and skills relating to the study of history.

Students can acquire knowledge of the past in an organic way through the study of historic objects. Key concepts, including source, evidence, chronology, bias/objectivity, fact/opinion, propaganda can be taught using primary sources examples. Engagement with historic objects enables students to acquire the skills of the historian, including the ability to locate and select information in a source and to critically analyse and communicate that information.

The study of objects relating to the Easter Rising, 1916, has a direct link to the syllabus topic: *'Political developments in Ireland in the late 19th century and the 20th century'*.

Lesson activities

* Students could study this object in conjunction with the photograph of Dr. Edmund McWeeney examining a the proclamation on St. Stephen's Green.

Starter activity: Teachers could ask students to think of the other revolutionary proclamations that they have encountered during their study of the Junior Certificate history syllabus. These documents might include the American declaration of independence (American Revolution), the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen' (French Revolution) and Robert Emmet's proclamation of independence (Dublin, 1803). They could consider questions such as why it would be necessary to produce such a document at the beginning of a revolution. They could also identify similarities and differences between the earlier independence documents and the 1916 proclamation.

Object study: Background information on this object should be provided to students. The following questions could form the basis of a class discussion of the object:

1. Ask students to examine the typeface of the document. Can they find any evidence to suggest that Molloy, O'Brien and Brady were under pressure while printing the proclamation?
2. Why do you think the men were under armed guard while printing the proclamation? What might have been the dangers for the rebels had the document been discovered by the authorities that weekend?
3. How does the printing process today differ from how documents were printed in 1916? If a proclamation were produced today, how would it be printed? Would it even be necessary to print copies of a proclamation?

Group work activity: Students could be divided into small groups with each group assigned one of the three paragraphs in the second half of the proclamation. They could rewrite each paragraph in their own words, summarising what they think is the core message of their section of the proclamation.

Follow-on activity: Their study of the half proclamation might prompt students to get involved in the 1916 Centenary Programme initiative to re-imagine the proclamation and write a new proclamation for 2016. Further details are available through the [Scoilnet website](#).