

## Painting, 'The Ruins of O'Connell Street' by Edmond Delrenne

\* This object could be used in conjunction with the photograph of O'Connell Bridge and Street in 1916

### 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

**Starter activity:** Students may have come across artist impressions of historic events throughout their study of the Junior Certificate history course, e.g. 'The Marriage of Strongbow and Aoife' by Daniel Maclise or the illustration of the Boston Massacre by Paul Revere. Students could think about the usefulness of paintings to the historian. Do they always contain accurate depictions of historic events? How could they be used for propaganda purposes?

**Object study:** Students could work in small groups of three to study the painting and answer the following questions.

1. Describe what you see in the painting. Can you name any of the buildings or monuments depicted? What colours has the artist used? Are the tones bright or muted?
2. Based on your study of this painting, would you say that the artist was sympathetic towards the rebels who led the Easter Rising? Give two reasons for your answer.
3. The artist, Edmond Delrenne, was a Belgian refugee who had come to Ireland fleeing the First World War in Europe. How do you think this experience might have affected his attitude towards the Easter Rising?

**Online activity:** Students could search online for images of O'Connell Street in ruins following the rebellion. The National Library image of O'Connell Street and Bridge in 1916 could also be examined. Students could assess the accuracy of Delrenne's painting by comparing and contrasting the photographs with the painting.

**Follow-on activity:** The green 'Irish Republic' flag that flew at the Prince's Street corner of the GPO is visible in the Delrenne painting. Students might be interested in carrying out further research on the different flags that flew above the GPO, using the Scoilnet website on the [Irish Flag](#), in particular [Eamon Bulfin's account](#) of the raising of the green 'Irish Republic' flag and the tricolour.