



Mother and Baby homes

Junior Cycle Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)
Unit 1

SLIDE 1



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Unit 1: Outline

Slide	Activity No	Activity Name	Description
3	1	Coming to terms	Introduction to Ireland's historic institutions and pre-teaching of relevant terminology (teacher input and pair work)
4	2	Our Brave Space	Devising a Brave Space Agreement (pair and small group work, whole class discussion)
6-7	3	Architecture of containment	Data relating to Ireland's historic institutions (whole class discussion) Introduction to the concept of the architecture of containment (teacher input)
8-10	4	For much of the C20th...	Relevant articles from the 1937 constitution (whole class discussion) Life for women and children in C20th Ireland (teacher input, small group work and whole class discussion)
11	5	S.I.T.	Reflection (individual work)

Teacher notes

Unit 1 activities engage students in learning linked to the CSPE outcomes listed below.

Students should be able to:

- **Learning Outcome 1.1:** discuss what it means to be human and to live in a community with rights and responsibilities
- **Learning Outcome 1.9:** outline different perspectives in situations where there is an apparent conflict of rights or an abuse of rights
- **Learning Outcome 2.5:** examine case studies or personal testimonies of people experiencing poverty or inequality from different contexts and countries and how they are working to overcome this
- **Learning Outcome 3.1:** create a visual representation of the day-to-day contexts and institutions to which they belong, highlighting where they have power and influence
- **Learning Outcome 3.3:** describe democratic structures for decision-making at local and national government levels
- **Learning Outcome 1.11 & 3.14:** reflect on their ongoing learning and what it means for them

Activity 1: Coming to terms

Industrial schools

Report of the Commission to inquire into child abuse (2009)

- For 'neglected, orphaned or abandoned' children, including those born in Mother and Baby homes.
- Focus on religious instruction and practical training (boys – farm workers; girls – domestic servants).
- Often included for-profit enterprises, such as commercial farms, involving child labour.
- Run by religious orders; legislated for and inspected by the state, with public funding.

Magdalene Laundries

Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries (2013)

- For girls/women who were perceived to be 'promiscuous', 'unmarried' mothers coming from Mother and Baby homes, the daughters of 'unmarried' mothers, those considered a burden on families or the state, those who had been sexually abused, or had grown up in industrial schools.
- Run by religious orders for profit, with public funding and dependent on the unpaid labour of girls/women.

Mother and Baby homes

Report of the Commission of Investigation into the Mother and Baby Homes (2021)

- For girls/women who became pregnant outside of marriage.
- Women were confined for varying periods of time after their baby was born, doing unpaid manual labour, such as cleaning, cooking, looking after children (not always their own). Some women were transferred directly from/to Magdalene Laundries. Children who did not leave with their mothers or die in the homes were, sometimes years later, boarded out (fostered), adopted (illegally) or sent to industrial schools.
- Run by religious orders; legislated for and inspected by the state, with public funding.

Teacher notes (slide includes animation – please ensure you are in presenter mode)

What, if anything, do you know about the words on the slide?

Click to show information about the industrial schools, Magdalene Laundries and Mother and Baby homes

Read aloud the information about the three types of institutions.

Allocate one institution type (that is, either industrial schools, Magdalene Laundries or Mother and Baby homes) to each student.

Take a minute to read the information about your given institution. Look up the meaning of any tricky words.

Divide the class into pairs with different institutions.

Explain your institution to your partner in your own words.

Facilitate a whole class discussion, using the following questions as prompts:

- *What, if anything, do you notice about each of the institutions?*
- *What, if anything, do the different institutions have in common?*
- *Why do you think these institutions existed? What might have motivated churches (religious orders), the state (government), society (people) to accept the existence of these institutions?*

Ireland was not the only country in the world with these institutions, and these institutions were not uniquely run by the Catholic Church. But, by the middle of the twentieth century there were more women and children 'contained' in these institutions in Ireland than anywhere else in the world. We were also much later in closing these institutions and in addressing the impact and legacy of their existence.

Click to show the titles of the government investigations into the 3 different types of institutions

In 2009, the government published a 'Report of an inquiry into child abuse in industrial schools' – this report is often called the Ryan Report because the inquiry was led by Justice Sean Ryan. In 2013, the 'Report on state involvement with the Magdalen Laundries' was published – this is often called the McAleese Report because the inquiry was led by Martin McAleese. In 2021, the final report of the Commission into Mother and Baby

Homes was published. These investigations and reports are a sign that the government and our country are slowly coming to terms with our institutional past.

In this unit, we will begin to look at the different types of institutions in Ireland in the C20th, the connections between these institutions and the economic, legal, political, religious and social context that allowed these institutions to exist.

Sources

Boston College. [Ireland's Magdalen laundries and the nation's architecture of containment](#). Interview with James M. Smith, 51.04mins.

Justice for Madgalenes Research (JFMR). [Information on the Magdalene Laundries](#)

McGregor, C., Devaney, C., Buckley, S.A. 2023. Language, Terminology and Representation Relating to Ireland's Institutions Historically Known as 'Mother and Baby Homes', 'County Homes' and related Institutions. Galway: UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, University of Galway.

O'Donnell, K., O'Rourke, M. & Smith, J. eds. 2022. *Redress: Ireland's Institutions and Transitional Justice*. UCD Press: Dublin.

McGarry, P. [Magdalene laundries: a brief history of the institutions](#). 11 June 2011, *Irish Times* online.

[Report of the Commission of Investigation into the Mother and Baby Homes](#)

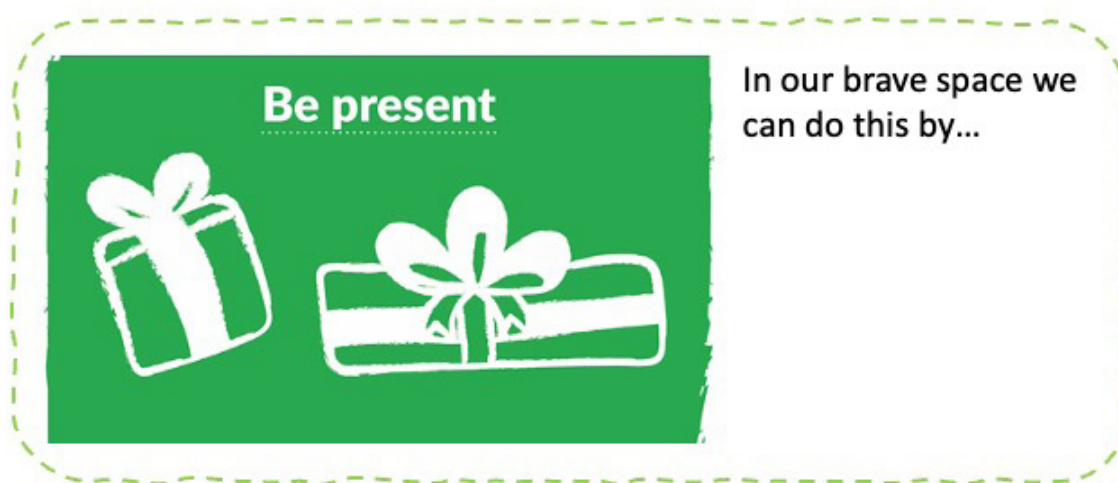
[Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries](#)

[Report of the Commission to inquire into child abuse](#). See especially volumes 1 and 2.

RTE. 2019. [Ireland's institutions explained](#). 8.43mins.

Tobin, M. [Literacy in the Irish Reformatory School](#). *Irish Probation Journal*, Volume 12, [October 2015](#).

Activity 2: Our Brave Space



Teacher notes (slide includes animation – please ensure you are in presenter mode)

NB: Allocate sufficient time to this activity. A rigorous Brave Space Agreement will stand to you and your students as you engage with these units.

Now that we have a better idea about the content of these units, let's take the time to agree how we want our class to operate.

Has anyone ever heard the term 'brave space' before?

If yes, invite students to explain what the term means.

Divide the class into pairs.

Invite each pair to draw a rectangle on a page.

What comes to mind when you hear the term 'brave space'? Note this in your rectangle.

Join with another pair and compare your work.

Use your combined work to come up ideas about what a 'brave space' looks and feels like.

Is a 'brave space' the same as a 'safe space'? In what way is it the same/different?

Sometimes safe spaces are taken to mean spaces where certain topics – those that are emotive, sensitive or controversial – are not discussed. Brave spaces are a little bit different. They are safe in that everyone should feel comfortable and safe in expressing their opinion, but they are brave in that emotive, sensitive or controversial issues are up for discussion.

There are six pillars (parts) that make up a brave space.

As we look at each pillar, discuss with your partner how you and others in the class might make this pillar a reality.

Click six times to show the six pillars that make a brave space. After each click, elaborate further on the specific pillar (see notes below), allow time for pairs to discuss and give feedback. Note student responses on the board or on a large sheet of paper.

Vulnerability

Be honest and truthful. Don't shy away from letting others know your thoughts and feelings and use 'I' statements when expressing yourself.

You will find that we all have some prejudices and are somehow biased. These attitudes and opinions have been learned and so can be unlearned over time. Acknowledge this about yourself and others.

Perspective taking

Disagreements and hurt feelings may happen but it is important to value the perspectives of others and communicate with civility.

Avoid 'you should' statements that pass judgement on others. If you don't agree with something someone says, make it clear that you are challenging what they said and not the person themselves.

If students suggest 'agree to disagree' or similar, try to get them to consider that this might have the effect of stopping the discussion/learning, and suggest instead that they should commit to understanding the sources of different perspectives and to being civil to one another in the face of disagreement/conflict.

If students mention the need for 'respect', ask them to give examples of how they might firmly challenge the viewpoint of another person with respect.

Lean into fear

Let your guard down in response to ideas or viewpoints that are new or different. Frame your questions respectfully but don't let fear of saying the wrong thing stop you from asking. Some ideas or discussions may make us feel uneasy, uncomfortable or even afraid. If this happens, try to remember that these feelings are a necessary part of learning and try to understand why you are feeling this way.

Critical thinking

Take time to think. Be curious and open-minded – ask questions to understand and to clarify. Analyse and evaluate evidence. Make connections between different pieces of information. Be creative in your thinking and any solutions that you suggest.

Intention

Ask yourself if sharing your thoughts will contribute to the conversation in a positive way. Own your intentions – avoid being defensive if your words/actions hurt others. Reflect on what you intended – What motivated you speak, respond, act in a particular way? Acknowledge intention and take responsibility for impact. Look for good intentions in others before taking offence, but don't be afraid to challenge prejudice/bias directly and constructively. Try to remember that constructive challenges on specific issues are not necessarily personal attacks.

If students suggest 'don't take things personally' or similar, ask them to instead consider 'own your intention and your impact'.

Be present

Participate and add your voice. If you feel you are taking too much space, step back and give others a chance to talk (take space, make space). Be inclusive of everyone in the space.

If students suggest anything around the right to decide yourself about how participative you want to be, ask them to consider expanding this to include something around the need to be aware of your motivations for participation levels.

Use student feedback to shape a Brave Space Agreement.

Do a final check to make sure that your Brave Space Agreement includes at least one item related to each of the 6 pillars outlined above.

NB: Display this Agreement in a prominent place in your class.

Source

Arao, B. & Clemens, C. 'From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces: A new way to frame dialogue around diversity and social justice' in Lisa Landreman. ed. 2013. *The art of effective facilitation: Reflections from social justice educators*. Stylus publishing.



If you are affected by any of the issues in this unit, and need support, come to me after class, talk to a trusted friend or adult and/or contact:

Adoption Rights Alliance: www.facebook.com/AdoptionRightsAllianceIreland/

Barnardos Origins, Post Adoption and Bereavement Services: www.barnardos.ie

Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
Phone: 116 123

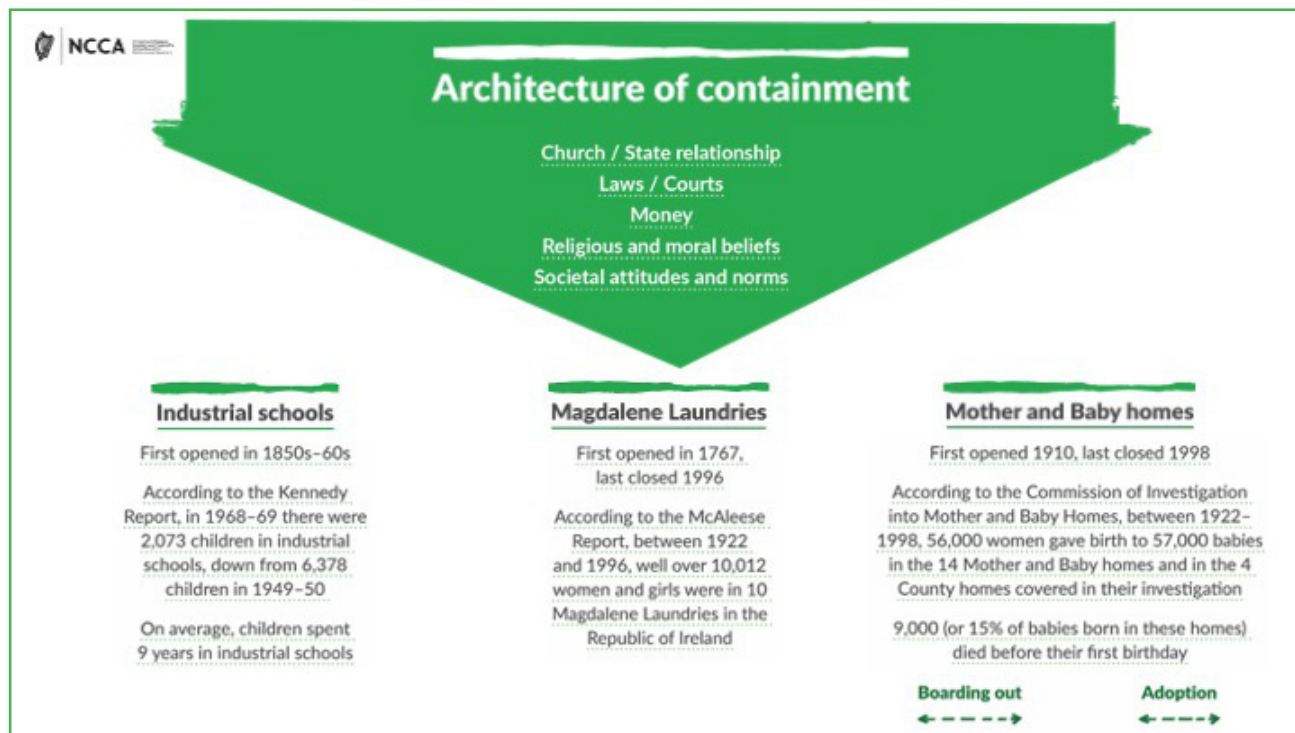
Childline: www.childline.ie
Phone: 1800 66 66 66

Jigsaw: www.jigsaw.ie

Teacher notes

Some of you might find the content that we cover in these units upsetting. This is a natural and understandable reaction to what survivor's call 'a dark chapter' in our national history.

If you are personally affected or distressed by any of the issues in these units, come to me after class, talk to a trusted friend or adult and/or contact one of the external support services listed on the slide.



Teacher notes (slide includes animation – please ensure you are in presenter mode)

Let's have a closer look at three different types of institutions – industrial schools, Magdalene Laundries and Mother and Baby homes.

Click to show data about the industrial schools

Ask for volunteers to read the data about industrial schools.

What, if anything, stands out for you about this data?

Depending on your students, you might want to tell them that:

- the majority of children in Irish industrial schools were not 'orphans' or 'abandoned'. They were removed from their parent(s) care for so-called 'improper Guardianship' as defined by the 1908 Children's Act and Article 42.5 in the 1937 constitution (see Unit 1, Slide 8).
- the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Systems Report (1970) was the result of an inquiry carried out from 1967–1970 by a committee headed by District Justice Eileen Kennedy, which is why the report is also known as the Kennedy Report. Although this committee was originally asked to look only at reformatory and industrial schools, their inquiries was later extended to look at children in care. The Kennedy Report recommended the abolition of "the institutional system of residential care".

Click to show data about the Magdalene Laundries

Ask for volunteers to read the data about Magdalene Laundries.

What, if anything, stands out for you about this data?

Depending on your students, you might want to remind them that the McAleese Report was the result of a Government of Ireland inquiry into state involvement with the Magdalen Laundries. This report concluded that the state supported the laundries, while failing to adequately inspect and regulate these institutions.

Click to show data about the Mother and Baby homes

Ask for volunteers to read the data about Mother and Baby homes.

What, if anything, stands out for you about this data?

The Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes was appointed by the government in February 2015 to look at what happened to women and children in Mother and Baby homes and County homes during the period 1922 to 1998. County homes were another type of institution. They were for a wide variety of people, mostly poor and working class, and often included women who were not married and their children.

Why do you think that this graphic is labelled 'architecture of containment'? What might this term have to do with industrial schools, Magdalene Laundries and Mother and Baby homes?

The term 'architecture of containment' (structures for keeping something that is considered harmful under control) refers to the different, but interdependent, network of institutions, like industrial schools, Magdalene Laundries and Mother and Baby homes, whose function was to hide people whose lives were on a path that was not the norm or was unacceptable according to morals and beliefs at the time.

Click to show references to systems of boarding out and adoption

The idea of the architecture of containment also includes the human movement in and out of different institutions, and from institutions into society through boarding out (the fostering system at the time) and adoption.

Click to show references to final important aspects of the architecture of containment

The architecture of containment was influenced by the relationship between the Catholic church and Irish State (government). This relationship, underpinned by the religious beliefs and societal attitudes at the time, led to the passing of laws to establish these institutions and allowed them to be funded from public monies and exist for long periods of time. These laws reflected ideas of the time about what a 'proper' family should be, and ideas about what was acceptable and respectable in relation to poverty and class, crime, education, disability, ethnicity, race, and religion.

Everything on the slide, and all the things that happened in these places, are all part of the same system, all part of the same story.

Sources

Chapter 2: Institutions, [Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes](#)

Finnegan, F. 2004. *Do Penance Or Perish: Magdalen Asylums in Ireland*. Oxford University Press.

[Reformatory and Industrial Schools Systems \(Kennedy\) Report](#)

[Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries](#)

Smith, J.M. 2007. *Ireland's Magdalen Laundries and the Nation's Architecture of Containment*. University of Notre Dame, Southbend. p. xii-xx.

Activity 3: Architecture of containment

My name is Mary Harney. I am the proud daughter of Margaret 'Peggy' Harney. ... I do not know much about my mother's early life other than that her mother died when she was 12 at which point she was sent to St Dominic's Industrial School where she stayed until she was 16. ... I was born in Bessborough [Mother and Baby home] in 1949. My mother and I stayed together in the Mother and Baby Home for two and half years. ... My mother chose to do some of the most menial tasks....like sluicing out the babies' napkins...so that she could sneak in to see me and pick me up, because women were not allowed free access to their children at any time of the day. I suffered whooping cough and measles while I was there, and therefore I was not eligible to be trafficked to America. Those were communicable diseases, and in getting children to America, they had to be free of such prior conditions. ... My mother was given a half an hour's notice to get me ready to have me taken from her. ... I was illegally fostered [boarded out to] an elderly couple... Because of their neglect, and also because I was probably suffering from malnutrition, a neighbour called the authorities and I was taken from the foster parents in 1954. I was brought to the courthouse in Cork, and the judge sentenced me to twelve and a half years in the Good Shepherd Industrial School at Sunday's Well in Cork City. ... We were deprived of food if we disobeyed rules. We were always deprived of water... We were beaten... It was there that I learned how to begin to resist. I am not a survivor. I am a small, yet mighty, resisting worker for justice.

Mary Harney – Testimony in O'Donnell, K., O'Rourke, M. & Smith, J. 2022. *Redress: Ireland's Institutions and Transitional Justice*. UCD Press: Dublin. p.3-5; Mary Harney, CLANN witness statement.

Teacher notes

Ask for volunteers to read the extract of testimony from Mary Harney, a woman who was born in Bessborough Mother and Baby home in Cork.

Do you notice anything about the words that Mary uses when talking about her experiences in the 'architecture of containment'? Words like 'trafficked', 'illegally fostered' 'resisting worker for justice'. What do these words tell us about Mary's attitude and response to her experiences?

If you could ask Mary Harney one question about her experiences, what would this question be?

Use Mary's testimony to draw a quick sketch or create a mind map showing her journey through, and experience of, the 'architecture of containment' in Ireland in the twentieth century.

[Student responses should show how Mary's mother, Margaret Harney, was in St Dominic's Industrial School and later admitted to Bessborough Mother and Baby home, where Mary was born. Mary avoided adoption to America and was boarded-out (fostered) to an elderly couple, before being sent to Good Shepherd Industrial School in Cork].

Many survivor accounts show intergenerational experiences of the architecture of containment. For example, both Mary and her mother, Margaret Harney, were sent to industrial schools.

The focus in these units is on the Mother and Baby homes, but it is important to remember that Mother and Baby homes were just one type of institution in twentieth century Ireland that existed for the purpose of containing or controlling the way that people lived.

Activity 4: For much of the C20th...

The family, women and children in the (1937) constitution (Bunreacht na hÉireann)

Article 41

- 1.1 – The State recognises the **Family as the natural primary and fundamental unit group of Society**, and as a **moral institution** possessing inalienable and imprescriptible rights, antecedent and superior to all positive law.
- 1.2 – The State, therefore, guarantees to protect the Family in its constitution and authority, as **the necessary basis of social order** and as indispensable to the welfare of the Nation and the State.
- 2.1 – In particular, the State recognises that **by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved.**
- 2.2 – The State shall, therefore, **endeavour to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home.**

Article 42

- 5 – In exceptional cases, **where the parents for physical or moral reasons fail in their duty towards their children, the State as guardian of the common good, by appropriate means shall endeavour to supply the place of the parents**, but always with due regard for the natural and imprescriptible rights of the child.

Teacher notes

1937 was a very important year for the Irish legal system because it saw the publication of the Irish Constitution (Bunreacht na hÉireann). Bunreacht na hÉireann set out the fundamental rights of every Irish citizen. No law can be passed by the government if it does not comply with the constitution. The constitution is divided into Articles, or important rules / points, like the two Articles on the slide.

Ask for volunteers to read the text (bullets) of Articles 41 and 42 in Bunreacht na hÉireann (1937).

After each bullet, invite volunteers to put the text into their own words.

Depending on your students, you might want to point out that the references to 'home' in Article 41.2.1 and 41.2.22 refer to the family home and not Mother and Baby homes. As your class progress through the units, you might like to encourage them to think about the application of Article 41.2.1 to the experiences of women in the Mother and Baby homes.

Facilitate a whole class discussion based on the following prompts:

- How did the 1937 constitution view the family/women/children?
- What do Articles 41 and 42 tell us about attitudes to gender and equality in 1937?
- What impact do you think that this might have had on the lives of ordinary people?

The constitution can be changed, with the consent of the people. This is done with a referendum (vote on the suggested constitutional changes). A referendum on 8 March 2024, which proposed replacing Articles 41.2.1 and 41.2.2 and amending the wording of Article 41.1.1, was rejected.

Possible homework tasks:

Be influenced by Articles 41 and 42 (on the slide) to create (hand drawn or using digital technology) a front cover for the 1937 constitution.

or

Research one constitutional amendment since 1937 relating to the family, women or children. Write a short paragraph summarising your findings.

[see [Irish Statute Book](#)]

Sources

Abbey Theatre and Larkin College. 2021. [Home: Part 1](#) (teacher pack and slides).

Biggins, T., Howard, J, McDonagh, H. O'Reilly, E. & Shen, S. 2021. 'Guidebook for Teachers: Ireland's Dark History', The Irish Centre for Human Rights, University of Galway.

Citizens Information. [The Irish Constitution](#)

Ryan, S. & Tynan, M-E. [Laying down the law](#) (unpublished resource for Junior Cycle CSPE).

Smyth, J. 'The Hidden Ireland' (unpublished presentation from 'Outcast Ireland' Boston College course).

Activity 4: For much of the C20th...

- Very high levels of religious observance – mass attendance, pilgrimages, devotions and missions
- An emphasis on the need for high ideals and moral virtue, especially for young women
- Sex before marriage and adultery were considered sinful
- There was no sex education, and most schools were under the control of the Catholic Church
- Use of artificial birth control was forbidden by the Catholic Church and banned in law
- Women who had children outside of marriage (labelled 'fallen women' or 'unmarried mothers') were stigmatised
- Children born outside of marriage (labelled 'illegitimate'), were judged for bearing the sins of their mothers
- Corporal punishment was accepted
- Divorce was illegal
- Censorship (banning) of literature, especially relating to sexuality or reproduction
- Dances could only be organised with permission from clergy, gardai and the judiciary
- Barriers to women sitting on juries
- Women working in the Civil/Public Service had to resign when they married
- The government could control and restrict the numbers of women working in any industry to lessen male unemployment

Teacher notes

Divide the class into groups of four.

Allocate (or invite your students to take on) the following roles in each group:

Reader – to read the text on the slide to the rest of the group

Recorder – to take note of important points raised

Reporter – to summarise

Chairperson – to keep the group on task

Invite each group to discuss the following questions:

- *How do you think a person your age living in C20th Ireland would have felt about the way things were? Would boys and girls have felt differently? Why/why not?*
- *How might they have gone along with the way things were?*
- *How might they have resisted or fought against the way things were?*
- *In what ways is the Ireland of today different to the Ireland outlined on the slide?*
- *Do you think that the way things were in C20th Ireland goes some way to explaining why institutions like the Mother and Baby homes existed? Explain your answer.*

Additional information

Depending on your students, you might want to expand on the information on the slide by giving an overview of relevant legislation, as follows:

- Criminal Law Amendment Act (1935) – ban on contraception
- Illegitimate Children (Affiliation Orders) Act (1930)
- Legitimacy Act (1931) – On the one hand, unmarried (natural) fathers escaped parental responsibility but in legal terms, they were not regarded as not being parents at all. The word 'illegitimate' was abolished under the Status of Children Act (1987). The Social Welfare Act (1973) was the first piece of legislation which entitled all mothers, regardless of marital status, to maintenance allowances and children's allowance.

- Children Act (1908) – deals with corporeal punishment, which was not banned in Irish schools until 1982 and in family homes in 2015.
- Prohibition on Divorce (1925)
- Censorship of Publications Act (1929)
- Dance Halls Act (1935)

Possible homework task:

With sensitivity, ask an older person to talk to you about their recollections, with reference to one or more aspects of life in C20th Ireland.

Sources

Abbey Theatre and Larkin College. 2021. [Home: Part 1](#) (teacher pack and slides).

Bhreatnach, A. 2021. [Habitually, rankly immoral: State censorship in Ireland after 1930](#). National Archives Ireland online lecture series – video, 1 hour 9 mins.

Biggins, T., Howard, J., McDonagh, H., O'Reilly, E. & Shen, S. 2021. 'Guidebook for Teachers: Ireland's Dark History'. The Irish Centre for Human Rights, University of Galway.

Buckley, S-A. [Institutionalisation and Gender: From the Foundling Hospitals to the Mother and Baby Homes](#). in Atwal, J. Breathnach, C. & Buckley, S-A. eds. 2022. *Gender and History*. Routledge: London.

Chapter 36: Attitudes to children born outside of marriage, [Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes](#). pp. 29–30.

Earner-Byrne, L. 2007. *Mother and Child: Maternity and Child Welfare in Dublin, 1922–60*. Manchester University Press.

O'Rourke, M., McGettrick, C., Baker, R., Hill, R., et al. *CLANN: Ireland's Unmarried Mothers and their Children: Gathering the Data: Principal Submission to the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes*. Dublin: Justice For Magdalenes Research, Adoption Rights Alliance, Hogan Lovells, 15 October 2018, p.14.

Activity 4: For much of the C20th...

...there was a woman in the parish. And she would have been the one to go down to the priest if she got any news... So she found out that my mother was pregnant, ... and she told the priest... So straight way then the priest came to the house. And of course, her parents were nervous and afraid to see a priest coming and the whole lot. So, he took control of everything altogether. He said that ... she was barred from the church because she was a sinner. And...she was to be kept indoors because it would be a bad influence on all the kids around to see her pregnant. It wasn't good. And they told her that there was a place in Tuam ... that, when she was due to have the baby she would be taken to Tuam and the nuns would look after her down there. Of course, it was an awful embarrassment to her mother and father and – of course neighbours around and the chatting going around and all that. The gossip back in them days. So anyway, eventually she was brought to Tuam by her father... So, I was born on the 29th of the 11th '51...

Transcript of interview with P.J. Haverty, Publisher "University of Galway", Asset Id 13756, Archival Record Id TOHP, <https://digital.library.universityofgalway.ie/p/ms/asset/13756>

P.J. Haverty with his mother Eileen (1976)



Eileen and P.J. Haverty (1976), Publisher "University of Galway", Asset Id 13750, Archival Record Id TOHP, <https://digital.library.universityofgalway.ie/p/ms/asset/13750>

Teacher notes

The Mother and Baby home in Tuam, Co Galway was just one Mother and Baby home. Since 2014, the Tuam home has been in the media a lot because of the work of a local historian, Catherine Corless, and her discovery that many of the children who died there were buried in a disused septic tank on the grounds of the old home.

Ask for a volunteer(s) to read the testimony given by P.J. Haverty, whose mother, Eileen, gave birth to him in Tuam Mother and Baby home.

Click back to Unit 1, Slide 9 (bullets with religious beliefs and morals, societal values and norms, laws)

Which of the bullets on this slide relate to what we have just read about Eileen Laverty?

[Possible answers: first 7 bullets]

Click back to Unit 1, Slide 8 (Articles 41 and 42 of the Irish constitution)

Which of the articles in the 1937 constitution can be connected to what we have just read about Eileen Laverty?

[Possible answers: first 4 bullets]

In the case of Eileen Laverty, her entry into the Mother and Baby home was organised by the local priest. The records about how women came to be admitted into the home in Tuam are incomplete, but of those that do exist, it seems they were commonly sent there by the local health authority or by a doctor/medical officer, but members of religious orders did refer women in some cases.

Sources

Chapter 15: The Tuam Children's Home, [Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes](#). p.20.

Chapter 9: Attitudes, [Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes](#). p.20.

03/02/2021, [Transcript of interview with P.J. Haverty](#). University of Galway Digital Collections. Asset Id 13756, Archival Record Id TOHP.

Activity 5: S-I-T

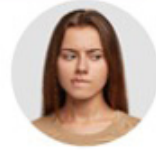
One **S**urprising fact or idea



One **I**nteresting fact or idea



One **T**roubling fact or idea



Teacher notes

Take a few minutes to sit with what you have learned in this unit.

Write down one surprising fact or idea you encountered, one interesting fact or idea that you heard or that struck you, and one fact or idea that troubled you.

You can put your name on your page if you like, but if you would rather not, that is fine as well.

Collect student responses and read them later to find out how students are feeling about and understanding the material covered in this unit. If needed, approach individual students who may need additional support before the next class or, without identifying individual students, address any issues arising at the start of the next class.