Lesson 1
Migration: Focus on Ireland

AIM:
To encourage students to think critically about the experiences of migrants including refugees and asylum seekers

RESOURCES:
Newspaper articles
Large sheets of paper/whiteboard
Blue tack
Sellotape
Markers

BRAINSTORM: WHY DO PEOPLE MIGRATE? (10 MINS)
List the keywords of the responses on a large sheet of paper or whiteboard.
e.g. employment
    better opportunities
    more opportunities
    better life
    better standard of life
    war
    persecution/safer life
    famine
    natural disasters
    better future
    experience

GROUP WORK WITH NEWSPAPER ARTICLES (20 MINS)
1. Divide class into 4 groups; A, B, C and D
2. Give each group a large sheet of paper and markers
3. Give each group the newspaper article pertaining to their group’s letter
   A. Young Irish in UK get poorer jobs
   B. Young Irish emigrants facing risk of anxiety and depression
   C. Letter to the Editor: Cruelty of direct provision for asylum seekers
   D. Letter to the Editor. Irish have long sought refuge overseas and so must offer refuge.
4. Each group nominates a person to read the article and the follow-up questions for their group
5. The group writes the answers to their questions on the large sheets of paper.
GROUP PRESENTATIONS OF ANSWERS (20 MINS)

1. Each group displays the answers to their questions on an area of wall.
2. One member of the group or individuals take it in turns to explain to the group as a whole what their answers relate to.
3. At the end of the presentations allow for Q&As from the larger group as a whole.

GENERAL DISCUSSION (20 MINS)

1. The newspaper articles, questions and presentations should have informed students on issues faced by migrants.
2. Now that students are somewhat better informed, manage further discussion by asking questions to the whole group such as:
   
   • Is it true that Irish migrants left Ireland because they had no other choice?
   • What do you think is the main reason why a person chooses to leave their own country?
   • Do you think direct provision centres are necessary?
   • Would you be able to survive on €19.10 per week if your food and accommodation were paid for?
   • What would you miss most about Ireland if you had to leave?
   • Do asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland experience similar problems to those experienced by Irish migrants abroad?
   • Do you think migrants give much thought to how different the environment or social structure of their new destination might be?
   • Do you think the Irish government should do more for asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland?
   • Can you as teenagers do anything to help alleviate any of the problems faced by asylum seekers or refugees?

CONCLUSION (5 MINS)

Ask students to write down what they consider to be the most interesting piece of information that they learned about migration during the workshop.
Lesson 1 | HANDOUT A

Read the article from the Irish Independent
April 11 | 1991 | pg. 13

Young Irish in UK get poorer jobs

By MARY PUNCH

ALTHOUGH young Irish emigrants have better educational qualifications than young British people, they tend to end up in less-skilled and more badly-paid jobs.

A new report to be published next week reveals that 75 per cent of the Irish youngsters questioned would have stayed at home if they could have found work.

Of the young people surveyed, 76 per cent had obtained their Leaving Certificate and only 8 per cent had left school with no qualifications, compared with the British average of 19 per cent.

Yet 60 per cent of the sample were employed in offices or shops, 23 per cent were in unskilled jobs, 11 per cent in skilled manual work and only 7 per cent in professional occupations.

The report, Over Here — Young Irish Migrants in London, published by the Action Group For Irish Youth, says a central feature of young Irish people’s employment experience was their concentration in jobs that were insecure and lacked employment rights.

Fewer than one in five young Irish migrants had found secure accommodation in London, half had experienced anti-Irish hostility and a fifth said their health had got worse since arriving in the British capital.

Use the following questions to explore the situation for Irish emigrants in the UK in the 1990s;

1. What appears to have been their main reason for emigrating to the UK?

2. What type of jobs did they tend to get?

3. What was the main feature of their jobs according to the Action Group for Irish Youth?

4. Why do you think the Irish were working in “less skilled and more badly-paid jobs” than young British people even though they appeared to be better educated?

5. Apart from insecure jobs what were the other problems experienced by Irish emigrants at this time? Discuss.
Read the article on Irish emigrants from the Irish Independent

June 18 | 2011 | pg. 9

Young Irish emigrants facing risk of anxiety and depression

Declan Cashin

YOUNG Irish emigrants to the UK face a real risk of developing anxiety problems and depression, a London counselling service has claimed.

“The new diaspora – people who have come over with hopes that things will be better financially here – suddenly find they’re without all their familiar networks and points of reference,” said Alan Corbett, clinical director of Immigrant Counselling and Psychotherapy (ICAP), based in north London.

“I think over the coming years ICAP will see younger people coming in with issues of depression, anxiety, and a real sense of yearning for the life they thought they would have.”

The charity is at the centre of attention today and tomorrow as Bob Dylan, Van Morrison, Christy Moore and The Cranberries are among those playing the London Feis in Finsbury Park to raise funds for the service.

ICAP, which was founded 15 years ago by London-based Irish psychotherapist Teresa Gallagher, primarily offers counselling services to older Irish immigrants in London and Birmingham.

“One of the most terrible statistics is that if you’re an Irish male living in Britain you could be twice as likely to take your own life than the population average,” says ICAP CEO Gary Peredery.

“Only the Pakistani community in London has higher rates of emotional distress than the Irish community.”

Indeed, almost half of ICAP clients are men, many of whom suffered physical and sexual abuse in Ireland, but never spoke about the trauma. It’s believed as many as 15% of survivors fled Ireland for Britain once they turned 16.

To that end, the Irish Department of Health provides one funding stream for ICAP to work with survivors of abuse.

“Trauma has a really long aftermath,” says Mr Corbett.

“Many of the people who have gone through institutional or clerical abuse are very old now, but to them it’s as if it happened just last week.”

He adds that other issues facing immigrants in Britain include loss of identity, alcohol and substance abuse, loneliness, and even, still, racism.

“We were in Birmingham recently and Irish people there told us how they are still bearing the brunt of the Birmingham bombings,” Mr Corbett says. “There’s a real sense of that scar being very deep. People have talked to us about having to hide their accents for years, having been targeted as terrorists.”

1. What unexpected problem is faced by many Irish emigrants to the UK?

2. What shocking statistic is revealed in the article in relation to Irish male emigrants?

3. What common experience does more than half of clients share who use the services of Immigrant Counselling and Psychotherapy?

4. What other issues faced by Irish emigrants does the article highlight?
Read the letter published in the Galway City Tribune

October 26 | 2012 | pg. 14

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WRITE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, GALWAY CITY TRIBUNE, MARKET STREET, GALWAY. EMAIL LETTERS@TRIBUNE.IE

Cruelty of direct provision for asylum seekers

As an asylum seeker living in Galway for over four years, I am happily surprised about the attention that the closure of Lisbrook House has generated in both the media and the community.

Over 95% of the residents of the Lisbrook House don’t care about the transfer issue, they just take their bag and go to wherever they have been transferred to.

The questions they ask are: How long do we have to stay in direct provision (hostels), before we get a decision on our applications? How long will families of four or five continue to share one room, irrespective of gender? How long are we to be deprived of post-secondary education, even PETAC? How long before children will be able to taste their mothers’ cooking? How long before parents will be able to pay for school trips for their children? How will children in the hostel feel, if and when they are allowed to reside officially in the state? Will they integrate properly and happily? What is the psychological effect of what they are going through on their future? How long before the Irish citizens see the institutional abuse in the direct provision? How long will fathers continue to be deported, leaving behind mothers and children for years? There are three such families in the Lisbrook House whose husbands/fathers are as good as dead in the last three years. There is a high number of us on anti-psychotic and anti-depressant drugs (Olanzapine, Seraline, Seroquel etc. are constant companions).

So many reports have condemned the direct provision. The most recent is the one by the Irish Refugee Council on the plight of children in the State’s asylum process, which suggests “many families are living in circumstances of extreme poverty in overcrowded accommodation with inadequate food”.

The free legal advice centre in there bulletin of volume 20 number 1 of January-March 2010 among other recommendations called for the abolition of the direct provision. It is a system that is meant to serve as deterrent to other people from coming to seek asylum in Ireland, rather than provision for vulnerable people in the society.

Ireland is a country that three years ago had over 50,000 of its citizens living “undocumented” (illegal) in America, according to the Oireachtas debate of October 4, 2011. The Irish government is doing all it can to lobby and help them. At the current rate of emigration only God knows how many are in Australia, Canada, Asia and Africa! The Irish love to help the “poor African child”, “the unfortunate children of Chernobyl”, it made a national mobilisation to help “the disaster-struck Haitians”... so where does the Irish hostility to asylum seekers come from?

Many Irish who emigrated planned ahead for their journey and can decide to visit loved ones in Ireland anytime they want to. Parents get to visit their children wherever they are. These are privileges we don’t have. We grieve deaths of children, siblings and parents that we left behind, all alone here far away from home.

The Irish are loving and caring people. The life of an asylum seeker is unimaginable, help to make our stay in Ireland a memorable one no matter how short or long it is. We have emotions too!

Name withheld

1. Identify the key issues that have been raised by the writer in relation to the asylum process in Ireland.

2. Do you agree with the writer on their view that “It is a system that is meant to serve as deterrent to other people from coming to seek asylum in Ireland, rather than provision for vulnerable people in the society”?

3. If given the power to prioritise just 3 of the issues highlighted by this Galway based asylum seeker what 3 would you tackle and why?
Lesson 1 | HANDOUT D

Read the article letter to the editor published in the Cork Examiner
June 24 | 2015

Irish have long sought refuge overseas and so must offer refuge

So far, the Irish navy has rescued 1,700 men, women and children in the Mediterranean and deposited them in Italy. Not surprisingly, Italy is having great difficulty coping with the huge numbers of asylum seekers that are being forced upon it, estimated to have been 170,000 in 2014 and expected to be 200,000 in 2015.

France has closed its borders to migrants travelling from Italy, and other European countries are also considering border restrictions. The international refugee system is at breaking point, especially in Italy, yet, the Irish navy is landing hundreds of additional migrants in Italy each week.

Ireland has clear obligations with regard to refugees and asylum seekers, under the UN Refugee Convention 1951 (and its subsequent protocols).

Yet, instead of taking our fair share of asylum seekers, Ireland has been using another convention, known as the Dublin III regulation, to send asylum seekers back to the country where they first entered the EU, or to the other four countries (Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland)

who are part of Dublin III regulations. However, since the Irish naval ship, LE Eithne, is arguably the equivalent of Irish sovereign territory, when on the high seas, any asylum seekers who are taken on board should be entitled to apply for asylum in Ireland. Other states that have signed up to Dublin III should likewise be entitled to send these asylum seekers to Ireland. Irish people fleeing hunger, poverty and persecution have found refuge in many foreign countries, even in recent times. Its time we lived up to our humanitarian obligations.

Dr Edward Horgan
Newtown
Castletroy
Limerick

1. How many asylum seekers had the Irish navy rescued at the point of writing?

2. How many asylum seekers will have landed on Italian shores when figures for 2014 and 2015 are combined? (Note: the capacity of Aviva stadium is 50,000).

3. What does the Dublin III regulation allow countries to do?

4. Do you think that if asylum seekers were taken on board an Irish naval vessel such as the LE Eithne, Ireland should automatically be responsible for processing their asylum application?

5. Explain the suggestion made by the writer that in recent times “Irish people fleeing hunger, poverty and persecution have found refuge in many foreign countries.”
### DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

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### GRAPHIC NOVELS

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### PICTURE BOOKS

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