

# ACTIVATE

No. 41 April 2009

The Newsletter of the Association of CSPE Teachers (ACT)  
Supporting Citizenship Education in Ireland

[info@cspeteachers.ie](mailto:info@cspeteachers.ie)

[www.cspeteachers.ie](http://www.cspeteachers.ie)



## Senior Cycle

Our 08/09 Conference was held in February in the Blackrock Education Centre. Mella Cusack (above) addressed the Open Forum and spoke of the new Senior Cycle subject Politics and Society. The proposed syllabus for this new subject is currently going out for consultation and we urge our members to get involved. The syllabus, we are told, will shortly be on the NCCA website ([www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie)) as will sample teaching activities on the Action section of the site. The Association will also make a submission and we would welcome our members opinions to [info@cspeteachers.ie](mailto:info@cspeteachers.ie).

## New Committee

A new committee for ACT was elected at the AGM. At the most recent committee meeting of ACT the following officers were elected: *Chair*: Jeanne Barrett, Dublin; *Vice-Chair*: Phillip Irwin, Dublin; *Secretary*: Catherine Byrne, Dublin; *Treasurer*: Finbar Loftus, Cork; *P.R.O.*: Brendan O'Regan, Arklow; Bernadine O'Sullivan, Dublin; Patricia Dennehy, Greystones

## Important Dates

This year's deadline for the completion of RAPs and CWABs is **Friday, 2nd May**. Blank RAPs and CWABs for this year's examination candidates have already been sent to schools by the State Examinations Commission. The CSPE Exam this year is on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June from 1.30 pm to 3 pm.

## Factsheets

Now available from NCCA - new **Factsheets** on a variety of subjects. These are suitable to give to students and parents to inform them about the courses. The CSPE Factsheet is at [http://www.ncca.ie/uploadedfiles/Factsheets/CSPE\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.ncca.ie/uploadedfiles/Factsheets/CSPE_factsheet.pdf)

The general list of factsheets is at

<http://www.ncca.ie/index.asp?locID=694&docID=-1>



## Membership Matters

Memberships for 2008/2009 are now due. Please send €20 to Finbar Loftus, 9 Birchgrove, Ballintemple, Cork. Check mailing label for status.

## Powerpoint Downloads Still Available

Useful for revision purposes, we can offer updated versions of our Powerpoint downloads that might be of use: *Famous Faces Powerpoint* - presentation including many of the new political leaders of recent times; *Famous Political Buildings* - based on pictures that came up in the exam paper a few years ago; *CSPE Facts* - revision aid with some useful facts and figures for Section 1 of the exam paper; *New Government Ministers* – the current Cabinet (we also have a Word document with colour pictures of the cabinet). We can send these on request – email [info@cspeteachers.ie](mailto:info@cspeteachers.ie)  
Ideas for other revision aids would be welcome.

## Local Elections Exhibition

As momentum builds towards the Local Elections in June 2009, the Local Elections in Ireland Exhibition visited Dublin City Library and Archive, Pearse Street, Dublin 2 in March 2009. The exhibition gave the citizens of Dublin a unique opportunity to assess the history and impact that local elections have had in Ireland from 1898 to 2008. The exhibition focussed on how elections work, how people use their vote, and explored local elections that left a significant impression on Irish society. Featuring material from Dublin City Library & Archives, the exhibition was particularly suited to CSPE students (aged 12-14) as through election posters, ballot boxes, newspapers and electoral registers, it animated the story of local democracy in Ireland. Students had the opportunity to interact with exhibition by completing a quiz and checking the Electoral Rolls Database to see if their grandparents were registered to vote in 1937-1964. Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government John Gormley said “I hope that, through initiatives like this exhibition, we can provide voters and communities with the opportunity to assess what benefits and changes local elections have brought to our society”

The exhibition was prepared by the Local Authority Archivists Group with funding from the Heritage Council, and will travel to Local Authorities across Ireland throughout 2009.

Further Information: Dublin City Archives [cityarchives@dublincity.ie](mailto:cityarchives@dublincity.ie) 01-6474997/6744848

Here are the non-Dublin dates for the Local Government Exhibition:

April 2009	South Tipperary County Council Archivist: Roisin O’Grady 052 34565 <a href="mailto:archives@southtippcoco.ie">archives@southtippcoco.ie</a>	Clare County Council Archivist: Rene Franklin Tel: 00 353 65 684 6414 or 00 353 65 684 6269 E-mail: <a href="mailto:archivesrecords@clarecoco.ie">archivesrecords@clarecoco.ie</a>
May 2009	Longford County Council Archivist: Martin Morris <a href="mailto:mmorris@longfordcoco.ie">mmorris@longfordcoco.ie</a>	Galway County Council Archivist: Patricia McWalter Phone 091 562471 Email: <a href="mailto:info@galwaylibrary.ie">info@galwaylibrary.ie</a>
June 2009	Louth County Council Archivist: Lorraine Buchanan  Tel: 042 9339387 Fax: 042 9339304 Email: <a href="mailto:archive@louthcoco.ie">archive@louthcoco.ie</a>	Donegal County Council Archivist: Niamh Brennan Tel: +353 74 9172490 E-Mail: <a href="mailto:archivist@donegalcoco.ie">archivist@donegalcoco.ie</a>
July 2009	Cavan County Council +353 (0)49 4378300 <a href="mailto:archives@cavancoco.ie">archives@cavancoco.ie</a>	Leitrim County Council Archivist T: + 353 (0)71 9645582 E: <a href="mailto:library@leitrimcoco.ie">library@leitrimcoco.ie</a>

# Action Project Ideas .....

## ‘Lights Out!’

*By Ronan Swift St. Columba’s College, Dublin 16*

St. Columba’s is a seven day boarding and six day teaching co-educational school in the Dublin hills. With up to 80% of the pupil body comprised of boarders it is surprisingly easy for them to forget the outside world and tune out from current affairs and their citizenship of the wider world altogether. Being a small, self contained community of around three hundred people (pupils and residential staff and their families) does however engender other positives such as a sense of ‘togetherness’ sometime lacking in our wider society.

Form III c’s action project idea was a simple one and was interesting as it sought to capture the imagination of the whole school. The main body of the project invited the school to enter a competition to design a striking image (text was allowed, as were designs created on computer) that would encourage all members of the college community to turn off the lights in their classroom, dormitory, accommodation, office or study when not needed. The winning entry would be reduced to a credit-card sized ‘badge’ and affixed to the wall at every light switch on the campus.

Clearly this project falls under the concept of Stewardship. There were many meaty jobs for the group to complete. Firstly a delegation arranged to meet with the college Bursar (who pays the electricity bill!) to ask for her approval but also for any statistics on current energy expenditure in the school. These boys established a striking statistic: that during the winter months of November to February the college spends a staggering €35 an hour on electricity. This is all the more note worthy since the school is heated by gas and so the majority of that figure must have been spent on lighting.

Another group wrote to the Chaplain asking for a slot during our daily chapel service to introduce the competition to everyone. Then three brave souls did just that to a positive reception. This involved further research on global energy issues too. A committee was appointed with the task of selecting a judging panel which ended up including the Head of Art, the Bursar herself and the current holder of the senior art prize. The tuck shop offered 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes in the form of gift vouchers as the competition prizes.

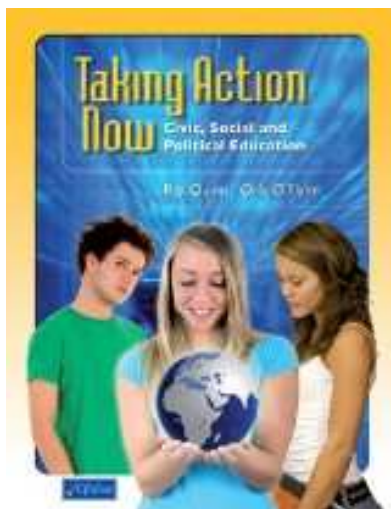
Even when a winner was selected there was further work to be done. One group was given to task of pricing different print jobs and perhaps more humdrum but vital was the job of simply counting how many light switches the school has.

This action project is in fact ongoing at the time of writing. Whether or not the Junior Cert. candidates will be allowed to play some part in assisting the maintenance crew in fixing the badges to the walls has not yet been discussed. I hope that they get this opportunity as well.

The really interesting aspect will surely come further into the future when these enthusiastic pupils might return to the Bursar’s office to find a reduced electricity bill (and carbon footprint) as a result of their actions.

**Note: We are always interested in printing accounts by teachers of interesting Action Projects – contact [info@cspeteachers.ie](mailto:info@cspeteachers.ie)**

## NEW RESOURCES!!

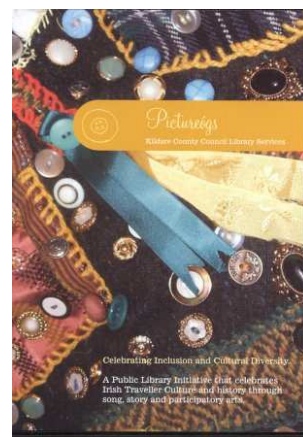


**Taking Action Now** from CJ Fallon Company is designed to prepare Junior Certificate Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) students for their exam and beyond. The text closely follows the syllabus requirements and has been reviewed by teachers. The book is divided into 25 chapters, which are grouped under the seven course concepts: Rights and Responsibilities; Stewardship; Human Dignity; Development; Democracy; Law and Interdependence. Laid out in a concise format with easy-to-read text, all chapters have an abundance of questions, as well as a wealth of ideas for activities and actions. Resource banks, at the end of each chapter, provide students with opportunities to search for further information. Case studies throughout provide students with real-life examples. Includes guidelines on how to prepare action projects and course-work assessments. Includes tips for

students on how to conduct a survey, contact an organization, write letters, invite a guest speaker, design posters and carry out an interview. Accompanying workbook features a selection of exercises and previous examination questions. 176 pages in full colour. ISBN: 9780714416908. Contact your book reps or ring CJ Fallon for sample copies. Tel.: 01 6166490

**Pictureogs: Engaging and Exploring Irish Traveller Culture** is a free DVD from the Kildare County Library Service - an 18 min visual representation of stories, songs and textile works by Travellers from Athy. It is part of the library's Cultural Inclusion and Social Cohesion Programme. The video, in segmented form, is also available to view on YouTube and on the library's website

<http://www.kildare.ie/library/storysacks.asp>



### **Trocaire 2009 Photo Pack**

This is a photo pack to accompany Trócaire Lenten Campaign of 2009 on internally displaced persons, but can be used at any time of the year. The 12 photographs contained within this pack are designed to be used as stimulus material to encourage the use of critical thinking and analysis skills. It is accompanied by a CSPE Resource that is focused on action and skills, and by a map for use in the classroom that illustrates populations displaced due to war and conflict zones around the world. All these resources and more can be downloaded at: <http://www.trocaire.org/lent/education-resources>

**Activate** is published once per school term by the Association of CSPE Teachers—supporting citizenship education in Ireland. Articles and letters for publication should be sent to the editor, Brendan O'Regan, Arklow CBS, Co. Wicklow, 0402-39176, or emailed to [info@cspeteachers.ie](mailto:info@cspeteachers.ie)