

ACTIVATE

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

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www.cspeteachers.ie



Annual Conference 2009

Our **Annual Conference and AGM** will take place in the Hilton Hotel, Kilmainham, Dublin, on Saturday 3rd October 2009. The theme of this year's conference is Children's Rights, and we are delighted to have as guest speaker Emily Logan, the Ombudsman for Children (pictured above), who will address the Open Forum. As usual there will be a range of workshops, including Child Labour (Concern), Child Soldiers (Trócaire), Humanitarian Law (Red Cross), the History of Children's Rights (Jeanne Barrett, MSC in Human Rights from the London School of Economics and our current Chairperson), the Position of the Child in the Irish Constitution (Pat Cahill, secondary teacher and Bachelor of Law), Student Councils and CSPE (Deirdre Phelan - Student Council Coordinator with the Second Level Support Service), and of course our always popular workshops on Organising Action Projects (with Kieran Shanahan, Local Facilitator for CSPE with SLSS) and on Reporting on Action Projects (with Bill Doherty, Chief Advising Examiner for CSPE). Brochures and booking forms should have arrived in schools last week, are included with this mailing, and you can also download them on our website – www.cspeteachers.ie/news.html). They can also be requested using email link above. Please pass on this information to colleagues – esp CSPE teachers and TY Coordinators.

CSPE Support

Conor Harrison has been appointed National Co-ordinator for a suite of subjects under the heading 'Cultural and Environmental Education'. He will continue to have responsibility for CSPE, and the following subjects will be added to his portfolio: Art, Classical Studies, Geography, Greek, History, Latin and Music. The Administrative Support is located in County Wexford Education Centre in Enniscorthy and will be administered by Ms. Angela Thompson there from 1st September. Contact details: 087-2405710 conorharrison@slss.ie

Referendum

The second referendum on the Lisbon Treaty will take place on Fri Oct 2nd. While it is a complex affair it may be a useful opportunity to enlighten students on the referendum process. On page 3 we have an updated version of an article on using a Referendum as the basis for an Action Project.

Membership Matters

Memberships for 2009/2010 are now due. Please send €20 to our Treasurer of ACT, Finbar Loftus, St Peter's Community School, Passage West, Cork.

Association Response to CSPE paper, 2009

This year's examination paper, with the colour insert, is available at www.examinations.ie

Section 1

Question 1: the pictures are historical rather than current this may present problems for some students.

Question 2: the phrasing of the question on the concepts was very difficult, students may not understand what they were required to do.

Question 3: question involving completion of sentences was satisfactory

Section 2

Stimulus material that accompanied this section was colourful, clear and well presented, the topics were excellent and it was good to see questions on the anniversary of the Declaration on Human Rights and the local elections.

Section 3

There was a good choice of topics. However the questions on what to do about text bullying were rather similar, the class action and the school action might have resulted in the same responses. The question could have asked what could be done nationally. The question on cctv was vague and referred to feelings rather on what students think.

Trócaire Updates

New resource available for CSPE Teachers & Students!

Trócaire is launching a new resource for CSPE this September. The resource contains a DVD featuring an animated story of; What is Aid? How does Aid Work? and Is Aid the Solution? The DVD is accompanied by a booklet featuring simple ideas for classroom activities. It is ideally suited for those looking to explore the concepts of Rights & Responsibilities, Interdependence and Development. For a free copy, please contact Trócaire using the details below. You can also sign up for free Trocaire education materials - if you would like to receive CSPE education resources to use in your classroom, please contact us with your name and school address. Email: mboyce@trocaire.ie or phone 01-6293333 and ask for Mary Boyce.

Student Councils

Just arrived in schools – The Student Council Liaison Teacher File - a folder with useful materials on Student Councils, which can link with CSPE in many ways – e.g. CSPE classes organising the Council elections as an Action Project. Note that this is one of the workshop topics for our Annual Conference.

Knowing Dublin

Knowing Dublin is a programme designed to promote active citizenship among the young people of Dublin. It is aimed at 2nd and 3rd Year CPSE and history students and comprises a published and on-line guide and a free programme of workshops for classes. The workshops are held in City Hall. Among many other activities the students will meet either an elected representative or a council official in the Council Chamber, there will be a video followed by an interactive session with the students, students will see the city treasures and as well as a treasure hunt style worksheet on the day information will be provided in advance. The tour takes about 50 minutes. The first of the workshops for the new school year in the Knowing Dublin series will be held from September 2009. If you are interested in participating please contact: Bernadette Cogan, Central Library, ILAC Centre, 01 8734333, centrallibrary@dublincity.ie or Bernadette.cogan@dublincity.ie

Action Project Ideas

The Referendum as an Action Project by *Brendan O'Regan, Arklow CBS.*

There is a variety of possible approaches for following a referendum in CSPE class. A starting point could be an investigation of the nature of a referendum. The primary resource here of course is The Constitution itself Articles 46 and 47 detail the constitutional provisions for a referendum, and while the language is legalistic it shouldn't be beyond the capabilities of our students, especially with a bit of simplification where necessary from the teacher. These articles could be a spark for class discussion, or the teacher (or students) could type them out, adding questions to make a worksheet. Student or teacher could make a Powerpoint Presentation on these articles. Alternatively a class group could research these articles and present their findings to the class (thus practising those skills vital to the Action Project Reports and Course Work Assessment Books).

The provisions of The Constitution relating to the issues at hand could also be examined. For those having difficulty finding a constitution the text is on the government's available for download (<http://www.constitution.ie/reports/ConstitutionofIreland.pdf>). Other sources of information on the referendum process are the leaflets sent to schools at various stages from the information section of The Houses of the Oireachtas and The Department of the Environment. These may still be hiding somewhere in the staffroom even if they were originally nabbed by the CSPE Department. At this stage it might be an idea to divide the class into small groups – e.g. some for the proposal and some against. It would then be the task of each group to follow in the media the arguments relevant to its position, and to write up and present their findings/arguments to the class on a once off or weekly basis (perhaps in debate format, or Powerpoint presentation). If students or teachers don't have access to Powerpoint, there are free options for creating presentations – e.g. in Google Docs or the Open Office Suite.

Students may need some assistance in finding the material but the teacher can provide the raw resources (e.g.. newspaper articles, letters to the paper, printouts from the web etc.) or point the students in the right direction. In the original Exemplar Materials for Unit 4 (for those still holding on to the striped brown box!) there are excellent guidelines on issue tracking in the media. A search on the RTE news site or the newspaper sites should prove fruitful. In recent referenda the Referendum Commission produces excellent materials. Particularly useful are the booklets sent to each home, which are usually available on their main website (www.refcom.ie) or website specific a current referendum (www.lisbontreaty2009.ie) . The Commission may also produce short TV broadcasts on the issues which should make for even more variety if shown in class. At the end of this process there could easily be a class poll on the issues, providing plenty of reportable activities for APRs and CWABs (speeches, posters, polling, counting). Some ambitious classes have raised the stakes and organised whole school polls on referendum issues.

A study of the national count is a vital part of any referendum project. Those schools situated near a count centre could organise a students' visit to the count. There is usually plenty of room during referendum counts though it might be advisable to check in advance with the local returning officer. CSPE classes could also undertake a registration campaign to ensure that senior students over 18 can vote if they wish.

Note: We are always interested in printing accounts by teachers of interesting

Action Projects – contact info@cspeteachers.ie

Official Inservice Programme for CSPE

Further information and application forms at www.slss.ie - follow the links to "Course Schedules". Details and booking forms have already been sent to schools.

CSPE0901: Induction course for teachers new to Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)

Application Closing Date: Friday, 25th September 2009

Venue and Dates

Tralee Education Centre	Tue 6 Oct 2009 (09:15-15:45)
Drumcondra Education Centre	Wed 7 Oct 2009 (09:15-15:45)
Athlone Education Centre	Thu 8 Oct 2009 (09:15-15:45)
Kildare Education Centre	Tue 13 Oct 2009 (09:15-15:45)
Waterford Teachers' Centre	Wed 14 Oct 2009 (09:15-15:45)
Galway Education Centre	Thu 15 Oct 2009 (09:15-15:45)

CSPE0902: Action Projects & Assessment in Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)

Application Closing Date: Friday, 30th October 2009

CDU, Captain's Rd, Crumlin	Tue 10 Nov 2009 (18:30-21:00)
CDU Captain's Road, Crumlin	Tue 10 Nov 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Mayo Education Centre	Wed 11 Nov 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Donegal Education Centre	Thu 12 Nov 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Navan Education Centre	Tue 24 Nov 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Waterford Teachers' Centre	Wed 25 Nov 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Clare Education Centre	Thu 26 Nov 2009 (18:30-21:00)

CSPE0903: Using Active Learning Methodologies and Resource Packs in CSPE

Application Closing Date: Friday, 20th November 2009

Monaghan Education Centre	Tue 1 Dec 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Tralee Education Centre	Tue 1 Dec 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Blackrock Education Centre	Wed 2 Dec 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Laois Education Centre	Thu 3 Dec 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Carr-on-Shannon Ed. Centre	Wed 9 Dec 2009 (18:30-21:00)
Co. Wexford Education Centre	Thu 10 Dec 2009 (18:30-21:00)

Co-operative Learning in RE, CSPE & SPHE

Book at least 2 weeks ahead of course.

Kilkenny Education Centre	Mon 28 Sep 2009 (16:30-18:30)
Sligo Education Centre	Tue 29 Sep 2009 (19:00-21:00)
Sligo Education Centre	Mon 9 Nov 2009 (19:00-21:00)
Kilkenny Education Centre	Mon 23 Nov 2009 (16:30-18:30)

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, or emailed to info@cspeteachers.ie