



Waterways Ireland Oral History Project Lesson Plan 4

Lost in Translation

Transition Year Subject

History, language, research methods, English

KS 4

Critical Thinking, history, English, Environment and Society

Aims of Lesson

This Lesson Plan will introduce students to the idea of oral history and will encourage them to engage with story and memory, will familiarize students with sites such as the Waterways Ireland Archive website and help them develop a better understanding of waterways heritage

By linking with the Lost in Translation TY Unit as well as Environment and Society in KS4 this Lesson Plan will enable students to hear about life in the past and how it has changed for some people in society. This can often mean that older and young people have different experiences and understandings of the world. They will be shown how memory, story and oral history can help bridge that gap.

What you Need

Internet Connection,
Whiteboard/Computer,
amplification and activity paper.

Preparation

Teachers should make sure that the Waterways Ireland Archive website is accessible within the classroom and that the oral history selections are playing through your speaker system/whiteboard.

Getting Started

To begin, pupils need a basic understanding of what the term oral history means. Write the term 'oral history' on the board and invite them to explain it. Oral sources can be divided into two categories:

- Oral History – The direct memories of a speaker
- Oral Tradition – Stories passed to the speaker from a previous generation



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Activity 1

Divide the class into groups of three. Give each group a sheet of paper and appoint a writer. Explain to the students that they will all have to listen to two selected pieces of memory (chosen by the teacher). Each piece should be played twice. The groups will then have to discuss the memory and do the following:

- ✓ Identify two ways that the group can find something in common with the memory bearer
- ✓ Identify two ways that life has changed significantly for the person recalling.
- ✓ Decide on three reasons why memory is important to bridge the gap between the generations.

Activity 2

Ask the students to imagine they are being interviewed when they are older. Each group should list and explain (1/2 page) how three aspects of life that might have changed in that time.



Waterways Audio Samples

Choose from two of the following memories

Fred Tiernan



Fred Tiernan from Kiladeas, Irvinestown, Co. Fermanagh explains how he was born on Inniscoonra Island on Lower Lough Erne, where he lived until he was 18 years old.

George Brierley



You will hear George Brierley, a retired Dock Master from Dublin. George speaks about his first job in 1944 at eleven years of age.

Jim Butler 1

Jim Butler 2

Jim Butler 3



Jim Butler, a retired lock keeper from Graiguenamanagh remembers his childhood business of selling worms, reflects on his schooldays and outlines his earliest memories of the waterways.

Michael Clarke



Michael Clarke, a maritime enthusiast from Larne in County Antrim recalls spending time on passenger boats and coal boats as a child.

