



Waterways Ireland Oral History Project Lesson Plan 1

What's With The Weather?

Transition Year Subject

Environmental Studies, History, English

KS 4

Environment & Society, Critical Thinking Skills

Aims of Lesson

This Lesson Plan will introduce students to the idea of oral history and encourage them to engage with story and memory. It directly addresses the Transition Year Unit (**What's with the Weather?**) as well as KS3 Area of Learning (**Environment & Society**) by encouraging the recollection and description of their own memories of **Storm Emma**, the heavy snow of 2018, as well as engaging with memories of previous weather events. The lesson will encourage a discussion on climate change and global warming.

What you Need

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

Preparation

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

Getting Started

If introducing oral history, teachers should explain the following:

Oral history is 'the recording of people's memories and experiences and using those oral sources to better understand the past. It 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

- ✓ Divide the class into pairs. The students will be played the memories of two men who remember the 'big snow' of 1947. Play each of the audio clips consecutively (twice). Ask the student groups to discuss the audio segment they listened to. Each pair should be expected to Demonstrate 'active listening' by summarizing what was said in both segments.
- ✓ The teacher should play the following news reports of Storm Emma to remind students of what the weather episode was like.

RTE News Storm Emma Anniversary Report

- ✓ **Irish Independent Storm Emma Status Red Warning Report**

The students should then be asked to individually prepare and write their own memories of the heavy snowfalls of March 2018. Students should be encouraged to describe their memories and experiences of the snow, how they felt, the games they played etc. They should also be asked to discuss who this event (and the events recalled in the audio segments) make them feel.

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The class should be then encouraged to discuss how the memories contribute to debate and discussion around climate change and global warming.



Remember: The stories you will hear are told in a variety of different accents from across the island of Ireland, so listen carefully!

Waterways Audio Samples

Tommy Holland

Tommy Holland from Nutgrove in Whitegate, County Clare recalls his knowledge of freezes on Lough Derg including 1917, 1947 and 1963-63.

George Morrissey

George Morrissey, a historian from Belturbet in County Cavan recalls 'The big freeze' of 1947

