AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA | DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

The 'Decade of Centenaries' all-island history competition for primary and post-primary schools 2017

1. The Decade of Centenaries

The decade 2012-2022 is categorised as the 'Decade of Centenaries' as it marks the centenary of a number of important historical events and developments that occurred in the period 1912-1922, and which formed a vital role in the formation of modern Ireland.

As part of the 'Decade of Centenaries' commemorations, schools and students at all levels of primary and post-primary schools across the island of Ireland are invited, in the 2016-17 school year, to enter the fourth annual all-island schools' history competition. The selected themes have a particular link to the events of a century ago across the island of Ireland.

2. The all–island schools history competition

The 'Decade of Centenaries' all-island schools history competition for primary and post primary schools is sponsored by the Department of Education and Skills, Mercier Press and University College Cork School of History. It is also supported by 'History Ireland'.

This year, at both primary and post-primary levels, there will be specific categories for projects on:

- **Revolution in Ireland** – a study of a political/revolutionary event from the 1912-1922 period, a particular aspect of the event, or an individual/group/organisation associated with it.
- **Ireland and the First World War** – a study of the Irish experience of the war from the perspective of an individual or group. This could involve a focus on a particular battle or a consideration of the entire 1914-1918 period.
- **Women's history in Ireland during the revolutionary period** – a study of a particular individual/group/organisation/movement striving to improve the quality of women's lives in Ireland in the 1912-1922 period.

- **A local/regional studies theme from a century ago** – a study of a particular historical event that affected your local or regional area in the 1912-1922 period.

The competition is open to all primary and post-primary schools across the island. The project can be submitted by a class, a group of students, or an individual student. Full details, and the template cover sheet for projects, will be available to download at www.education.ie/historycompetition. The closing date will be **Monday 13th March 2017**, and prizes will be awarded in May that year. Further queries can also be sent to historyaward@mercierpress.ie.

The all-island schools history competition is intended to complement the history curriculum at primary and post-primary level. The competition is entirely optional and is not intended to place any additional burden on schools.

3. Criteria

The maximum word count for projects is 2,000 words at primary level (i.e. for projects submitted by a class, group of pupils or an individual pupil), and 4,000 words at post primary level (i.e. for projects submitted by a class, group of students or an individual student).

All projects must be submitted as word documents. PowerPoint presentations cannot be accepted. Projects will be judged against the following criteria:

- Understanding of the selected individual, event or development: the degree to which the significance of the selected event/s or person is/are understood.
- Assessment of the selected individual, event or development: The extent to which the impact of the selected event/s or person on the local area is/are examined.
- Presentation: the overall presentation of the project should be coherent and accurate with a high standard of literacy. While the incorporation of multimedia resources such as pictures into a project is not compulsory they could enhance the overall presentation of a project. Any resources of this nature that are used are not counted in the word count of the project.
- Research: the extent of research evident in the project. School textbooks may be used as a starting point for the project but they must be supplemented by other sources. Primary documents could also be incorporated into the project where possible in order to enhance the quality of the project. (Due care should be taken that extensive passages are not copied from textbooks or other sources and inserted wholesale into the history project).
- Overall quality: the extent to which the project captures the imagination of the reader.

While not essential, a project might benefit from references to other areas of the curriculum that are relevant to the subject matter chosen. For example, references to drama, art, poetry, or literature of the time could be used to enrich a history project.

Efforts should be taken to include historical referencing of the sources on which the project is based. Projects that plagiarise (copy directly) sources will not be considered eligible to win the competition. Each project must include a bibliography at the end that lists the main primary and secondary sources that have been consulted. The bibliography does not form part of the word count.

The projects will be assessed by a three-person panel that will be chaired by the School of History in University College Cork. The other members of the panel will comprise representatives from the Department of Education and Skills and from Mercier Press.

4. Prizes

There will be 8 prizes in total. This will comprise the following:

- Revolution in Ireland category: 1 primary and 1 post primary winner
- World War I category: 1 primary and 1 post primary winner
- Women in the revolutionary period category: 1 primary and 1 post primary winner
- Local or regional category: 1 primary and 1 post primary winner

Prizes will consist of the following:

- a History trophy to be awarded to each winner
- a mini library comprising titles from the Mercier press website (www.mercierpress.ie), to the overall value of €200 per winner
- all winning entries will be digitised on www.scoilnet.ie and also on the Mercier press website
- one of the winners will be considered for publication in the Sept./Oct. 2017 issue of *History Ireland* and a year's subscription to the magazine.

5. Links to other projects, examinations and competitions

It should be noted that success in the all-island schools history competition should not be considered as any indication of the likely performance by a student or group of students in a state examination, or in any other competition.

It is possible that a student or group of students may wish to use material uncovered during their research for a local project or competition, or for an ancestry or oral history initiative. It is perfectly acceptable for them to use such research to support an entry to this decade of centenaries competition too, provided the entry comes under one of the identified themes and requirements about format, word count and other rules are adhered to.

6. Possible sources for the all-island history project

A variety of sources are available to assist in researching the period 1912-1922. The sources of information listed below will provide a useful starting point for research.

- Local public libraries: all public libraries across the island of Ireland provide access to a range of secondary sources that support the history curriculum. Each local library has an online catalogue that can be searched for relevant books, including biographies. There are central facilities for checking availability of books (www.borrowbooks.ie in Ireland and www.ni-libraries.net in the North of Ireland).
- www.scoilnet.ie: this website is funded by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and provided through the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST). It provides a number of valuable resources to support pupils, teachers and parents in approaching the primary and post primary curriculum.
- www.hist.ie: this website is also funded by the DES and provided through the PDST. It is aimed primarily at post primary students and teachers (as well as

parents). It provides a number of online resources relevant to the period 1912-1922, as well as a major resource called *Discovering Women in Irish History*.

- www.dib.cambridge.org: contains the Dictionary of Irish Biography which is the most comprehensive and authoritative biographical dictionary yet published for Ireland. It contains biographical details of over 10,000 lives, including articles on individuals who had important careers in politics, law, religion, literature, journalism, architecture, the arts, the sciences, and sport. Access to the DIB is free online for schools funded by the Department of Education and Skills.
- www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/military-service-pensions-collection: The many testimonies and accounts of the surviving leaders, veterans and volunteers who took part in the events of the 1916 Rising and afterwards, up to 1923, and supporting documentation gathered from the participants through the unique collection that is the Military Service (1916-23) Pensions Collection.
- dh.tcd.ie/letters1916: The 'Letters of 1916' project includes letters held at institutions (in Ireland and abroad), alongside those in private collections. To date, we have collected over 1800 letters that comment on the Easter Rising, literature and art, the Great War, politics, business, and ordinary life.
- www.100objects.ie contains on-line resources for primary schools based around selected objects from the 'A history of Ireland in 100 objects'.
- www.nmni.com: The home of the National Museums of Northern Ireland, containing links to the Ulster Museum, the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and the Ulster American Folk Park, each of which contains large amounts of images, documents and information.
- www.nationalarchives.ie: The website of the National Archives in Dublin provides a number of digitised resources relating to the history of modern Ireland. There is also an online exhibition relating to the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. The site also allows free access to the 1911 census It also hosts the witness statements from the *Bureau of Military History* for the period 1912 to 1922.
- www.nli.ie: The website of the National Library of Ireland includes a guide for post primary students on how to use the numerous resources available in the library. There are also online case studies of the 1913 lock out, as well as an online exhibition relating to 1916.
- www.proni.gov.co.uk: The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland offers a range of resources that students may find useful. These include a searchable database of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant.
- http://www.cwgc.org/: the website of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission provides a number of resources on the events of WW1 and a searchable database of soldiers who died while fighting in the British Army.
- http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/events/ulster_covenant: the BBC website provides a number of historical resources. In particular, it provides a very readable account of the Ulster League and Covenant with information on the background and other events happening at the time.
- www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/easterrising/: This is a special site on the events, personalities, and impact of the 1916 rising, and includes interviews with witnesses and historians.
- http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/The_Pursuit_of_Sovereignty__the_Impact_of_Partition_1912--1949: The University College Cork multi-text project in Irish history provides resources relating to 'The pursuit of sovereignty and the impact of partition, 1912-1949'. This includes material on key personalities, events and developments in the decade 1912-1922.
- http://www.nmni.com/Home: the website of the Ulster Museum has a number of historical sources including a specific section dealing with events in the decade 1912-1922. This includes an excellent selection of images from the period.

- http://www.rte.ie/centuryireland/: this is a website supported by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht which provides a range of resources to support study of the period 1912-1922.
- www.mercierpress.ie: Mercier Press has published a large number of books that will be suitable for research. Suggested titles can be seen on the site's 'Decade of Centenaries' all-island history competition page. The books should be available from your local library.

7. Submission of projects and announcement of winners

The deadline for receipt of completed projects is **13th March 2017** with the winners being announced, and prizes awarded, before the end of May 2017.

Projects must be submitted online to the following email address: historyaward@mercierpress.ie .

Each project **must include** a cover sheet at the front (a template cover sheet is attached to this letter and is also available to download at www.education.ie/historycompetition) and a bibliography listing the sources consulted.

8. Queries

Any queries on this circular should be directed to historyaward@mercierpress.ie

9. Circulation

Please bring this letter to the attention of your principal, history teachers and members of the school board of management.

Department of Education and Skills,
Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1

Template cover sheet which must be included at the front of all projects

Title of project:

Category for which you wish to be entered (i.e. Revolution in Ireland, Ireland and World War 1, Women's history or a Local/Regional category

Name(s) of class / group of students / individual student submitting the project

School roll number (this should be provided if possible)

School type (primary or post-primary)

School name and address (this must be provided even for projects submitted by a group of pupils or an individual pupil):

Class teacher's name (this must be provided both for projects submitted by a group of pupils or an individual pupil):

Teacher's contact phone number:

Teacher's contact email address