

TEACHER'S NOTES

SECTARIANISM

NEWSSTAND

SPORT

INTRODUCTION:

The central objective is to emphasize that the idea of belonging to a group, particularly a sporting group, can contribute to our sense of identity. In Northern Ireland sport has unfortunately become another avenue for some to vent sectarian feelings, attitudes and behaviour. This lesson will attempt to identify how the roots of sectarianism in sport go back centuries. However, it will also afford students with opportunities to understand how sport is now being used as a mechanism to overcome sectarianism in Northern Ireland and beyond.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- How has sport contributed to sectarianism in Northern Ireland?
- How can sport be used to promote inclusion rather than exclusion?

TIME: 2 hours (2 double periods)

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

This lesson offers students opportunities to explore:

- The extent of sectarian violence in sport in Northern Ireland and beyond
- Concepts of sectarianism, stereotyping and discrimination
- The need to resolve conflicts and work towards reconciliation

Throughout this lesson students will have opportunities to:

- Develop an understanding of the nature of sectarianism and its effects
- Understand resulting conflict and consider how to move towards resolution
- Consider a set of 'rules' (behaviours, attitudes and values) which can support diversity
- Improve their thinking skills and ability to manage information

RESOURCES: newspaper articles

Article A: "Croke Park debate boils up" Sunday Business Post 04/01/04

A profile of the GAA which takes a look at its past, present and future, as well as the removal of Rule 42.

Article B: "Bigotry gets boot from young people" Newsletter 12/06/03

The Irish Football Association takes a stand against bigotry with the launch of a new initiative.

Article C: "Choosing your team can mean life or death" Irish Times 24/08/02

An interesting history of the sectarian rivalry between Rangers and Celtic, and the impact this continues to have in Northern Ireland.

Article D: "Sporting hybrid linked by common Ulster hero" Newsletter 03/03/04

How teenagers from 3 very different sporting traditions are coming together to play a match which will involve a combination of shinty, hurling and hockey. Hopes are expressed that 'cross-code' sporting activities such as this can unite people.

LESSON PROGRESSION:

1. Read Article A
 - a) Explain why you think there is so much controversy surrounding Rule 42 for the GAA
 - b) Identify and explain how the GAA has evolved into "a purely sporting and cultural organisation"
2. Read Article B
 - a) List reasons why the IFA spent thousands on the Red Card Appeal
 - b) Record ways in which this was successful / unsuccessful
3. Read Article C
 - a) Describe, with use of examples, how choosing your football team remains 'a totem of tribalism'
 - b) Explain why two Scottish football clubs have contributed to sectarian violence in Northern Ireland
4. Read Article D
 - a) Describe, with use of examples, how Shinty can unite rather than divide communities
5. Using evidence from the 4 newspaper articles list methods that individuals, society and the government have used to try and wipe out sectarianism from sport

CONCLUSION:

Go back to original definition of sectarianism that students have been developing throughout the lessons. Add to this on the basis of what has been learned in this lesson. Ensure students have the following and that it is recorded.

"Sectarianism can be defined as a system of attitudes, beliefs and actions which exist at individual, community and institutional levels which involves negative expression towards another religious group. In a Northern Ireland context sectarianism involves the addition of both cultural and political elements".

Sectarianism involves bullying types of behaviour such as:

- Excluding the other group e.g. threatening slogans
- Denial of the existence of other groups
- Putting down of other groups

- Domination of the other groups, involving the denial of the other group's rights and abuse of power
- Intimidation and physical attack

(CCEA Appendix 2 2004 Local and Global Citizenship)

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Students should design a pamphlet which includes guidelines for the IFA on how to rid football of sectarianism.