



Lesson Plan: The Black and Tans

– An inquiry focus for TY History students

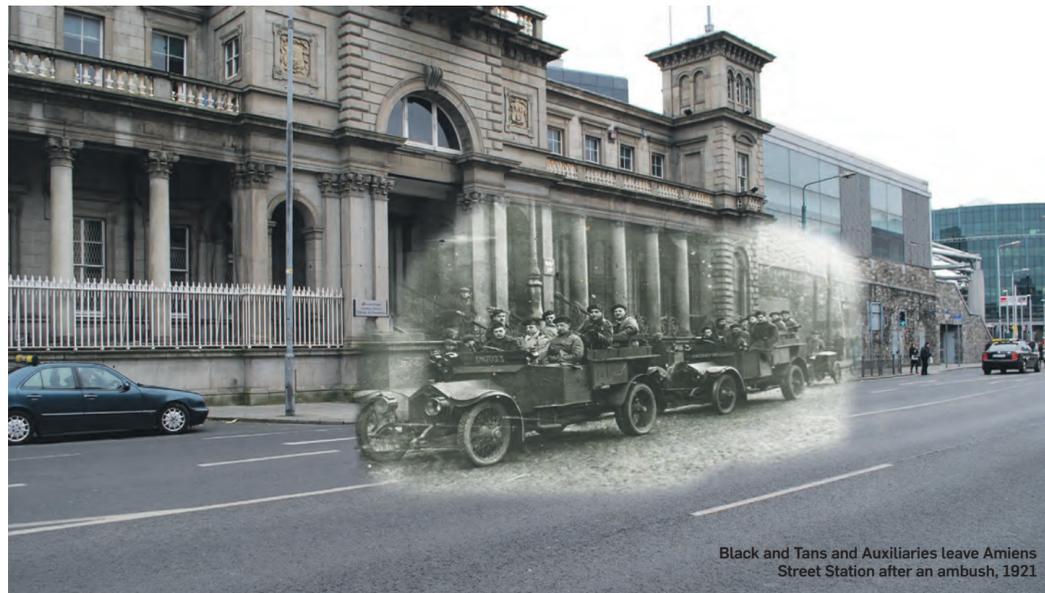
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RATIONALE

We must be careful not to judge the past by present day attitudes or be fearful to let go of long-held beliefs. It is our duty as historians and history teachers to instil the essential principle of objectivity in our students. For they will inherit the mantle of history and shape its understanding. In the decade of centenaries, our current interpretation may shape or skew the discourse of history for years to come. The “Tan War” is perhaps one of the most eulogised periods of Ireland’s modern history. It is venerated in song, story and myth and yet misunderstood. With this in mind, who were the Black and Tans?

This lesson is set for TY students who will focus on investigation, enhancing research skills, evaluating sources, analysing source provenance and using the internet ethically. It may be offered as part of a niche focus within the War of Independence period. However, there are intrinsic links to both the new Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert curriculum/RSR research.

“If a police barracks is burned or if the barracks already occupied is not suitable, then the best house in the locality is to be commandeered, the occupants thrown into the gutter. Let them die there – the more the merrier. Should the order (“Hands Up”) not be immediately obeyed, shoot and shoot with effect. If the persons approaching (a patrol) carry their hands in their pockets, or are



Black and Tans and Auxiliaries leave Amiens Street Station after an ambush, 1921

in any way suspicious-looking, shoot them down. You may make mistakes occasionally and innocent persons may be shot, but that cannot be helped, and you are bound to get

the right parties some time. The more you shoot, the better I will like you, and I assure you no policeman will get into trouble for shooting any man.”

Lieutenant-Colonel, Gerald Bryce Ferguson Smyth, Divisional Commissioner for the province of Munster, June 1920.

		Time Allocated (40-minute class)
Initial Stimulus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the above quote from Smyth, students discuss (Think-Pair-Share) their interpretation of this using only prior knowledge on War of Independence and a brief background by teacher Also shared with students are statistics on the Black and Tans which reveal that 1 in 10 was an Irish Catholic (Think-Pair-Share) 	10 mins
Lesson Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students taught the cause-course and consequences of Smyth’s statement Statistical analysis of Black and Tans with Catholic Irish heritage using IT Students analyse sources on Smyth statement and evaluate outcomes using primary and secondary sources Teacher leads students in understanding diversity within Black and Tans and RIC Group/table evaluate data and offer historical judgements using questions from Effective Questioning. 	20 mins
Lesson Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students write a brief reflection on what they learned from lesson and interpret a new understanding of the period Students offer one key sentence from their reflections to the class group. 	10 mins
Learning Intentions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students understand misconceptions surrounding Black and Tans Students assess impact of Smyth’s speech Students evaluate the consequences of IRA execution of Smyth. 	
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students understand the role of the Black and Tans Students can assess Black and Tans using primary sources Students evaluate objectively actions of IRA Students use Internet to research ethically 	
Success Criteria	Students can use numerous sources to objectively evaluate the origins of Smyth’s speech, its consequences and the significance of the actions of the Black and Tans/IRA during this time period	
Differentiation	Students will have access to IT, paper resources and visuals. Each area can be divided by teacher. Effective Questions can be targeted to challenge each learner in a different way. Each cohort can be tasked with answering a selected question and presenting conclusion-based on historical references and sources.	
Effective Questioning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Was Lt-Col Smyth doing his job? Why would the Black and Tans choose such tactics? Were the protests of the RIC justified? How is this incident significant? Were the IRA justified in killing Smyth? Why would an ordinary Irish person support the IRA? Why would an ordinary Irish person assist the Black and Tans? Were all Black and Tans English criminals? Are Irish Catholics and Protestants different at this time? If so, how? Why would an Irish Catholic join the Black and Tans? 	
Literacy	Focusing on key words: Reprisal, Atrocity, Auxiliary, Mutiny, Protest, Execution, Guerrilla war, Interpretation, Murder, Assassination, RIC, Black and Tan, Independence	
Numeracy	Interpreting statistics and data relating to Black and Tan membership, RIC numbers in Ireland and Membership figures for the IRA	
Student Reflection	Students reflect on findings at the end of the lessons and challenges common perceptions of Black and Tans/IRA and time period.	
Links to JCT	Strand 1 -The Nature of History: 1.1 – 1.11 are applicable Strand 2 – The History of Ireland: 2.3, 2.4, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11	
This lesson and module are conducive to JCT	<p>JCT Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staying Well Managing myself Being Literate Being Numerate Working with others Managing Information & Thinking Commination <p>JCT Statements of Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SOL3: creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts SOL6: appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives SOL8: values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change SOL15: recognises the potential uses of mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning SOL17: devises and evaluates strategies for investigating and solving problems using mathematical knowledge, reasoning and skills SOL24: uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner 	
Links to LC	Irish History Topic 3 – Pursuit of sovereignty and the impact of partition, 1912-1949 Research Study Report – Scope for investigation	
RSR/CBA research	Key personalities/events that may be useful for CBA 1 – The past in my place. Some key personalities/events for potential research are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tom Barry and the Kilmichael Ambush 1920 Bloody Sunday 1920 Thomas D. Huckerby – “Tan Serial killer” Sean MacEoin and the Clonfin ambush HMS Argenta in Belfast Lough The National Loan and the funding of the Dáil The Burning of Cork 1920 Winston Churchill’s Black and Tans William Mitchell – A Black and Tan Executed. 	
Continuing the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RIC policemen joining the IRA RIC policemen fleeing the IRA Smyth’s funeral in Co. Down Rioting for three days after Smyth’s funeral Analysing newspaper reports of the execution and funeral of Smyth Researching Smyth’s brother George Osbert Smyth George Osbert Smyth and his membership of The Cairo Gang George Osbert Smyth’s death whilst attempting to arrest Dan Breen/Sean Treacy Events of Bloody Sunday and the Cairo Gang Mapping the atrocities of the Black and Tans in Ireland Analysing history through songs (Rebel and Loyalist) Analysing history through film (e.g. Wind that Shakes the Barley) 	

APPENDIX 1

Useful Sources

- British Broadcasting Company (BBC), “Wars and Conflict”, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/easterrising/aftermath/af05.shtml#audio>
- The History Learning Site, Ireland 1845-1922, available at <https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/ireland-1845-to-1922/the-black-and-tans/>
- W.J. Lowe, History Ireland Magazine, “Who were The Black-And-Tans?”, No.3., vol. 12., (Autumn, 2004)
- S. Barry, ‘The whereabouts of Eneas McNulty’, (London, 1998)

- D.V. Duff, ‘Sword for hire: the saga of a modern Free Companion’, (London, 1936)
- W.J. Lowe, ‘The war against the RIC, 1919-21’, Éire-Ireland, vol. 37, (Fall/Winter 2002)
- K. Griffith & T. O’Grady, ‘Curious Journey: An Oral History of Ireland’s Unfinished Revolution’, (Mercier Press, 1998)
- Gaughan, A. ‘The Memoirs of Constable Jeremiah Mee’, (Kildare, 1975)
- Bureau of Military History, available at <http://www.bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie/>
- Royal Irish Constabulary: Records and Files, available at, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-irish-constabulary/>
- The Irish History, available at <http://www.theirishstory.com/>