

LESSON
5.



LESSON DESCRIPTION

In the previous lesson in the module, students learned about what the Good Friday Agreement was and how it changed the political landscape of Northern Ireland. This lesson looks at some of the international organisations and mediators that assisted – and continue to assist - the peace process in Northern Ireland.

LESSON INTENTIONS

1. Describe how the signing of the Good Friday Agreement was assisted by international organisations and mediators
2. Discuss the importance of these outside organisations and mediators to the peace process (and the continuation of the peace process)
3. Demonstrate objectives 1 & 2 through digital media

LESSON OUTCOMES

- Be able to explain how Northern Ireland received assistance from international organisations and mediators in reaching a peace agreement.
- Students should also be able to describe and reflect upon how difficult it is bringing opposing sides of a conflict together.
- Employ ICT skills to express an understanding of the topic.

HANDOUTS AND GUIDES

- Lesson 5 Key Information
- Comic Creation Storyboard
- Video Editing Storyboard

DIGITAL

- Suggested Additional Resources

SOFTWARE

- Comic Creation Software e.g. Comic Life
- Video Editing Software e.g. Movie Maker

HARDWARE

- Whiteboard
- PCs / Laptops



ACTIVITY	LEARNING OUTCOMES
<p>Starter – Play <i>Suggested Additional Resources 4</i>, 'Reaction to the Good Friday Agreement', from the Key Information. Despite a peace agreement being struck, why do you think some people still showed some scepticism about the agreement?</p>	<p>Watching the video will give students a recap on how the Good Friday Agreement came about as well as varying reactions (both domestic and foreign) and continued scepticism.</p>
<p>Using the Key Information, teachers will have a choice of activities to engage students.</p> <p>Teachers may choose to split the class into groups and ask students to use the discussion points to discuss some aspects of the Key Information. Students will then share their discussions with the rest of the class.</p> <p>Alternatively, teachers may want to use the Questions/Tasks as group discussion questions or to test individual knowledge.</p> <p>The Alternate Task challenges students to come to an agreement on a topic on which they have differing opinions.</p> <p>*If possible, allow students to research the topic on the internet – suggested additional resources / search engine.</p>	<p>The Key Information is designed to cover the information within the topic and meet the learning intentions.</p> <p>The discussion questions on the Key Information are designed to meet the learning intentions through interaction and Q&A.</p> <p>The questions on the Key Information are designed to meet the learning intentions through the students understanding of the information.</p> <p>The various activities should allow the students to learn while they interact. The activities will also serve to reinforce knowledge and encourage discussion.</p>
<p>Plenary – Ask students to recall an argument or discussion with someone. What did you disagree about? How did it end? Did you agree or disagree in the end up? How can opposing opinions be resolved? Ask students to consider how difficult the peace process in Northern Ireland was - asking two sides to compromise and agree after 30 years of conflict.</p>	<p>The discussion will serve as a recap as to how difficult it can be to come to agreement on a disputed topic and to consider how difficult peace agreements can be to resolve conflict.</p>

KEY
INFORMATION
5.

THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Canadian diplomat **John de Chastelain** in 1997, was appointed Chairman of the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, the group responsible for overseeing and verifying the decommissioning of arms by paramilitaries in Northern Ireland. De Chastelain was assisted by several other international personalities including **Brigadier Tauno Nieminen** of **Finland** and **Ambassador Donald C. Johnson** and **Andrew D. Sens** of the **United States**.

The compromises made between **Britain** and the **Republic of Ireland** concerning their respective representation in Northern Ireland was central to the agreement. In 1997 **Prime Minister Tony Blair** became the first PM since 1921 to meet a Sinn Féin leader (Gerry Adams). Blair worked with Taoiseach **Bertie Ahern** towards finding common ground between Northern Ireland's political parties. Blair appointed Chris Patten as the chairman of the Commission into Policing in Northern Ireland, which became central to securing Nationalist support for the agreement.

The United States had a central role as a mediator throughout the peace talks. In November 1995 President **Bill Clinton** became the first sitting US President to visit Northern Ireland. Clinton attended a rally at Belfast's City Hall where he gave his support to the peace process. The president's encouragement and pressure given to both sides to come to a compromise was a major influence in the creation of the Good Friday Agreement. Clinton also sent Senator **George Mitchell** as the US envoy in 1995; Mitchell would come to chair the peace talks and his participation was crucial to their success.

South African diplomat **Roelf Meyer** - a central factor in the negotiations ending apartheid in South Africa - was a key peace consultant during the negotiations. Based upon his experience in South Africa, Meyer urged Northern Ireland parties to construct their own agreement, independently of both the British and Irish governments.

1.))) DISCUSSION

Why do you think decommissioning was an important part of the Northern Ireland peace process?

WHAT WAS THE ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON DECOMMISSIONING AND WHO LED IT?

Decommissioning, the disposal or handing over of all arms by paramilitary groups, proved to be a particularly contentious issue in the Northern Ireland peace process. The British government had stated that it would not publicly participate in talks with paramilitary groups while the groups were still participating in violent actions. Decommissioning thus became essential to the ultimate success of peace negotiations.

In 1996 an international body chaired by **Senator George Mitchell** released a report on decommissioning, which recommended that the decommissioning process be overseen by an independent commission. In response, the British and Irish governments established the **Independent International Commission on Decommissioning** on 26 August 1997 to oversee, facilitate and monitor decommissioning.

In the Good Friday Agreement, all parties agreed to work towards the disarmament of paramilitary organisations within two years and to verify such disarmament through the IICD. Ultimately the decommissioning progress was drawn out and the goal of complete disarmament in two years was not met. In 2005 the IICD announced that the PIRA had finished decommissioning its arms. Four years later the **Ulster Volunteer Force** officially decommissioned their arms, an action which was replicated by the **Ulster Defence Association** in 2010.

THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT AND THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (ECHR)

The protection of human liberties and rights in Northern Ireland was central to the Good Friday Agreement. Human rights abuses had fuelled social unrest and the violence of the Troubles; thus it was clear to all parties to the Agreement that the establishment of clear protections of human rights was essential to the success of the negotiations. The Equality Commission and the Human Rights Commission were two institutions set up to ensure that the civil, political, social and cultural rights of people are upheld.

THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT AFFIRMED CIVIL RIGHTS INCLUDING:

- freedom of political thought, expression and religion,
- right to equal opportunity
- freedom from sectarian harassment.

The Agreement certified that the British Government would incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which affirms basic rights for all European citizens, into the law of Northern Ireland.

2.))) DISCUSSION

Why are Peace Funds important to the peace process?

THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT AND EU PEACE FUNDS

Since the beginning of the peace process, international bodies and nations have sought to support Northern Ireland with economic assistance. In 1995 the EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland, which became known as PEACE I, was established to promote reconciliation and a peaceful, stable society with funds of €667 million. This first program has been followed by Peace II (2000-2006), Peace III (2007-2013) and Peace IV (2014-2020) programs.

The Good Friday Agreement established the Special EU Programmes Body, which has the responsibility of allocating peace funds from the European Union.

The Peace Funds have provided for programs to develop positive cross community relations, which have allowed for more constructive ways of dealing with the past and better strategies for dealing with the future.

GEORGE MITCHELL

US Senator George Mitchell played a pivotal role in the Northern Ireland peace process from 1994 to 2001. The British and Irish governments asked Mitchell in 1995 to chair an international body which would deal with the issue of arms decommissioning. The body produced a report in January 1996 which contained six principles of democracy and non-violence, known as the "Mitchell Principles" - ground rules which all potential parties to talks had to agree to. When negotiations commenced in June 1996, Senator Mitchell was appointed chair of the talks. Mitchell was awarded with an honorary knighthood in December 1998 in recognition of how vital his participation was to the success of the peace talks.

All of those parties involved with talks had to commit to the following principles...

1. *Resolve political issues peacefully and democratically*
2. *The total disarmament of all paramilitary groups*
3. *Any disarmament must be verified by an independent commission*
4. *Renounce and oppose any effort by those who would use force, or threaten to use force to influence the course or outcome of all-party negotiations*
5. *All parties must abide by the terms of any agreement reached by all-party talks. Any aspect of the agreement they disagree with, they must address it peacefully and democratically*
6. *Take effective steps to stop "punishment" killings and beatings*



QUESTIONS

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1. What was significant about President Bill Clinton's visit to Northern Ireland in 1995?

2. Explain why decommissioning was important to the peace process and what the role of the IICD was.

3. State the role Senator George Mitchell played in Northern Ireland.

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4. Explain how EU peace funds help Northern Ireland to deal with the past.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY 1:

Create a table with 2 columns. In the left column write the names of 3 people who played a role in the Northern Ireland Peace Process. In the right column describe what their role was.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY 2:

In your opinion, why do external mediators play an important role in conflict resolution?

TASK 1

The Special EU Programmes Body allocates peace funds to pay for programs to develop cross community relations to help people deal with and learn about the past. Included in this are education programs for young people.

In groups answer the following questions:

- Do you think these programs make a difference to the way young people view Northern Ireland's past?
- Why do you think it is important for people your age to learn about the past?
- Why is learning about the past important for the future?

TASK 2:

Using Suggested Additional Resources 2 and 3, describe what the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is and what the Equality Commission is.

In groups, discuss and record how you would ensure that civil rights and equality could be respected in Northern Ireland. Take into account the past and present events.

ALTERNATE TASK

- In groups of three, students will take part in a discussion on a certain issue - two students will take opposing sides of the argument and one student will act as a mediator.
- The topic for discussion will either be decided upon by the students or supplied by the classroom teacher - it should be a topic that is quite divisive (e.g. the best football team in the country, the best music act in the world, etc...)
- After the topic is decided upon, each student will have three minutes to prepare their argument for/against. Each student will then present their argument to the mediator.
- The job of the mediator will be to listen to each argument and try to make each side understand each other's point of view (and perhaps concede on a point or two!).
- After discussions have ended, the mediator will note down a list of shared or agreed views. Students will then consider the following: Is there anything that could not be agreed upon? How difficult was it to get someone to accept/understand a different point of view?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- 1)  http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/activity/ireland/index_en.cfm - An explanation of the Northern Ireland Peace Program
- 2)  <http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/schools/agreement/equality/hr1.shtml> - The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
- 3)  <http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/schools/agreement/equality/equality1.shtml> - Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
- 4)  http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/events/good_friday_agreement#p017ky6g - Reaction to the Good Friday Agreement



DIGITAL TASKS

COMIC CREATION TASK



TASK DESCRIPTION

Students will create a comic which explains who George Mitchell was and how he played a role in the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. Students will research the topic by reading the Key Information and if possible, performing extra research on the internet. (Alternatively, images and information may be sourced by the teacher prior to the lesson).

PLAN

Images and information will be sourced from the internet and designed in the form of a storyboard.

- Students will be supplied with search terms by the teacher and source appropriate images and text from the internet – ask students to consider the reliability and objectivity of the information they find.
- Students will identify and select images/text to use and save them appropriately in a dedicated folder with a meaningful filename.
- Students will keep an account of the sites they have visited in a saved document.
- Students will use the images and information they have sourced and design their comic on a storyboard.

DO

Students will use images and speech bubbles/caption boxes to explain who George Mitchell is. Students will use at least 3 images that they have sourced. Students will complete their piece of work by exporting it in a suitable file format (e.g. JPEG)..

- Encourage students to consider the size and style of fonts, the size and cropping of images, the colours used and the tools available to them within the software package.
- Remind students to save their work in a dedicated folder with an appropriate filename.

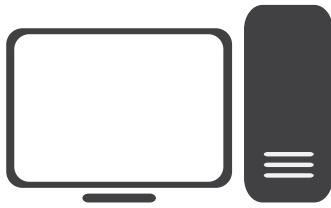
REVIEW

Give students the opportunity to view each other's work. This may be done by displaying the best work on the whiteboard or students may circulate the room.

Taking other students' feedback into account, ask students to justify their choices and decisions, including any difficulties they encountered in the creation of their comic. This may be completed in the form of a saved document.

EXTENSION TASK

Students will add an extra page to their comic which details some of the conditions that opposing parties had to agree to before taking part in peace talks.



DIGITAL TASKS

FILM MAKING TASK



TASK DESCRIPTION

Students will create a movie of at least 30 seconds which explains what decommissioning was and why it was a key aspect of the Northern Ireland peace process. What role did the International Independent Commission on Decommissioning play? Students will research images (and if possible audio and video) and information from the internet which will be used in their movies.

PLAN

Information will be sourced from the internet and designed in the form of a storyboard.

- Students will be supplied with search terms by the teacher and source appropriate images, videos, audio and information from the internet – ask students to consider the reliability and objectivity of the information they find.
- Students will identify and select information to use and save it appropriately in a dedicated folder with a meaningful filename (this may be images or quotes that helped them to write their script).
- Students will keep an account of the sites they have visited in a saved document.
- Students will use the information and media they have sourced and construct a storyboard for the making of their movie.

DO

Students will import the various media items they sourced from the internet. Using their storyboards as a guide, students will construct their movie using various editing tools (Splitting, Trimming, Transitions, Effects and Captions/Titles). Students will complete their piece of work by exporting it in a suitable file format (e.g. WMV/MP4).

- Encourage students to consider the size and style of fonts, the size of images, the effects/transitions used and the tools available to them within the software package.
- Remind students to save their work in a dedicated folder with an appropriate filename.

REVIEW

Give students the opportunity to view each other's work. This may be done by viewing selected pieces of work or students may circulate the room.

Taking other students' feedback into account, ask students to justify their choices and decisions, including any difficulties they encountered in the creation of their video file. This may be completed in the form of a saved document.

EXTENSION TASK

Students will add information on any disputes that arose over the process of decommissioning.

