



## 'I'll Tell Me Ma'

What do songs reveal about our  
study of Irish history?

Examining audience & purpose

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## About this unit

This piece of work revisits consideration of how messages are constructed or designed for a particular audience with a particular purpose.

### Skills addressed

This particular activity addresses the skill of evaluation, where pupils can judge the value of information against criteria developed by them; is strong for all reasoning skills; and also develops, to a lesser extent, the skills of enquiry, creative thinking and information processing.

### Prior knowledge & experience

It is assumed that, by the time pupils are undertaking this unit, they will have completed some/all of the previous activities in the suite of materials. They will therefore have explored a variety of thinking skills strategies in a range of contexts from Irish history.

As a result, they should be becoming more sophisticated in their metacognitive ability, ie. in their capacity to 'think about their thinking'.

### Plenary exercise

The plenary exercise should therefore reflect, and develop progression in, metacognition. In this case, pupils are encouraged to focus on those thinking skills which are identified in national curriculum programmes of study.

Through discussion about the meaning and implications of such skills, and links between them, pupils will be preparing for a higher level of challenge at Key Stage 4.

### Organisation of plenary activity

For the organisation of the metacognitive plenary, it is to be noted that the activity is divided into two parts: the first without the cards in bold type; and the second with them included as headings.

In this case, pupils are taken through some rigorous investigation of songs as historical sources. By using a graphic organiser, they are enabled to see how they can move through different levels of source description, inference, explanation and evaluation.

## Main task

- a) Listen to the song.  
Look at the lyrics whilst you listen.
- b) Complete the Graphic Organisers for each song.  
In the central box (number 1) write down what you think is the **STORY** the song is telling.
- c) In box number 2 write down what you think the **MESSAGE** of the song is.  
What is the singer trying to say? How does he/she get the message across?  
What is the **MOOD** of the song?
- d) How does the song **HELP** you understand Irish history?  
How does the song help you understand people's attitudes?  
Write down your thoughts in box number 3.
- e) In box number 4 write down what **PROBLEMS** exist with this song.  
Is it reliable?  
Does it tell you everything you need to know about Irish history and attitudes?  
What other information do you think you will need to find out more?

## Song 1

'I'll Tell Me Ma' (Traditional arranged by van Morrison/Paddy Maloney) 1988

Tell my ma when I go home  
The boys won't leave the girls alone  
They pull my hair and stole my comb  
Well that's alright till I go home

She is handsome, she is pretty  
She is the belle of Belfast city  
She is courtin' one, two, three  
Please won't you tell me who is she?

Albert Mooney says he loves her  
All the boys are fighting for her  
Knock at the door and they ring that bell  
'Oh my true love are you well?'

Out she comes as white as snow  
Rings on her fingers and bells on her toes  
Oul Jenny Murray says she will die  
If she doesn't get the fella with the roving eye

Let the wind and the rain and hail blow high  
And the snow come tumbling from the sky  
She is nice as apple pie  
She'll get her own lad by and by

When she gets a lad of her own  
She won't tell her Ma when she comes home  
Let them all come as they will  
For it's Albert Mooney she loves still

Tell my ma when I go home  
The boys won't leave the girls alone  
They pull my hair and stole my comb  
Well that's alright till I go home

She is handsome she is pretty  
She is the belle of Belfast city  
She is courtin' one, two, three  
Please won't you tell me who is she?

## Song 2

'Sunday Bloody Sunday' (U2) 1983

I can't believe the news today  
Oh, I can't close my eyes and make it go away  
How long...how long must we sing this song?  
How long? how long...  
cause tonight...we can be as one  
Tonight...  
Broken bottles under children's feet  
Bodies strewn across the dead end street  
But I wont heed the battle call  
It puts my back up  
Puts my back up against the wall  
Sunday, bloody Sunday  
Sunday, bloody Sunday  
Sunday, bloody Sunday (Sunday bloody Sunday...)  
And the battles just begun  
There's many lost, but tell me who has won  
The trench is dug within our hearts  
And mothers, children, brothers, sisters torn apart  
Sunday, bloody Sunday  
Sunday, bloody Sunday  
How long...  
How long must we sing this song?  
How long? how long...  
cause tonight...we can be as one  
Tonight...

Tonight...  
Sunday, bloody Sunday (tonight)  
Tonight  
Sunday, bloody Sunday (tonight)  
Wipe the tears from your eyes  
Wipe your tears away  
Wipe your tears away  
I wipe your tears away  
(Sunday, bloody Sunday)  
I wipe your blood shot eyes  
(Sunday, bloody Sunday)  
Sunday, bloody Sunday (Sunday, bloody Sunday)  
Sunday, bloody Sunday (Sunday, bloody Sunday)  
And its true we are immune  
When fact is fiction and TV reality  
And today the millions cry  
We eat and drink while tomorrow they die  
The real battle yet begun (Sunday, bloody Sunday)  
To claim the victory Jesus won (Sunday, bloody  
Sunday)  
On...  
Sunday bloody Sunday  
Sunday bloody Sunday...

## Song 3

'Give Ireland back to the Irish' (Paul McCartney) 1972

Give Ireland back to the Irish  
Don't make them have to take it away  
Give Ireland back to the Irish  
Make Ireland Irish today

Great Britain you are tremendous  
And nobody knows like me  
But really what are you doin'  
In the land across the sea

Tell me how would you like it  
If on your way to work  
You were stopped by Irish soliders  
Would you lie down do nothing  
Would you give in, or go berserk

Give Ireland back to the Irish  
Don't make them have to take it away  
Give Ireland back to the Irish  
Make Ireland Irish today

Great Britain and all the people  
Say that all people must be free  
Meanwhile back in Ireland  
There's a man who looks like me

And he dreams of God and country  
And he's feeling really bad  
And he's sitting in a prison  
Should he lie down do nothing  
Should give in or go mad

Give Ireland back to the Irish  
Don't make them have to take it away  
Give Ireland back to the Irish  
Make Ireland Irish today

## Song 4

'Young Ned of the Hill (The Pogues) 1989

Have you ever walked the lonesome hills  
And heard the curlews cry  
Or seen the raven black as night  
Upon a windswept sky  
To walk the purple heather  
And hear the westwind cry  
To know that's where the rapparee must die  
Since Cromwell pushed us westward  
To live our lowly lives  
There's some of us have deemed to fight  
From Tipperary mountains high  
Noble men with wills of iron  
Who are not afraid to die  
Who'll fight with gaelic honour held on high  
A curse upon you Oliver Cromwell  
You who raped our Motherland  
I hope you're rotting down in hell  
For the horrors that you sent  
To our misfortunate forefathers  
Whom you robbed of their birthright  
"To hell or Connaught" may you burn in hell tonight  
Of one such man I'd like to speak  
A rapparee by name and deed  
His family dispossessed and slaughtered  
They put a price upon his head  
His name is known in song and story  
His deeds are legends still  
And murdered for blood money  
Was young Ned of the hill  
A curse upon you Oliver Cromwell  
You who raped our Motherland  
I hope you're rotting down in hell  
For the horrors that you sent  
To our misfortunate forefathers  
Whom you robbed of their birthright  
"To hell or Connaught" may you burn in hell tonight  
You have robbed our homes and fortunes  
Even drove us from our land  
You tried to break our spirit  
But you'll never understand  
The love of dear old Ireland  
That will forge an iron will  
As long as there are gallant men  
Like young Ned of the hill

## Song 5

'Coney Island' (Van Morrison) 1989

Coney Island

Coming back from Downpatrick  
Stopping off at St. John's Point  
Out all day birdwatching  
And the craic was good

Stopped off at Strangford Lough  
Early in the morning  
Drove through Shrigly taking pictures  
And on to Killyleagh  
Stopping for Sunday papers in the Lecale district

Just before Coney Island

On and on over the hill to Ardglass  
In the jamjar, autumn sunshine magnificent  
And all shining through

Stop off at Ardglass  
For a couple of jars of mussels and some potted herrings  
In case we get famished before dinner

On and on over the hill  
And the craic is good

Heading towards Coney Island

I look at the side of your face  
As the sunlight comes streaming through the window  
In the autumn sunshine  
And all in all the time walked going to Coney Island  
I'm thinking

Wouldn't it be great if it was like this all the time?

3. HELP

2. MESSAGE/MOOD

1. STORY

Song title

## Plenary: how, and what, have we learned?

### Tasks

For the first three tasks you have a set of twenty cards:

1. Discuss some of the cards for meaning: eg, 'classify', 'suggest a hypothesis', 'evaluate information'.
2. Sort the cards into the following groups or categories:
  - Types of thinking that you know you have done.
  - Those that you have heard about but cannot remember doing.
  - Those which are new to you.
  - Feed back to the class about how and why you have grouped them this way.
3. Turn over all of the cards. How many of them can you remember?

For the remaining tasks you have five extra cards:

4. The cards in bold type are your new headings. Re-arrange all the cards into new categories under these headings.
5. Did you find any of the cards difficult to place? If so, identify them, and explain why you found them difficult.
6. Show a set of cards where you can easily describe and explain a connection between them.

| Information<br>-processing skills                                 | Enquiry skills                                    | Creative<br>thinking skills                 | Evaluation<br>skills                           | Reasoning<br>skills  |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| Classify  | Compare<br>&<br>contrast                          | Test conclusions                            | Sequence                                       | Ask relevant<br>questions  |
| Suggest hypotheses  | Generate<br>&<br>extend ideas                     | Pose<br>&<br>define<br>problems             | Plan what to do<br>&<br>how to search          | Make judgements<br>& decisions<br>informed by reasons<br>or evidence |
| Develop criteria for<br>judging the value of<br>your work & ideas | Judge the value of<br>what you read, hear<br>& do | Analyse part/whole<br>relationships         | Give reasons for<br>your opinions &<br>actions | Use precise<br>language to explain<br>what you think                 |
| Have confidence in<br>your judgements                             | Draw inferences<br>&<br>make deductions           | Look for alternative<br>innovative outcomes | Apply imagination                              | Evaluate<br>information  |

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