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Supporting the Professional  
Learning of School Leaders  
and Teachers



# Cultivating Critical Thinkers: Reflective Planning and Enquiry in Politics and Society

Oide Politics and Society  
March 2026



# Today's Sessions



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Session 1:  
Cultivating the Conditions  
for Critical Thought



Session 2:  
Approaching Enquiry



Session 3:  
Politics and Society and the  
Transition Year Programme  
Statement

# Visual Aides to Today's PLE



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Discussion



Activity



Reflection

# Today's Breaks



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Coffee break  
11.00 – 11.15



Lunch  
13.00 – 14.00



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# Session One: Cultivating the Conditions for Critical Thought

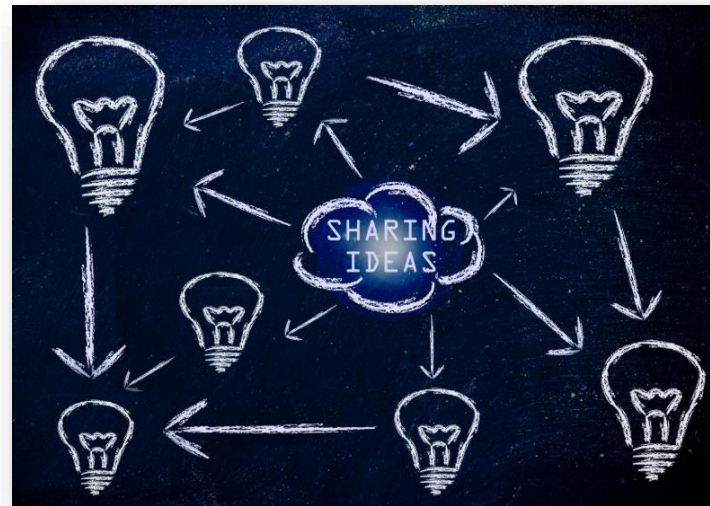




# Our Focus: Session One



Cultivating the Conditions for  
Critical Thought



Adaption in Planning



# Rationale

“Politics and Society aims to develop the learner’s capacity to engage in reflective and active citizenship, informed by the insights and skills of social and political sciences.”

Politics and Society Specification, NCCA, p. 7





**LIVE**

## Latest Stories

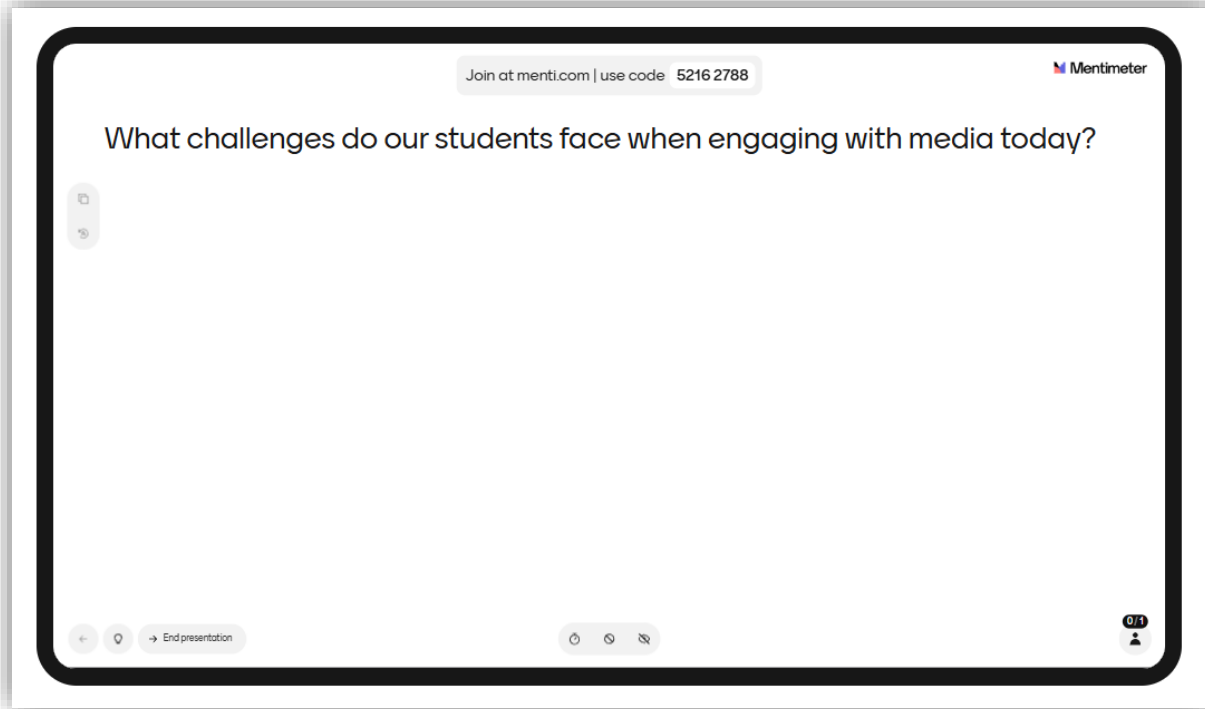
● Europe live

⚡ Breaking

- Take 5 minutes to reflect on today's news stories and consider what current affairs issues your students might want to explore?



Activity



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code 5216 2788

Mentimeter

What challenges do our students face when engaging with media today?

0/1

← Q → End presentation

0 0 0

0/1



Activity

# Supporting Student Responses through a Critical Lens



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- Scenario: A student wishes to discuss a claim you suspect to be disinformation
- In your group, outline briefly how you might navigate a response to best support students' critical thinking skills
- Nominate one person to provide feedback



Activity

Sponsored Post

October 2, 2023 by Our Reporter

**Olena Zelenska spends \$1,100,000 on Cartier jewelry, gets sales employee fired**



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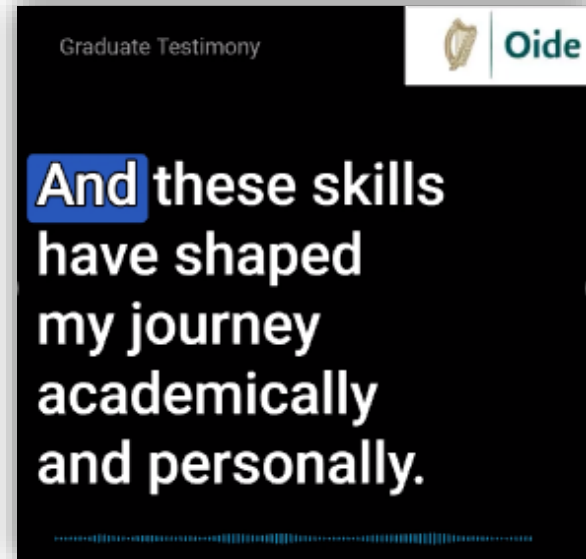
# Critical Thinking Skills



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“Politics and Society aims to develop the learner’s capacity to engage in reflective and active citizenship, informed by the insights and skills of social and political sciences.”

Politics and Society Specification, NCCA, 2019, p. 7



Sarah Burke-Hayes,  
Graduate of Politics and Society at  
Coláiste Chiaráin, Croom, Co Limerick

# Fostering Critical Thinking



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What are the conditions that need to be created in class for critical thinking to occur?





# Fostering Critical Thinking Skills in Media

- Ownership
- Regulatory context
- Language
- Framing/Agenda setting
- AI generation
- Engagement strategies
- Intention/Bias
- Fact-checking
- Lateral reading

**Oide** Office of the Director of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

**Judging the Credibility of Sources of Information in Politics and Society**

Use this document to critically assess sources of information

Name of Source: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Ownership / Authorship**  
Who owns or wrote this source? Are they qualified?  
 Author is named  
 Author credentials are listed  
 Organisation or institution is clearly identified  
 Ownership of source is publicly available  
 Write the name of the author/organisation: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Is there any evidence of a conflict of interest or bias? \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Reputation & Currency**  
Is the source well-known and trusted? Is it recent?  
 Recognised by other reliable sources  
 Frequently cited by experts  
 Recently published or updated  
 Date of publication: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Bias / Agenda Setting**  
Is the content balanced or one-sided?  
 This source uses language that is neutral  
 This source regularly considers multiple perspectives  
 This source avoids emotive language  
 This source gives reasonable coverage and does not disproportionately frame issues

**Questions to develop Understanding**

**1. Who?**  
• Who was involved?

**2. What?**  
• What is this, or what has happened?

**3. Where?**  
• Where is this happening?

**4. When?**  
• When did this happen?

**5. Why?**  
• Why did this happen?

**6. How?**  
• How did this happen?

**Questions to develop Critical Thinking**

**1. Who?**  
• Who is affected?  
• Who benefits?  
• Who loses?  
• Who instigated this?  
• Whose perspective is missing?

**2. What?**  
• What caused this?  
• What changes now?  
• What else is this like?  
• What information is available/missing?

**3. Where?**  
• Where can I get further information?  
• Where does the issue go from here?  
• Where are similarities?  
• Where are differences?

**4. When?**  
• When have I seen this before?  
• When did information become available?  
• When can I act?

**5. Why?**  
• Why is this happening now?  
• Why am I seeing this?  
• Why isn't action being taken?  
• Why is this helpful/harmful?

**6. How?**  
• How does this benefit/harm?  
• How does this work?  
• How do I know this to be true?  
• How can I see this from another perspective?

**Cultivating Critical Thinking in Politics and Society**

**Oide** Office of the Director of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

**Oide** Office of the Director of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

**Assessing a News Source**

**Ownership transparency**  
Can I find out who owns this source?

**2. Vested Interests**  
Can I find out what the media owner owns or has interests in?

**3. History and Reputation**  
Does this source have a history of bias?

**6. Nature of Source**  
Is this an entertainment or engagement source rather than a news source?

**5. Regulation**  
Is this source regulated or a member of a standards authority?

**4. Authorship Transparency**  
Can I see who wrote/created this story?

**9. Error Accountability**  
Does this source regularly correct significant errors?

**10. Litigation**  
Does this source have a history of legal action against it?

**11. Accuracy and Cross-referencing**  
Do the news stories hold-up to lateral reading and independent investigation?

**12. Conclusion**  
Having considered the criteria, is this a reliable source?



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They have never known  
a non-Trumpian world.

- What issues do your students want to talk about?
- How do you approach teaching and learning in a relevant news cycle?



Dr Jerome Devitt,  
The King's Hospital School,  
Dublin

# Politics and Society Strands of Study



## Strand 1: Power and decision-making

### TOPIC 1: POWER AND DECISION-MAKING IN SCHOOL

- 1.1 processes of power and decision-making in their schools
- 1.2 arguments concerning the need for rules
- 1.3 ideas underpinning these arguments
- 1.4 evidence concerning the effects of rules and rule-making processes

### TOPIC 2: POWER AND DECISION-MAKING AT NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVEL

- 2.1 the making of national policy
- 2.2 how the executive branch of government is selected
- 2.3 social class and gender as important social categories
- 2.4 arguments concerning representation
- 2.5 evidence about the effectiveness of representation
- 2.6 traditional and new media in a democracy
- 2.7 participants in these debates

## Strand 2: Active citizenship

### TOPIC 3: EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO COMMUNITIES

- 3.1 people who have made positive contributions to their social context
- 3.2 becoming involved in, or starting an initiative, group or organisation
- 3.3 the range of means of taking action at local, national or international level
- 3.4 identifying, evaluating and achieving personal and collective goals, including developing and evaluating action plans
- 3.5 developing personal qualities that help in new and difficult situations, such as taking initiatives, being flexible, being reliable and being able to persevere when difficulties arise
- 3.6 appraising oneself, evaluating one's own performance, receiving and responding to feedback

### TOPIC 4: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN COMMUNICATION WITH OTHERS

- 4.1 rights to freedom of expression in small-group contexts
- 4.2 developing skills in listening and communicating
- 4.3 acknowledging differences and negotiating and resolving conflicts
- 4.4 seeking and evaluating information and ideas
- 4.5 relating democratic practices in small groups to the sorts of practices that are appropriate for citizens in wider society

## Strand 3: Human rights and responsibilities

### TOPIC 5: HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN IRELAND

- 5.1 some of the rights of young people
- 5.2 human rights principles
- 5.3 the idea of equality in relation to rights
- 5.4 arguments about rights
- 5.5 state bodies for human rights
- 5.6 evidence on the right to education
- 5.7 participants in these debates

### TOPIC 6: HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN EUROPE AND THE WIDER WORLD

- 6.1 rights in the wider world
- 6.2 arguments about rights in the wider world
- 6.3 international cooperation and human rights

## Strand 4: Globalisation and localisation

### TOPIC 7: GLOBALISATION AND IDENTITY

- 7.1 representations of national identity made available to young people
- 7.2 diversity and cultural change
- 7.3 diversity in the European Union
- 7.4 understanding identity
- 7.5 understanding interaction between western and non-western culture
- 7.6 globalisation and political power
- 7.7 participants in these debates

### TOPIC 8: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 8.1 actions that address sustainable development
- 8.2 arguments concerning sustainable development
- 8.3 participants in these debates

# Adaption in Planning in Politics and Society



<b>Strand 1: Power and decision-making</b>	<b>Strand 2: Active citizenship</b>	<b>Strand 3: Human rights and responsibilities</b>	<b>Strand 4: Globalisation and localisation</b>
<p>TOPIC 1: POWER AND DECISION-MAKING IN SCHOOL</p>	<p>TOPIC 3: EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO COMMUNITIES</p>	<p>TOPIC 5: HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN IRELAND</p>	<p>TOPIC 7: GLOBALISATION AND IDENTITY</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any school rule or policy (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4)</li> <li>Authoritarian state (1.2, 1.3)</li> <li>Democratic backsliding (1.1, 1.3, 1.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A belief that the individual can not create meaningful change (3.1)</li> <li>Civil disobedience (3.2, 3.3)</li> <li>Protest/civil unrest (3.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AI bias in recruitment (5.3)</li> <li>Online surveillance (5.1, 5.2, 5.4, RN)</li> <li>Protest/civil unrest (5.4, 5.2)</li> <li>Refugees and International protection (5.4, 5.1, 5.2, KAA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Radical politics/Flag politics (7.1, 7.4)</li> <li>Online subcultures (7.2, 7.4, 7.5)</li> <li>Sport and Identity (7.1, 7.2, 7.5)</li> <li>Cost of Living (7.6, KL)</li> </ul>
<p>TOPIC 2: POWER AND DECISION-MAKING AT NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVEL</p>	<p>TOPIC 4: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN COMMUNICATION WITH OTHERS</p>	<p>TOPIC 6: HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN EUROPE AND THE WIDER WORLD</p>	<p>TOPIC 8: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Manosphere' online media (2.3)</li> <li>Refugees and Int. protection (2.5)</li> <li>A contentious planned development (2.5)</li> <li>Media Polarisation (2.6, NC)</li> <li>Role of ultra-rich in policy/discourse (2.1, 2.3, 2.4, TH)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Cancel culture' (4.1-4.4)</li> <li>'Deepfake' media content (4.4)</li> <li>Conflict in a group project (4.2, 4.3) Antisocial or incendiary online discourse (4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Right to repair' (6.2, 6.1)</li> <li>Global brands and hidden exploitation (6.1-6.3)</li> <li>Indigenous rights vs. infrastructure developments (6.2, 6.1, 6.3, ES)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Questions of responsibility (8.1)</li> <li>Community opposition to infrastructure development (8.1, 8.2)</li> <li>EU nitrates derogation (8.1, 8.2)</li> </ul>



# Group Activity – Adaption in Planning

1. In your group, discuss and identify three topics from current affairs your students want to explore in class.
2. Consider which learning outcomes these topics can be explored through, and note this in the Padlet using the plus sign under your relevant strand.
3. Appoint one person to share feedback.

The screenshot shows a Padlet board with four main strands, each with a list of topics and learning outcomes:

- Strand 1: Power and decision-making**
  - DECISION-MAKING IN SCHOOL
    - TOPIC 1: POWER AND DECISION-MAKING IN THE SCHOOL
      - 1.1 provisions of power and decision-making in their schools
      - 1.2 arguments concerning the need for rules
      - 1.3 ideas underpinning these arguments
      - 1.4 evidence concerning the effects of direct and rule-making processes
  - Any school rule or policy (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4)
  - TOPIC 2: POWER AND DECISION-MAKING AT NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVEL
    - TOPIC 2: POWER AND DECISION-MAKING AT NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVEL

- Strand 2: Active citizenship**
- TOPIC 3: EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO COMMUNITIES
  - TOPIC 3: EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO COMMUNITIES
    - 3.1 people who have made positive contributions to their social context
    - 3.2 identifying needs of an existing initiative, group or organisation
    - 3.3 the range of means of raising money at local, national or international level
    - 3.4 identifying, organising and achieving personal and collective goals, including fundraising and fundraising, and other skills
    - 3.5 identifying potential partners that help in new and difficult situations, such as taking initiatives, being flexible, being creative and being able to persuade and influence
    - 3.6 organising oneself, evaluating one's team performance, reviewing and responding to feedback
- A belief that the individual can not create meaningful
- Strand 3: Human rights and responsibilities**
- TOPIC 5: HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN IRELAND
  - TOPIC 5: HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN IRELAND
    - 5.1 some of the rights of young people
    - 5.2 human rights principles
    - 5.3 the role of youth in human rights
    - 5.4 arguments about rights
    - 5.5 roles and roles for human rights
    - 5.6 evidence on the right to education
    - 5.7 participants in these debates
- AT bias in recruitment (5.3)
- TOPIC 6: HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN EUROPE AND THE WIDER WORLD
  - TOPIC 6: HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN EUROPE AND THE WIDER WORLD
- Strand 4: Globalisation and localisation**
- TOPIC 7: GLOBALISATION AND IDENTITY
  - TOPIC 7: GLOBALISATION AND IDENTITY
    - 7.1 representations of cultural identity made available to young people
    - 7.2 diversity and culture change
    - 7.3 diversity and European Union
    - 7.4 understanding diversity
    - 7.5 understanding relations between systems and non-systems cultures
    - 7.6 globalisation and political power
    - 7.7 participants in these debates
- 'Flag politics' (7.1, 7.4)
- TOPIC 8: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
  - TOPIC 8: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
    - 8.1 actions that address biodiversity
    - 8.2 demonstrating energy conservation
    - 8.3 demonstrating social inclusion
    - 8.4 demonstrating environmental and human
- Community opposition to infrastructure development (8.1, 8.2)




# Considerations



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- Teaching sensitive issues
- Collaboration in your classroom





- Teaching sensitive issues
- Collaboration in your classroom

NCCA

## Activity 2: Our Brave Space



**Be present**

In our brave space we can do this by...

# Practical methodologies



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What type of learning methodologies/activities are effective for you and your students?



# Methodologies and Practice for Adaption in Planning



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## Scenario:

Students wish to discuss a news story



# Exploring Connections and Contexts



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## Irish man detained by ICE fears for his life in Texas detention centre

Updated / Tuesday, 10 Feb 2026 08:17



Seamus Culleton was detained by ICE in Boston where he lived with his wife Tiffany Smyth

HOME PAGE / NEWS

## Ireland's immigration law 'could become one of Europe's most severe'



Justice and migration minister Jim O'Callaghan. Two proposed pieces of legislation currently in front of the Oireachtas are causing concern among activists and lawyers. Picture: Sam Boal/Collins



BBC

Register

Sign In

## Asylum seekers fearful living on Dublin's streets

2 February 2024

Share Save

Aoife Moore

Dublin reporter



# Relevant Learning Outcomes



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5.4

- ▶ sometimes the rights of the individual have to be set aside to protect the rights of the majority

7.4

- ▶ national groups and ethnic groups are 'imagined communities': social constructs which involves the imagining of an 'us' and a 'them', something which can have significant consequences for how people understand and interact with those seen to be in the 'other' group

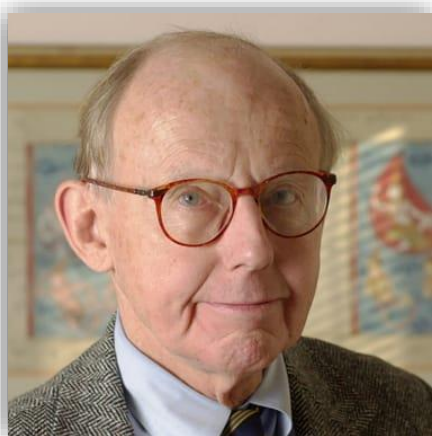
2.1

describe the process of decision-making at national level and how this relates to a policy that impacts upon young people, making reference to the roles of

# Relevant Thinkers



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## Flipped Classroom

1. For homework, students are asked to read two prescribed pieces articulating opposing views/narratives (LO 2.6)
2. Students are invited to seek out one further source to better understand the issue at hand (LO 4.4)
3. In class, students engage in dialogue (open forum, carousel, jigsaw) (4.2)
4. In groups, students are tasked with preparing a briefing note (or other resource) on the issue

**Oide** Office of the Director of the Department of Education

**Briefing Note – Politics and Society**

A briefing note is a concise, structured, document created used in government to inform decision-makers of the key facts around a particular issue. Generally, they will have four key sections: Title; Background; Situation; and Messages

**Title**

Write a short, clear, title that tells the reader exactly what the briefing note is about, e.g. 'French Presidential Election, 2027':

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Background**

Using bullet points, briefly explain the context and key facts the reader needs to know about the better understand the issue

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Situation**

Describe the current situation, problem, or development that requires attention. For Politics and Society, consider also the links to relevant course thinkers.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Messages**

List the most important points or take-away messages the reader should remember. For Politics and Society, this could include personal reflections or relevant data.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

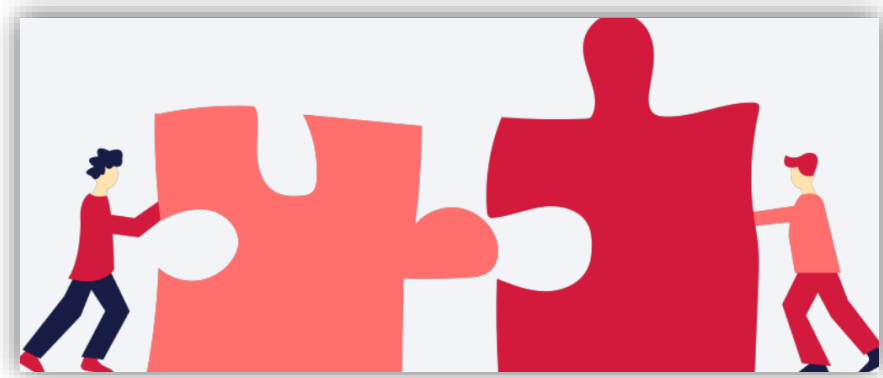
\_\_\_\_\_

# Opportunities for Collaborative Learning



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- Research investigations
- Evaluating and actioning campaigns
- Peer review
- Reports
- Briefing notes
- Oral summaries
- Debates, Town Halls
- Podcast investigations
- Voter registration drives
- Co-creating success criteria and rubrics
- ...





Building Ideas

Exploring Multiple Perspectives

Recognising Bias and Perspectives

- 'I noticed my own bias when...'
- 'My perspective is shaped by my experiences of...'
- 'A viewpoint I initially dismissed was...'
- 'I now understand why others might think differently because...'
- 'This discussion revealed how perspective influences opinion...'

What approaches do you use in the classroom to encourage dialogic learning?

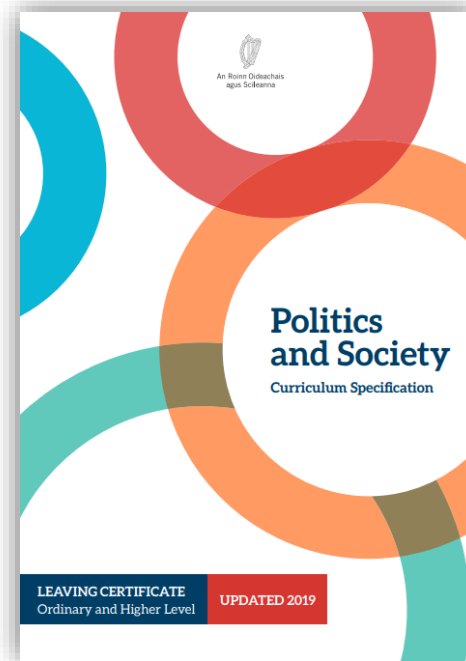
# Collaborative Learning – Small Research Project



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“A small research project on one of the concepts or ideas in Politics and Society will also enable learners to relate the idea to concrete contexts with which they are familiar and so enhance their learning. Such a small research project might then form the basis of a learner’s citizenship project for assessment towards the Leaving Certificate.”

Politics and Society Specification, NCCA, p. 16





How do you support student reflective practice in your classroom?

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## How have I done?

Next Steps

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## Ladder of Feedback

**Suggest**

Making suggestions on how to improve things

- What if...?
- Maybe you could...?
- Could I suggest that...?
- You might want to look at this?

**Review**

State what puzzles or concerns you

- Have you considered ...?
- What I wondered about is ...?
- Perhaps you thought about this, but...?

**Value**

Express to the student what you like about the idea or matter in specific terms

- What I like...
- One positive point is ..
- I was interested in ..

**Clarify**

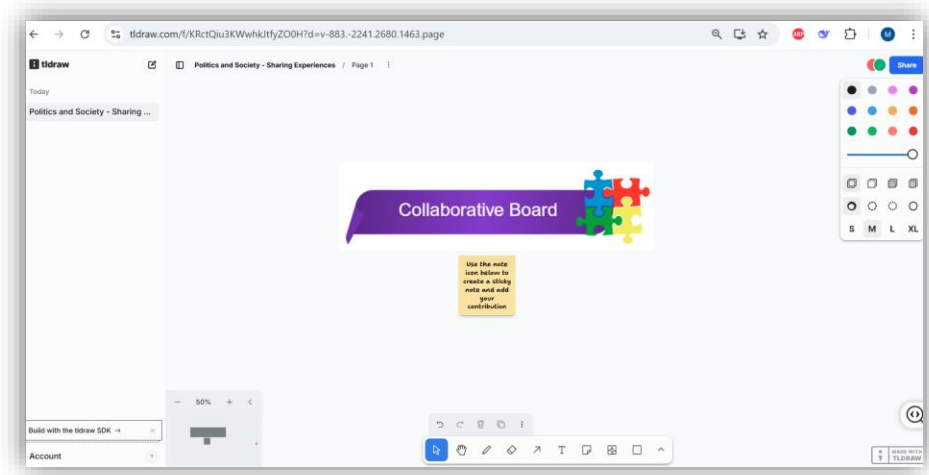
Ask clarifying questions

- I wasn't sure what you meant...?
- Could you help me better understand...?
- This is what I think you are saying...



# Collaborative Board Activity

1. Use the QR code to visit the collaborative board.
2. Individually, share one aspect of your teaching (pedagogical practice, assessment practice, reflection practice, explain or share a resource, etc.) which supports the development of student critical thinking.
3. With your group, reflect on and discuss what aspects stood out to you and that could facilitate learning in your classroom.
4. Appoint a speaker to feed back to the main room.



# Feedback



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# Reflection

- What have I learned from a colleague that I can use in my own classroom?
- How can this be of benefit to my students?



Reflection

## Our Focus: Session One



Cultivating the Conditions for  
Critical Thought



Adaption in Planning

# Break



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11:00 -11:15



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# Session Two: Approaching Enquiry

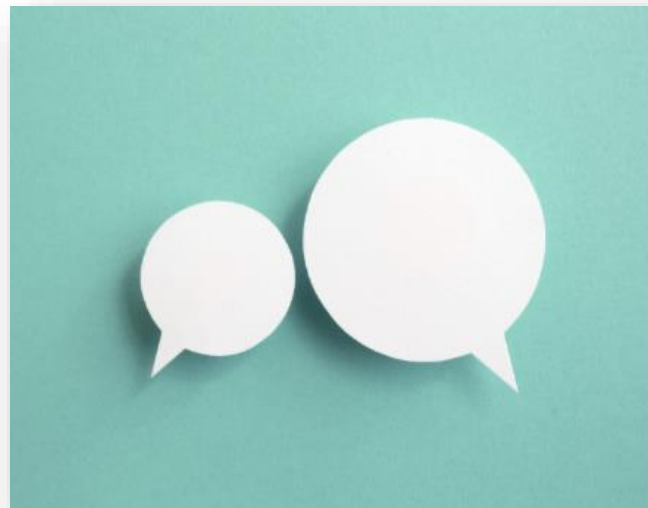




# Our Focus: Session Two



Enquiry in the Politics and  
Society Classroom



Collaboration and dialogue



# Learning through Enquiry



Reflection

“...learners have opportunities to make learning meaningful to themselves by applying concepts and ideas to different real-life contexts and through working with peers to develop and apply their understanding of ideas...”

Politics and Society Specification, NCCA p. 14

### POLITICS AND SOCIETY ENQUIRY



**OUR CONTEXT**  
How does this topic relate to our lives or to a context that is important to us? Why might it be important for us to engage with this topic?

**BECOMING INFORMED**  
What are the defining features of this topic? Why is it important or relevant? Who are the parties involved/affected? How can our understanding be informed by relevant arguments, thinkers, and perspectives?

**ANALYSING SOURCES**  
Where can we access relevant data, theory, and reliable information? What sources can inform our understanding, and how do we establish their credibility?

**COMPARING CONTEXTS**  
What social and political context is this topic immediately relevant to, and how might it impact different contexts (local, national, European, global)? How might it intersect with other areas of learning?

**REFLECTIVE CONCLUSIONS AND INFORMED ACTION**  
What conclusions can be drawn from the evidence? How is this topic informed by arguments or ideological values? What are the consequences for parties involved? How can we stay informed? What actions could affect meaningful change?



“... a wide range of participatory and enquiry focused teaching and learning activities are appropriate for Politics and Society.”

Politics and Society Specification, NCCA, p. 13



- What resonates with you from this testimony?
- How do you support students in accessing the language of Politics and Society?
- How do your students consider the ethics of their own research?



I think, it's important, so students are not made to feel afraid or inadequate

Kathleen Lynch  
Professor Emerita of Equality Studies  
University College Dublin





## POLITICS AND SOCIETY ENQUIRY



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**REFLECTIVE CONCLUSIONS AND INFORMED ACTION**  
What conclusions can be drawn from the evidence? How is this topic informed by arguments or ideological values? What are the consequences for parties involved? How can we stay informed? What actions could affect meaningful change?

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- Class size
- Range of abilities
- Prior learning
- Pre-teaching vocabulary
- Necessary resources
- Supporting/Stretching
- Possible adjustments
- Student interest
- Classroom agreement/contract
- Success criteria
- Co-agency

# Supporting Resources and Approaches

## POLITICS AND SOCIETY ENQUIRY





**OUR CONTEXT**

How does this topic relate to our lives or to a context that is important to us? Why might it be important for us to engage with this topic?



**BECOMING INFORMED**

What are the defining features of this topic? Why is it important or relevant? Who are the parties involved/affected? How can our understanding be informed by relevant arguments, thinkers, and perspectives?



**ANALYSING SOURCES**

Where can we access relevant data, theory, and reliable information? What sources can inform our understanding, and how do we establish their credibility?



**COMPARING CONTEXTS**

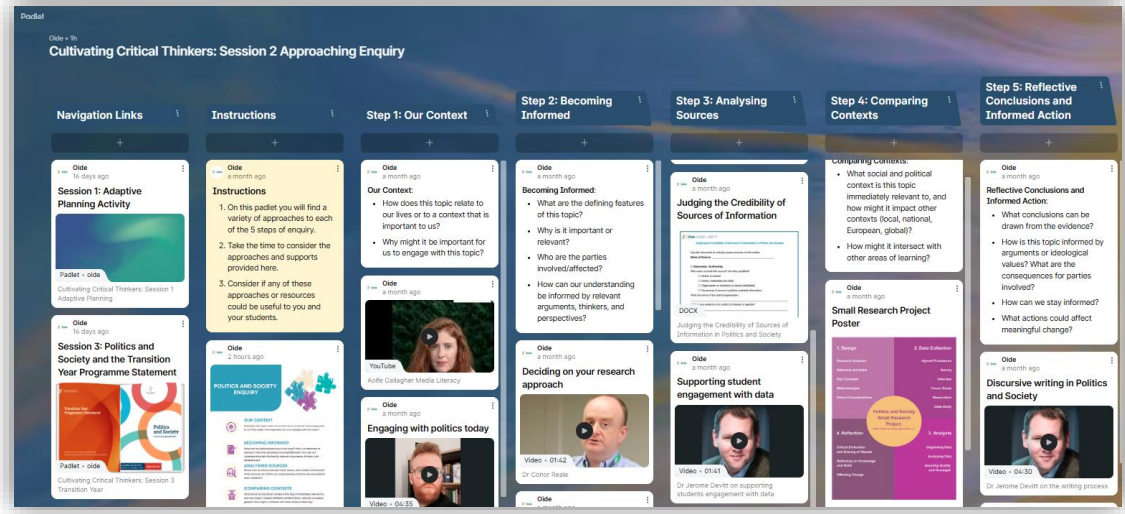
What social and political context is this topic immediately relevant to, and how might it impact different contexts (local, national, European, global)? How might it intersect with other areas of learning?



**REFLECTIVE CONCLUSIONS AND INFORMED ACTION**

What conclusions can be drawn from the evidence? How is this topic informed by arguments or ideological values? What are the consequences for parties involved? How can we stay informed? What actions could affect meaningful change?





The screenshot shows a digital resource interface for 'Cultivating Critical Thinkers: Session 2 Approaching Enquiry'. It features a navigation menu at the top with tabs for 'Navigation Links', 'Instructions', 'Step 1: Our Context', 'Step 2: Becoming Informed', 'Step 3: Analysing Sources', 'Step 4: Comparing Contexts', and 'Step 5: Reflective Conclusions and Informed Action'. Below the navigation, there are several content cards:

- Session 1: Adaptive Planning Activity** (Packet, 16 days ago)
- Instructions** (Oide, 1 month ago) with a list of 3 numbered steps.
- Our Context** (Oide, 1 month ago) with bullet points about relevance and importance.
- Session 3: Politics and Society and the Transition Year Programme Statement** (Oide, 16 days ago)
- OUR CONTEXT** (Oide, 2 hours ago) with a diagram showing 'OUR CONTEXT' leading to 'BECOMING INFORMED', 'ANALYSING SOURCES', and 'COMPARING CONTEXTS'.
- Becoming Informed** (Oide, 1 month ago) with bullet points about defining features and understanding.
- Deciding on your research approach** (Oide, 1 month ago) with a video thumbnail.
- Judging the Credibility of Sources of Information** (Oide, 1 month ago) with a document thumbnail.
- Supporting student engagement with data** (Oide, 1 month ago) with a video thumbnail.
- Comparing contexts** (Oide, 1 month ago) with bullet points about social and political context.
- Small Research Project Poster** (Oide, 1 month ago) with a poster thumbnail.
- Reflective Conclusions and Informed Action** (Oide, 1 month ago) with bullet points about conclusions and actions.
- Discursive writing in Politics and Society** (Oide, 1 month ago) with a video thumbnail.



**POLITICS AND SOCIETY ENQUIRY**

**OUR CONTEXT**

How does this topic relate to our lives or to a context that is important to us? Why might it be important for us to engage with this topic?

**BECOMING INFORMED**

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 Oide

“learners can begin to engage with a topic through exploring how it applies to their own lives or to a context that is meaningful to them”

Politics and Society Specification, NCCA, 2019, p. 10



# Our Context

7.6 globalisation and political power

critically examine the role of intergovernmental/supranational bodies, (including, where appropriate, the International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation, World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme) in the process of decision-making in relation to a policy that impacts upon young people

evaluate the argument that power is moving from national governments to supranational bodies

## Ireland business blog with Lisa O'Carroll

🕒 This article is more than **15 years old**

### Ireland bailout: what it's like to live with the IMF

As a team from the IMF heads to Dublin to discuss a bailout for Ireland, the former Argentinian economics minister describes what life was like during its economic crisis

*Lisa O'Carroll*

Wed 17 Nov 2010 13.04 CET



The New York Times



GIVE THE TIMES


### *Housing Crisis Grips Ireland a Decade After Property Bubble Burst*



Share full article



225



## POLITICS AND SOCIETY ENQUIRY


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 Oide

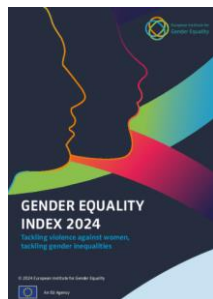
“...then they explore the topic in more detail through applying a range of different arguments or through examining relevant data...”

Politics and Society Guidelines for the Citizenship Project and Report, NCCA, 2018, p. 4



Oide

# Becoming Informed





## Primary Social Research in Politics and Society

**Quantitative research:** gets a little information from a lot of topics. It tends to be numerical and statistical. Think of it as 'how many?' (surveys, polls).

**Qualitative research:** gets a lot of information from a smaller pool of subjects. It tends to be based on themes and experiences. Think of it as 'why?' or 'how?' (interviews, focus groups, etc.)

**Open-ended question:** can not be answered with a 'yes' or 'no' response, e.g. "What are your thoughts on...?"

**Closed-ended question:** can be answered with a 'yes' or 'no' response, or from a list of options, e.g. "Which option best describes your work?"

### 1. Surveys / Questionnaires (Quantitative)

**Definition:** A set of structured questions used to gather opinions or facts from a group of people. These are great for collecting data from a lot of people quickly, but responses may lack depth.

**Steps to use:**

1. Design your questions – Use a mix of closed and open-ended questions relevant to your issue, organised in a logical way, and only asking questions relevant to your overall research issue. Clearly communicate standards on ethics and data recording for participants. Be sure to record demographic information, if necessary.
2. Choose your audience – Identify who will complete it (e.g., students, parents, community).
3. Collect and analyse – Distribute the survey, gather responses, summarise the findings, draw conclusions

### 2. Interviews (Qualitative)

**Definition:** These are usually one-to-one conversations used to explore personal opinions or experiences in-depth. These provide rich information with more detail than a survey, but they take time and planning. Importantly, the open-ended nature of questions allows the participants to lead the conversation.

**Steps to use:**

1. Prepare questions – Develop open-ended questions focused on your topic. Make sure they are easy to understand and are not 'leading' questions. Ask yourself why each question is necessary and useful to the research.

Social Class	Gender	Media	Human Rights	Globalisation, Identity,	Sustainable development
2024: Ireland's billionaires have a net worth that is half of the (Oxfam, 2024)					
2023: Gini 27.5% (CSO)					
Barnardos ten have us in last year parents going with provide for (Irish Times)					
Middle-class crimes must receive a sentence as crimes as poor (criminal drug offences more likely open detention) (Irish Penal 2012)					

**Oide** Department of Education and Skills

**Editable Data Bank – Politics and Society**

Most recent annual ranking, Ireland

Human Development Index	World Press Freedom Report	Democracy Index	Freedom Index	World Happiness Report
•	•	•	•	•

Data/statistics to evidence claims in Politics and Society


Social Class	Gender	Media	Human Rights	Globalisation, Identity	Sustainable development
•	•	•	•	•	•

# Analysing Sources



Oide

**POLITICS AND SOCIETY ENQUIRY**




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 Oide Óide na hÉireann

“...in doing this they can develop their skills of discussion and debating and of analysing information...”

Politics and Society Specification, NCCA, 2019, p. 11

# Analysing Sources



Oide

How do you support students in analysing sources of information?



Aoife Gallagher is a Senior Analyst at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue where she researches online ecosystems of misinformation, extremism, and conspiracy theories. Her work has been covered by the Irish Times, RTÉ, BBC, The Guardian and the Washington Post. She is the author of the book *Web of Lies: The Lure and Danger of Conspiracy Theories*.



# Fostering Critical Thinking Skills in Media

- Ownership
- Regulatory context
- Language
- Framing/Agenda setting
- AI generation
- Engagement strategies
- Intention/Bias
- Fact-checking
- Lateral reading

**Oide** Office of the Director of Equal Opportunities and Learning for School Leaders

**Judging the Credibility of Sources of Information in Politics and Society**

Use this document to critically assess sources of information

Name of Source: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Ownership / Authorship**  
Who owns or wrote this source? Are they qualified?  
 Author is named  
 Author credentials are listed  
 Organisation or institution is clearly identified  
 Ownership of source is publicly available  
 Write the name of the author/organisation: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Is there any evidence of a conflict of interest or bias? \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Reputation & Currency**  
Is the source well-known and trusted? Is it recent?  
 Recognised by other reliable sources  
 Frequently cited by experts  
 Recently published or updated  
 Date of publication: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Bias / Agenda Setting**  
Is the content balanced or one-sided?  
 This source uses language that is not neutral  
 This source regularly considers multiple perspectives  
 This source avoids emotive language  
 This source gives reasonable coverage and does not disproportionately frame issues

**Oide** Office of the Director of Equal Opportunities and Learning for School Leaders

**Assessing a News Source**

**Questions to develop Understanding**

**1. Who?**  
• Who was involved?

**2. What?**  
• What is this, or what has happened?

**3. Where?**  
• Where is this happening?

**4. When?**  
• When did this happen?

**5. Why?**  
• Why did this happen?

**6. How?**  
• How did this happen?

**Questions to develop Critical Thinking**

**1. Who?**  
• Who is affected?  
• Who benefits?  
• Who loses?  
• Who instigated this?  
• Whose perspective is missing?

**2. What?**  
• What caused this?  
• What changes now?  
• What else is this like?  
• What information is available/missing?

**3. Where?**  
• Where can I get further information?  
• Where does the issue go from here?  
• Where are similarities?  
• Where are differences?

**4. When?**  
• When have I seen this before?  
• When did information become available?  
• When can I act?

**5. Why?**  
• Why is this happening now?  
• Why am I seeing this?  
• Why isn't action being taken?  
• Why is this helpful/harmful?

**6. How?**  
• How does this benefit/harm?  
• How does this work?  
• How do I know this to be true?  
• How can I see this from another perspective?

**Cultivating Critical Thinking in Politics and Society**

**Oide** Office of the Director of Equal Opportunities and Learning for School Leaders



# Comparing Contexts



Oide

## POLITICS AND SOCIETY ENQUIRY



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 Oide

“...they can compare their own context to another context at national, European or global level...”

Politics and Society Specification, NCCA, 2019, p. 11

### COMPARE COUNTRIES

Compare countries and territories to learn about the people, governments, and terrain of our world.



[Explore Compare Countries](#)



# Comparing Contexts

Step 1

scoilnet

Step 2

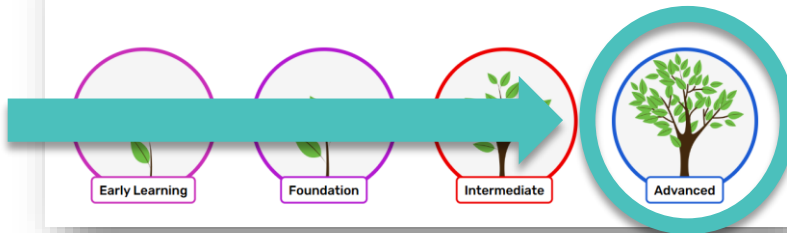
Anytime, anywhere access to Britannica for students and teachers.

[More about Britannica School in Ireland](#)



Step 3

Welcome to Britannica School





**POLITICS AND SOCIETY ENQUIRY**



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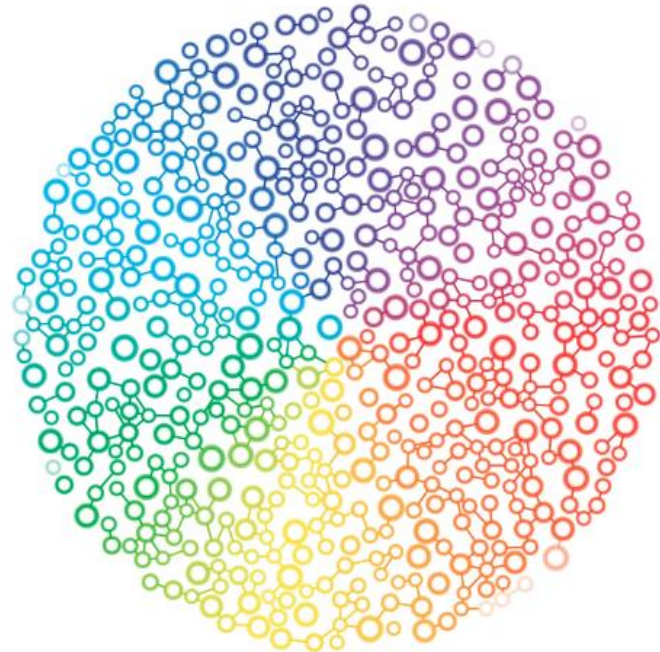


“...they ask what is the meaning of the learning for my life? They use skills of democratic participation to plan and implement an action, based on their learning and reflection....”

Politics and Society Guidelines for the Citizenship Project and Report, NCCA, 2018, p. 4



- What conclusions can be drawn from the evidence?
- How is this topic informed by arguments or ideological values? What are the consequences for parties involved?
- How can we stay informed?
- What actions could affect meaningful change?







# Benefits of an Enquiry Approach

- “Students are able to learn both **independently** and **collaboratively** in a very purposeful, creative and productive manner”
- “Students have a **sense of ownership** of their learning, take pride in it, and take responsibility for improving it”
- “Students demonstrate very high levels of **interest** and **participation** in learning”

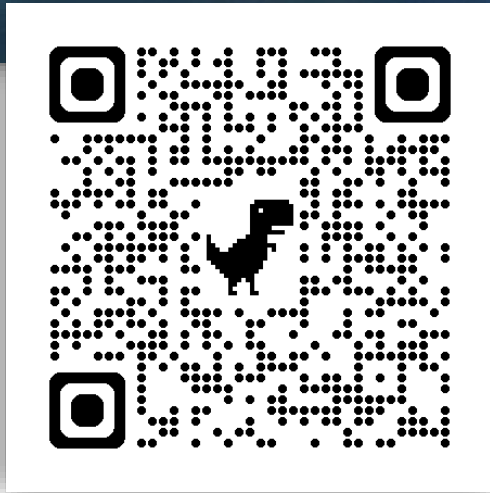
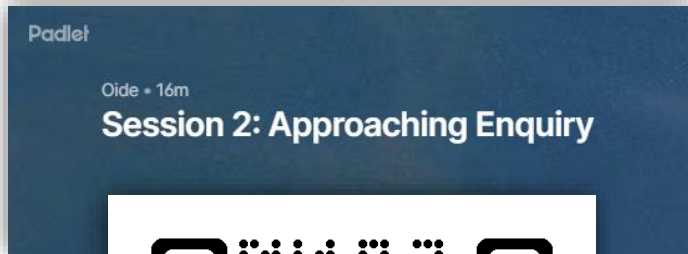
*Looking at Our School 2022* (updated 2024), Domain 2: Learner Experiences, Pgs.28-29



# Group Activity – Approaching Enquiry



Oide



1. Take 10 minutes to review resources and approaches for the stages of enquiry as found on this Padlet.
2. Consider which of these resources may be useful to you and your students.
3. In your breakout room, discuss:
  1. What stood out to you?
  2. How you could use this in your classroom?
4. Appoint one person to take notes, and one person to feed back





# Reflection

- What have I learned from a colleague that I can use in my own classroom?
- How can this be of benefit to my students?

## Our Focus: Session Two



Enquiry in the Politics and Society Classroom



Collaboration and dialogue

Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí Scoile agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional Learning of School Leaders and Teachers



Reflection

# Lunch 13:00-14:00



Oide





Oide

Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim  
Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí  
Scoile agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional  
Learning of School Leaders  
and Teachers



Oide

# Session Three: Politics and Society and the Transition Year Programme Statement

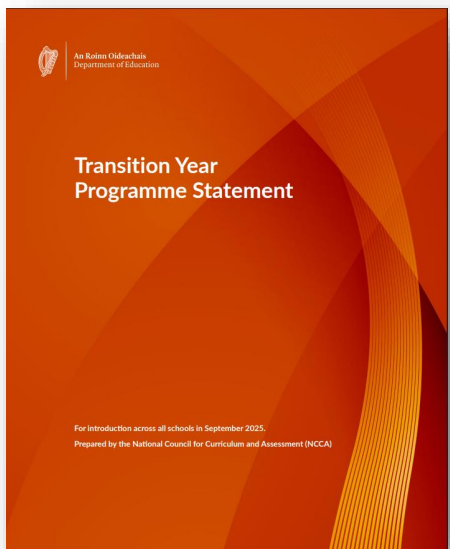


Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim  
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Scoile agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional  
Learning of School Leaders  
and Teachers



# Our Focus: Session Three



The Transition Year Programme Statement and Politics and Society



Considering Module Opportunities



**TY Politics and Society was a great experience as I have an interest in**

Students of Politics and Society  
St Augustine's College  
Dungarvan, Co Waterford

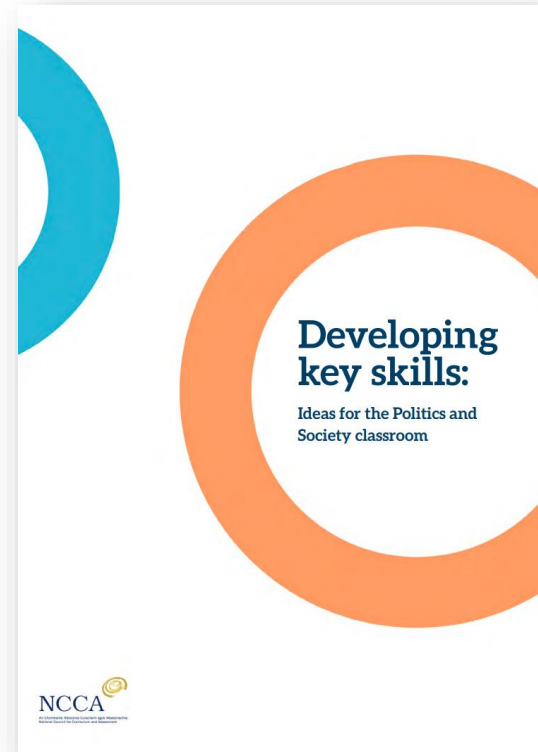
What is your students' experience of TY Politics and Society?

# Politics and Society in Transition Year



Oide

How do you promote the type of learning and skills required for Politics and Society in Transition Year?



Discussion

# TY Programme Statement

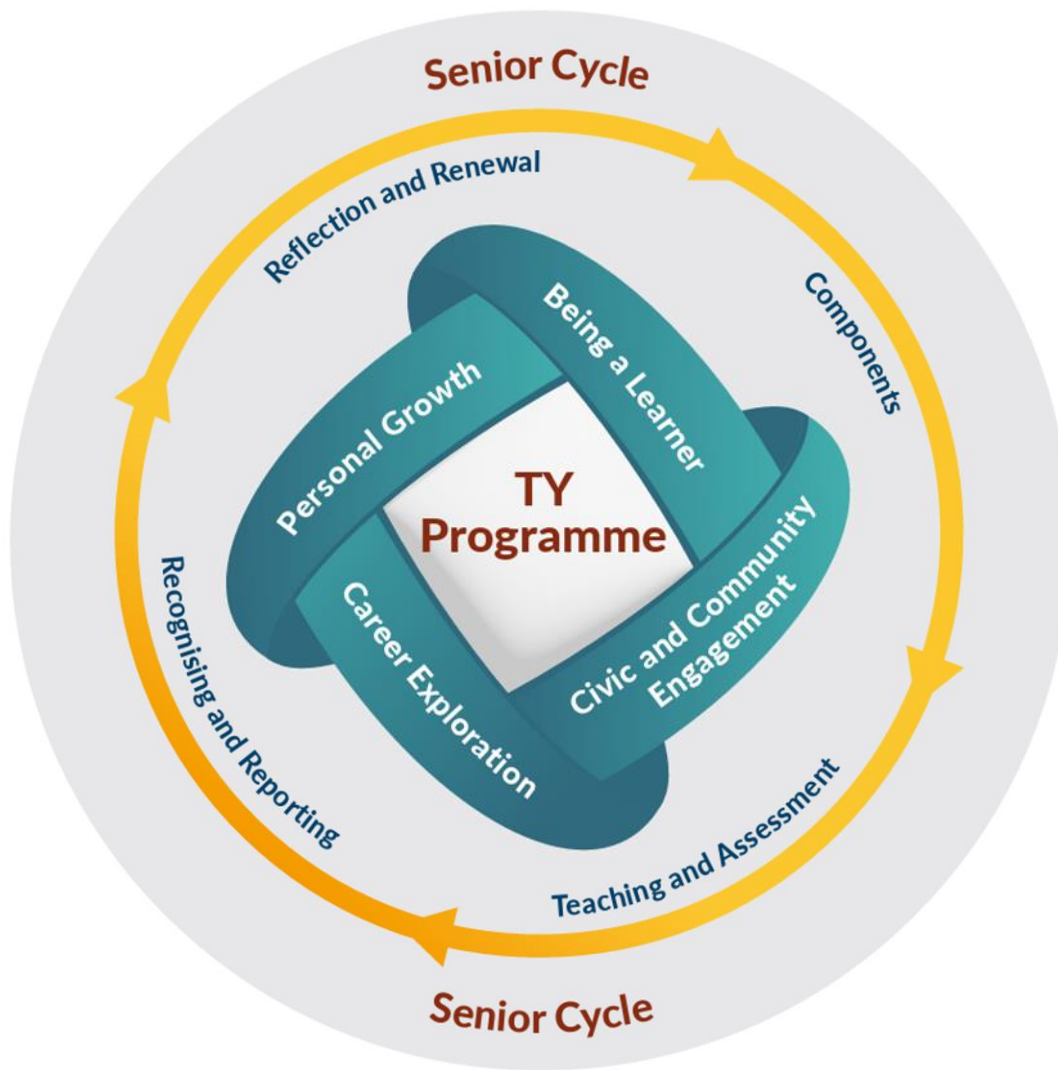


Oide

“TY offers time, space and autonomy to create enjoyable and meaningful educational experiences that support students in senior cycle. It can be a bridge to opening up a broader range of possibilities and pathways. The programme enables young people to develop a greater capacity to respond to uncertainty, manage complexity, nurture personal interests and become agents of positive, ethical change in society.”

Transition Year Programme Statement, NCCA, p. 7





# Student Dimensions



Oide

## Student Dimension

## Description

### Personal Growth

Students mature socially and emotionally over the course of the year, developing in areas that include health and wellbeing, autonomy, identity, empathy and leadership.

### Being a Learner

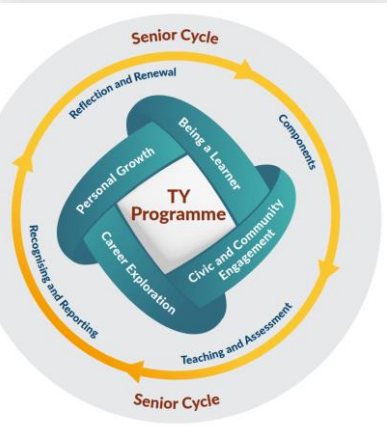
Building on their previous experiences, students begin to develop as senior cycle students, embracing opportunities and strategies for learning that work best for the student now and into the future.

### Civic and Community Engagement

Students make a positive difference in their schools, communities and society. They learn to act on their responsibilities and exercise their rights as local, national and global citizens in ethical and sustainable ways.

### Career Exploration

Students explore diverse future pathways in a guided and coordinated manner, gaining first-hand workplace experience, and developing career-related competencies.





- Title/theme
- Relevant learning outcomes
- Relevant key competencies
- Student learning experiences
- Modes of assessment
- Teacher reflection



# Transition Year micro-module



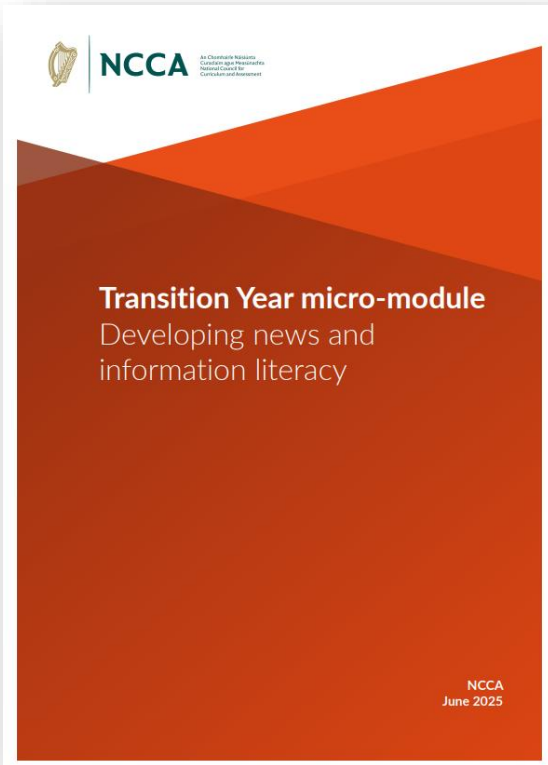
- Title
- Student Dimensions
- Rationale
- Aim
- Time allocation
- Learning Outcomes
- Teaching for student learning - Suggested activities
- Assessment
- Reporting
- Evaluating
- Resources

# Transition Year micro-module

## Developing news and information literacy



Oide



This micro-module will:

- help students to become more information and news literate through building student critical literacy when engaging with media content, and will empower students to develop the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions that contribute to being able to engage meaningfully with content regardless of where they source their news and information.

Transition Year micro-module Developing news and information literacy, NCCA, p. 5

# Transition Year micro-module Guidance Project Management



Oide



This micro-module will:

- develop students' understanding of the stages of a project management process
- enable them to apply those stages to a project they are currently engaged with
- empower students in understanding and experiencing different roles in project management

Transition Year micro-module  
Guidance Project Management, NCCA, p. 5



# Building a Micro-module

The screenshot displays the Oide platform interface, organized into several columns:

- Navigation Links:** Contains two cards: "Session 2: Adaptive Planning" (16 days ago) and "Session 2: Approaching Enquiry" (16 days ago).
- Instructions:** Contains one card: "Instructions" (4 months ago) detailing steps for working in groups and assigning tasks.
- Transition Year Key Documents:** Contains three cards: "TY Programme Statement" (4 months ago), "Student Dimensions poster" (4 months ago), and "Oide supports for TY" (4 months ago).
- TY Micro-modules:** Contains three cards: "Micro-modules" (4 months ago), "Transition Year micro-module: Developing news and information literacy" (4 months ago), and "Transition Year micro-module: Project Management" (4 months ago).
- Breakout Room 1 to 5:** Each room contains a grid of cards for various activities: Title, Student Dimensions, Key Learning, Time allocation, Success Criteria, Suggested Activities, Methods of Assessment, Reflection practices, and Resources.



Activity

# Feedback



Oide





# Reflection

- What have I learned from a colleague that I can use in my own classroom?
- How can this be of benefit to my students?



The Transition Year Programme Statement and Politics and Society



Considering Module Opportunities



Reflection



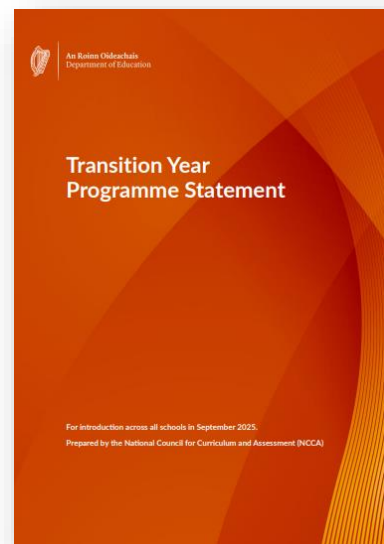
# Revisiting our Focus



Session 1:  
Cultivating the Conditions for  
Critical Thought



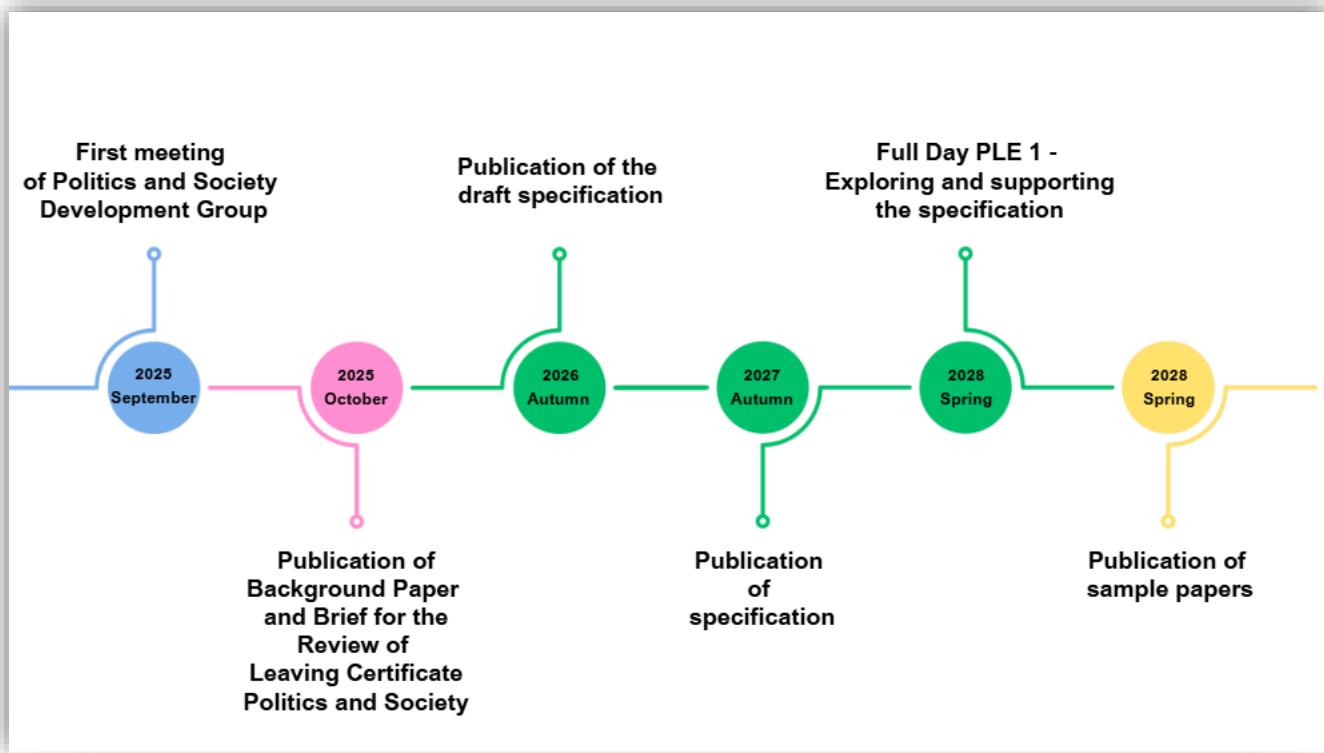
Session 2:  
Approaching Enquiry



Session 3:  
Politics and Society and the  
Transition Year Programme  
Statement



# Senior Cycle Redevelopment Updates



**September 2028  
the new  
specification  
for Politics and Society  
will be  
taught in schools**

# Upcoming from Politics and Society

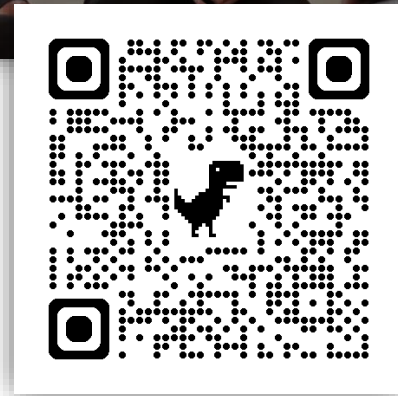
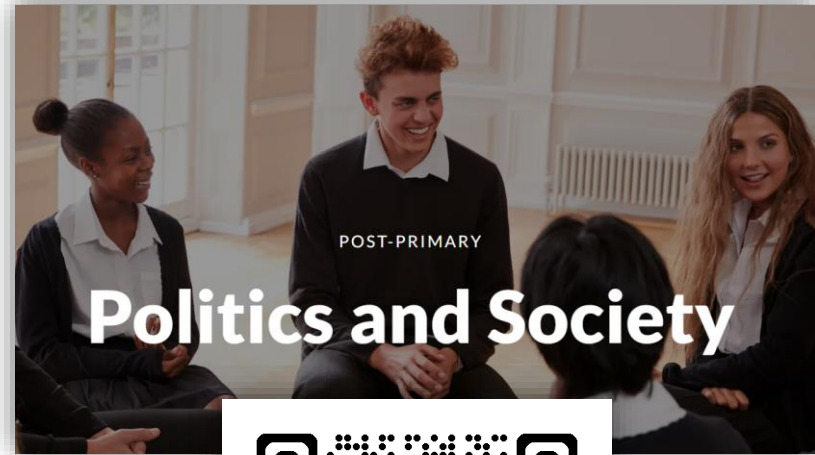


Oide

- April: Leinster House Professional Learning Day
- Ongoing school support



- Collaboratives
- School Support Visits
- Scoilnet
- April: Leinster House Professional Learning Day



# Evaluation



Oide

Oide Politics and Society PLE  
Spring 2026 Evaluation Form



<https://forms.office.com/e/K7tWxMpyLe>

# A Final Note



Oide

