Imaginative new resource for TY based on *Ros na Run*  

The arrival of *Ros na Run Ais Foghlama don Idirbhliain* into classrooms marks a new stage in the development of the Transition Year programme. For the first time all teachers of Gaeilge in TY now have easy access to videos of the popular TnaG soap opera backed up by teacher notes and student worksheets.

The project, initiated by Geraldine Simmie of this support service, was developed in association with five teachers, in partnership with Udarás na Gaeltachta, bord na Gaeilge, Eo Teifis, Teifis na Gaeilge and Léirithe Thir Eoghain. The teachers who worked on the pack were: Norah D’Arcy, An Scoil Phobail, Moinin na gCiseach, Gallimh; Mairé Ui Dhufaigh, Scoil Naomh P61, Uachtar Ard, Co. na Gallimhe; Máire Ui Fhionnaille, Coláiste Jognaid, Gallimh; Eamonn 0 Loinsigh, Coláiste Iarlaithe, Tuaim, Co. na Gallimhe and Catriona Ni Ghriallais, Coláiste na Trócaire, An Gráig, Co. na Gallimhe.

Copies of *Ros na Rín Ais Foghlama don Idirbhliain* have been sent to all TY schools. Any school which has not received a copy should contact the support service.

New Laois video on experiential learning gets into classrooms

Students managing learning in *Transition Year* is the sub-title of an exciting, new 35-minute video on experiential learning. The viewer is brought right in to seven specific classroom situations and sees teachers and students engaged in a range of teaching and learning situations. There is team teaching and peer teaching from Limerick, laboratory work from Galway, group work from Mountrath and Nenagh and project work involving a variety of schools and UCD.

Classroom is an excellent resource for use at pre-service and in-service training, at staff meetings or among groups of teachers. Individual sections can also be useful for classroom work with students.

The video was a collaborative venture between Laois Education Centre, the Laois County Enterprise Board and the Transition Year Support Team. The video is introduced by Dermot Quish and Maria Callinan and presented by Bridie Corkery, Bill Reidy and Geraldine Simmie. Copies of *Experiential Learning in the Classroom* are available from Tony Mahon, Director, Laois Education Centre, IBS House, Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois Telephone 0502-61170, Fax 0502-61 137. Please include £10 to cover postage and packing.
New pack explores ideas about masculinity

A new multi-media resource for use with boys in Transition Year will be available to schools soon. Exploring Masculinities has been piloted in more than twenty schools and the authors are currently putting the finishing touches to an exciting innovation.

The project has four main aims:

- Explore different perceptions and experiences of masculinity leading to positive and meaningful understanding of the diversity of male roles.
- Promote equality, understanding and respect for all.
- Raise awareness in boy’s present and future lives of:
  * Life Choices
  * Changing Roles in Society
  * Work (Paid and non-paid)
  * Relationships
  * Health and Sexuality
  * Violence against Women and Men
- Promote boys’ self-awareness, their interpersonal relationships and awareness of the impact of their behaviour on others.

According to those developing Exploring Masculinities, the rationale for this programme is:

1. While men continue to dominate many spheres of life and have greater access to positions of power and wealth than women, social changes are taking place that are creating new opportunities for greater equality between women and men.
2. Men are more likely than women to be violent, to be in prison, to be in psychiatric care, to commit suicide, and to be alcoholics.
3. Men are less likely to discuss their emotional needs with men than women are with women, and are more likely to see emotionalism as a sign of weakness.
4. Men are more likely to be threatened by change, particularly that which affects their position in society.

Some schools already include some of these issues in their TY programmes. Typically, the topics are addressed in modules such as personal development, social awareness, health education, career guidance and RSE.

Exploring Masculinities is a joint EU, Department of Education and Science, and ASTI project. Further information is available from Maureen Bohan, Psychological Services, Department of Education and Science, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.

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The initiative by the National Millennium Committee to compile a Millennium Book is most welcome. With TY students central to the Write Here! Write Now! project we expect it will be a great success!

Numerous other organisations and agencies are also putting final touches to plans for millennium projects. TY students of ’99-’00 will have even more opportunities than usual for getting involved in projects outside their own schools.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is planning a millennium project for teams of TY students on the theme of Poverty and Social Justice.

Details will be sent to schools in September. Information available from Columba Faulkner, SVP Head Office, 8 New Cabra Road, Phibsboro’, Dublin 7. Tel. 01-8389896, Fax 01-8389950.

Projects on environmental themes undertaken between September and Christmas will be eligible for Young Environmentalist Awards.

This award scheme is operated by ECO, the Irish Environmental Conservation Organisation for Youth, which is based at 26 Clare Street, Dublin 2, Tel. 01-6625491, Fax. 01-6625493. Gráinne O’Leary is the person to contact.

Resource Checklist

Exploring Art at the National Gallery of Ireland was inadvertently left out of the resources for TY listed in Transition News No 10. The teachers’ pack is only one part of the excellent overall schools’ service provided by the Gallery. Further details from Marie Bourke, Head of Education, National Gallery of Ireland, Memon Square West, Dublin 2. Tel 01-
Workshops focus on assessment in Transition Year

‘Focus on Assessment’ was the theme of a series of nineteen workshops delivered by the service during March. Over 300 teachers attended. Most were co-ordinating the programme, though there was a welcome sprinkling of Principals and Deputy Principals at the sessions.

There was a rich sharing of experiences as teachers recounted varied approaches to and experiences of assessment in TY. The overall picture is an uneven one: some schools have put in place quite sophisticated assessment systems while others are still at the early stages of development. It is worth recalling that the Inspectors’ Evaluation of 1996 highlighted ‘assessment’ as a feature of the TYP needing attention. In that Evaluation 49% of schools were rated creditable or better but 19% were considered to be weak.

A central theme throughout the workshops was the closer linking of assessment with teaching and learning. Meaningful feedback to both students and teachers can be very effective in keeping the focus on the learning tasks. The need to find suitable assessment techniques for ‘calendar items’ of the TYP such as work experience, trips, visiting speakers and other once-off events was a point of much discussion.

‘Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process’ Transition Year Programme - Guidelines for Schools

In most workshops, participants favoured the idea of students building up, throughout the year, ‘folders’ or ‘portfolios’ containing samples of their work. This highlights the developmental nature of the programme and can be a good motivator. The idea is also attractive in that ‘folders’ or ‘portfolios’ provide visible evidence to parents and others of the work done during the course of the programme. Obviously when items in the ‘folder’ are accompanied by teacher assessments, the usefulness of the folder is greatly enhanced.

There was a growing recognition that traditional Christmas and Summer tests and reports are not always appropriate for TY. A greater alignment between whatever forms of assessment are used and the goals of the programme was seen as critical. There was also concern that whatever is developed should not impose huge extra demands on teachers.

A great range of specific suggestions, based on good practice, were made at these workshops. The list below gives a flavour of some of these ideas:

- Include assessment details in student induction in September.
- Make sure that all teachers are clear on the school’s assessment policy for TYP.
- Use TY to ensure that students experience a variety of modes of assessment.
- Ensure that assessment system is motivating for students, not demotivating.
- Assessment systems work better if kept simple rather than elaborate.
- Assessment must be attractive for the teachers involved.
- When students keep a self-assessment diary or log, reflecting on their own learning, it builds into a formidable statement.
- Adapt and develop the LCA credit system for TYP.
- If attendance is a problem, include it in the assessment system.
- Devise a report form that is visibly different from that used in other years.
- If modules run until February, have assessment and reporting then rather than at Christmas.
- A stall can agree on a common form for assessing projects.
- If students compile folders of excellence, arrange an end-of-year exhibition with a stand for each student.
- Ensure that ‘personal development’ features are integrated into assessment in all subjects.
- Ensure that what is assessed and rewarded reflects what the school values in its TYP e.g. personal development, social skills, maturity, progress etc.
- Assessment needs to be very clearly linked with the aims of the subject or module.

Recommendations

- The involvement of teachers, parents, work-providers and pupils themselves in pupil assessment procedures could be greatly improved upon in many of the schools offering the programme.

- School certification reflecting the experience, achievement and assessment of each pupil should be an integral part of each Transition Year programme.

Evaluation by Inspectorate, 1996
Integrating S.P.H.E. into TY programmes

Requests from TY teachers for additional training frequently centre around social, personal and health education (SPHE). Many schools have already found the SAP (Substance Abuse Prevention) programme particularly useful.

The Substance Abuse Prevention Project is running a further series of 10 basic introductory courses in Social, Personal and Health Education commencing in Autumn 1999. Courses will be held in the following areas:

- Dublin South/Wicklow at a venue in south Dublin;
- Dublin West/Kildare (two courses) at venues in west Dublin;
- Dublin North/Meath at a venue in north Dublin;
- Cork
- Laois
- Limerick
- Sligo
- Tipperary
- either Galway or Louth, depending on numbers.

Places are limited so teachers interested in availing of this training should apply immediately to:

The Substance Abuse Prevention Project, Attn: NIAMH McARDLE, Marino Institute of Education, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9
Tel. 01-8330101; Fax 01-8337219

Citizen Foundation awards three Golds

Three groups of Irish young people have been presented with golds awards in the The Citizenship Foundation Gulbenkian Youth Awards Scheme 1999. A group from the Irish Girl Guides, students from St.Peter’s College, Dunboyne, Co. Meath and students from Scoil Chriost Ri, Portlaoise, Co. Laois received their awards from awards three Golds Olympic boxer and star of the film Southpaw, Francis Barrett in Dublin in May. A group of TY students from Loreto College, Cavan were among the recipients of bronze awards. The scheme is designed to celebrate the work of young people in schools and youth groups. Details of the Awards were set out in Transition News 10.

Developing IT skills through the TY programme

Introducing students to information technology and enhancing skills is a feature of many TY programmes. Practice varies across the country: some schools offer specific IT training courses; others integrate IT skills development into activities such as project work or CV presentation; others link IT with a specific subject e.g. art, business, science etc. A great revolution in the gathering, processing and presentation of information is under way in schools. Much of the innovation is TY centred. For example, the national winners of the 1999 Young Entrepreneurs were two students whose company makes Internet websites for small-medium sized businesses. Simon Rand and Brian Davey, transition year students at The Kings Hospital School in Dublin can be visited at their website at http://wwwmidiasms.com. Their company is mediashop media solutions.

Of the different IT training programmes, the ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) appears to be growing in popularity as a qualification which can be acquired during TY. Thanks to those schools which supplied details to this service about their timetable and cost arrangements. A short report based on that data will be available through the TYCSS in September.

A particularly useful ECDL resource for teachers and students is the ECDL Training Manual produced by the Blackrock Education Centre. For further information contact Con O’Doherty, Blackrock Education Centre, Kill Aye, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. Tel 01-3200977, Fax 2301624, E-mail brocktce@iol.ie The manuals cost £25 each.
Castlebar enterprise project goes nationwide

A project developed in Davitt College, Castlebar, Co. Mayo, is now available to all schools nationwide. The Graduate Privilege Club is a discount scheme for second-level students. Based on this idea, a flexible teaching and learning programme ranging from six weeks to a year is now available to all schools. ‘This project develops an enterprise culture and can provide valuable work experience’, says teacher Joe McGowan. ‘I have seen students develop skills in communications, computing, accounting, sales, marketing, PR, reporting, teamwork and leadership through this programme’, he adds.

A special school kit with all the relevant materials is now available. Joe McGowan can be contacted at Davitt College, Castlebar, Co. Mayo. Tel. 094-23060

Drogheda TY students raise money for sick children

Jamie Maxwell presents Michael Roche of Our Lady’s Hospital for Sick Children, Crumlin, Dublin with a cheque for £500. Jamie and his TY classmates in Drogheda Grammar School raised the money by taking part in a sponsored cycle. Fundraising for charitable causes is a feature of many TY programmes and is often prompted by specific activities aimed at increasing social awareness.

Waterford PE programme includes community outreach

Social awareness linked to physical education is a feature of the TY programme in Presentation Secondary School, Waterford. The students share an integrated PE class with participants from the local Belmont centre, a service for people with mental disabilities run by the Brothers of Charity. Classes rotate between the school and Belmont with both Presentation and Belmont PE teachers working closely together.

The TY students also assist the people from Belmont in their preparation for the Special Olympics. The relationships developed in TY continues at an annual Christmas Party, a variety show, an annual social and right through fifth and sixth year.
Cork Schools co-operate to aid charities

Marketing, distributing and selling St. Patrick’s Day badges is the focus of a very practical YYproject among four Cork schools. The project, which originated in Blackrock College, Dublin, is co-ordinated locally by Colette Ó’Neill, Scoil Mhuire, Sidney Place, Cork and includes Midleton College, St. Vincent and Presentation College, Ballyphehane. The proceeds, which this year amounted to €29,000, go to two charities GOAL and AJDLJNK. Pictured left are some of the Scoil Mhuire TY students preparing the badges/or distribution.

Dingle students prepare for Millennium restoration

One Kerry school provides an excellent example of how one year’s TY can prepare the way for the next. This year’s TY class at CBS Dingle have constructed a garage (left). This garage will house the car (!) (right) which the ‘99-‘00 TY class will restore as a Millennium vehicle.

Delphi Centre attracts adventurers Project Forest a massive resource

For some students a highlight of the Transition Year can be their introduction to outdoor pursuits. A night or two away from home can add to the excitement, adventure and friendship. Lorraine McCartan, Karen Buckland, Chris Noonan, Kenneth Farrelly and James Comerford, all from Tallaght Community School, anticipate canoeing at Killary Harbour during their outdoor pursuit course at the Delphi Adventure Centre, Co. Mayo.

Project Forest, a massive mixed media educational resource for TY, was launched by the Minister for the Marine and Natural Resources, Dr. Michael Woods in Dublin Castle in March. Among those exploring the CD-ROM and resource pack were students from The Donahies Community School, Dublin, Leigean McBryan and James Noonan. To get a copy of Project Forest contact Neil Leyden Windmill Lane Pictures, Dublin, Tel 01-6713444.
Minicompany Trade Fairs show excellent enterprise

Transition Year students at De La Salle College, Dundalk ran a minicompany specialising in greeting cards. Their IY minicompany was just one of the hundreds which took part in Trade fairs organised by the Support Service this May. Pictured at the Trade Fair in Dundalk Shopping Centre are (left to right) Paul Brady (Local Organiser), Denise Kelly, 7YCSS, and De La Salle students Barry Carroll, Aidan Nash and Gerard Garvey.

President McAleese honours Wexford schools TY project

Learning the skills of interviewing older people and recording their stories is one feature of a project operating between three Wexford schools: Christian Brothers Secondary School, Wexford, Coláiste Bride, Eriniscorthy and Bridgetown Vocational College. Recently President McAleese honoured the Reminiscence Project when she visited Enniscorthy. The President heard the TY students talk about their work and received a copy of their publication. The Reminiscence Project has been developed as a cooperative venture between the three schools, The Arts Office of Wexford County Council, and WORD, Wexford Organisation for Rural Development Michael O’Leary of Transition Year Curriculum Support Service acts as educational advisor to the project.

President Mary McAleese and Reminiscence Project co-ordinator Jacqui Sydney talk with Bridgetown Vocational College students John Paul Goff Nicola Reddy, Sinead Barry and Samantha Doyle.

Co. Carlow students win top national ‘Agri Detective’ award

TY students from Knockbeg College, Carlow won the top prize in the inaugural Agri Aware ‘Agri Detective’ awards scheme. Pictured with TV presenter Ray D’Arcy and John McCullen, Chairman of Agri Aware are James Redmond, Paul O’Byrne, James Julian, Terence O’Byrne and William Tei. Thirteen schools were represented at the finals which took place in the RDS in Dublin in May. A comparative analysis of farming, BSE and its effects, organic farming farmers attitudes towards the future were among the project topics. Agri Aware and TYCSS have co-operated well on this project. A full resource pack on the Agri Aware programme will be available during the ‘99-’00 school year.
Monaghan Arts Festival showcases TY enterprise and creativity

Seven Monaghan schools formed a network and put on a magnificent Transition Year Arts Exhibition in the Market House Gallery at the end of April. The schools taking part were Community College, Ballybay; Largy College, Clones; Castelblaney College; St. Louis Convent, Monaghan; Collegiate School, Monaghan; Our Lady’s Secondary School, Castelblaney and Patrician High School, Carrickmacross. Local Arts Education Organiser Oona Treanor linked with Denise Kelly of the Support Service in facilitating the exhibition.

Lorraine Marry, Production Manager and Pauline McAree, Chief of Design, of Castelblaney College at the recent Monaghan Arts Show

St. Benildus magazine honours writer Bryan McMahon

One of the most impressive magazines produced by TY students is PUE’s Occurences. This magazine is produced twice each year in St. Benildus College, Kilmacud in Dublin under the guidance of teacher Joe Connell. Following recent successes in obtaining interviews with, among others, Gerry Adams, Mieheal Martin T.D., David Norris, Gay Byrne, Dick Spring and Eamon Dunphy, the latest issue is dedicated to the memory of Bryan MacMahon. The Kerry writer and teacher was a regular visitor to the school and a source of inspiration for students and teachers. The magazine includes an extract from MacMahon’s last, unfinished work Primrose as well as tributes from Benedict Kiely and John B. Keane. There are also interviews with An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, writer Roddy Doyle and soccer manager Brian Kerr.

‘PUE ‘s Occurences’ editor Stephen Gregory accompanies Minister of State Liz 0 ‘Donnell from the school library after she had addressed the TY students and received a copy of the magazine.

C’est Ta vie

TI’ students Emmet O’Gaibhin and Dara O Cuinneagain pictured during the lifeskills module C’est la vie at Coldiste de hIde, Tamhlacht, Baile Atha Cliath

Thanks for the memories

Thanks to all who responded to the invitation to send in photos. While we were not quite inundated, we had more than enough for this issue. The service wishes to continue receiving photographs about aspects of the TY Programme for use at displays, exhibitions and in publications. When sending photos, whether in colour or black and white, please ensure that captions include the names of all the people photographed, where possible. Thank You!
A student induction programme can get you off to a good start

A good start to a TY programme is very important. Even when the preparation during 3rd year has been thorough, everyone needs to focus afresh in September. Time spent on student induction is time well spent. More and more schools are putting a specific induction programme in place.

Who does this?
The main reasons are:
- To explain what TY is about
- To motivate students
- To clarify students’ perceptions and expectations
- To inform students of the shape of the TY, including timetable, calendar and assessment details
- To demonstrate how the school values TY
- To prepare for – signing
- To begin ‘bonding’
- To establish ground rules
- To further commit the school and staff to TY

Who does this?
The people who deliver a TY induction programme will vary from school to school. In some schools a wide range of people participate in the induction sessions. From observing practice, three particular points recur:
1. While the co-ordinator is critically important, s/he should not be the only person giving an input.
2. Some input from the Principal or Deputy Principal underlines the centrality of TY to the school and a ‘whole school’ approach.
3. Not everything can be said or grasped in a single session so induction needs to happen in ‘digestible’ segments, possibly spread over a number of days.

Contracts
Some schools have the signing of a ‘Transition Year Learning Contract’ as the finale of an induction programme. Signing the contract helps students clarify their own goals for the year. It also highlights personal responsibility for learning. A sample contract, which can be customised for individual schools, is available in the pack Transition Year Programmes - Resource Material. All schools should have copies of this pack.

Follow up
The induction programme can SCI a tone and focus tom th- whole year. The ideas and values articulated during induction need to be revisited at various stages during the year.
Student Induction into Transition Year

Teaching and Learning in Transition Year can differ from what you have been used to in Junior Cycle. It is therefore important that you understand what is meant by the following terms. In your own words give a brief explanation or example of each of the following 20 terms. Your teacher will explain whatever is unclear.

1. Project work
2. Learning from experience
3. Oral presentation
4. Maturity
5. Enterprise
6. Communication skills
7. Self-esteem
8. Social awareness
9. Assessment
10. Group work
11. Self-directed learning
12. Inter-disciplinary work
13. Learning beyond the classroom
14. Visiting speakers
15. Negotiated learning
16. Competence
17. Confidence
18. Homework in Transition Year
19. Intrinsic motivation
20. Self-development
21 Evaluation
Student Induction into Transition Year

1. I am in Transition Year because

2. The FIVE most important goals I want to achieve during my Transition Year are: number 1 (highest) to 5 (fifth highest)
   __ Get on better with adults
   __ Talk in public with more confidence
   __ Have a more positive attitude to school and learning
   __ Get on better with people of my own age group
   __ Make decisions more easily
   __ Express my own point of view more clearly
   __ Be able to work more independently, without too much spoonfeeding from teachers
   __ Get a better understanding about workplaces and working life
   __ Become a more mature person
   __ Form a clearer picture of what I want to do after TY
   __ Work more co-operatively with teachers
   __ Learn more about myself
   __ Improve my skills and develop new ones
   __……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

3. By the end of the Transition Year I would like to be able to

Signed...................................................................     Date.........................
Peeling the layers - looking inside TY programmes

One way of looking at a TY programme - whether to construct or deconstruct - is to think of it as made up of four layers as shown here. The outer, often most visible, layer will include once-off items such as work experience placements, visiting speakers, trips, musicals, drama performances, exhibitions, induction and graduation events etc.

The second layer refers to modules which are increasingly becoming identified with TY, often inter-disciplinary in character e.g. minicompany, *In Search of Europe, Shaping Space, Project Forest, The Family, Information Studies*, or the many TY modules/subjects which are specific to individual schools. The third layer involves sampling subjects with a view to making well-informed choices about LC subjects.

Finally, there is what many schools refer to as core subjects, usually English, Irish, Maths, sometimes a language, often RE and PE.

In achieving a programme (and timetable) that has breadth and balance, it is worth asking:

- Is there a coherence between the layers so that they integrate into one programme?
- Is the image of TY primarily shaped by the outer layer?
- Are active teaching and learning approaches applied in all four layers?
- Is there relevant assessment within each layer?
- Do students, parents and teachers appreciate the value of each layer’s activities?

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