

How Did The Great Irish Famine Change Ireland and The World?

PART THREE

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Irish Domestic Servants in America

BACKGROUND

The Aran poet Máirtín O’Direáin, a contemporary of Liam O’Flaherty, was born in the same village in Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands. In his autobiography *Feamainn Bealtaine* (Spring Seaweed), O’Direáin says that in his boyhood there wasn’t a mother in the village who hadn’t spent time in America. Many worked six or more years and returned to Ireland for a visit. Women with American “fortunes” were considered good marriage partners.

Between 1883 and 1908, some 310,000 Irish women arrived at the port of New York. Most of these young women went into domestic service. Irish women did not regard domestic service as servile or demeaning. They saw domestic service as well-paying work that provided discretionary income because domestic service included room, board, and uniforms. Many Irish girls sent money home regularly to their families in Ireland.

Some Irish women found some discrimination in want ads that said “No Irish Need Apply.” The discrimination was actually religious. Some households were suspicious about the behavior of Roman Catholics. For example, some expressed concern that Irish Catholic servant girls might secretly baptize the children of the household. On the other hand, Irish servant girls were warned to beware of employers who did not give their help time off for Sunday mass, or who tried to convert them to the religion of the household.

Teachers may want to refer to the activity *Irish Emigrants to Australia*.

RESOURCES

HANDOUTS

To Mrs. Moore at Inishannon

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Diner, Hasia R. *Erin’s Daughters in America. Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1983.

Mahon, Derek. *The Hudson Letter*. Winston-Salem: Wake Forest University Press, 1995.

Miller, Kerby A. with David N. Doyle and Patricia Kelleher, “‘For Love and Liberty:’ Irish women, migration and domesticity in Ireland and America, 1815-1920,” in Patrick O’Sullivan ed., *Irish Women and Irish Migration*. London: Leicester University Press, 1995. pp. 41-65.

Murphy, Maureen. “Bridie, We Hardly Knew Ye: The Irish Domestic,” in Michael Coffey, ed. *The Irish America*. New York: Hyperion, 1997. pp. 141-145.

Nolan, Janet A. *Ourselves Alone: Women’s Emigration from Ireland 1885-1920*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1989.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Identify and discuss the imagery in *To Mrs. Moore at Inishannon*.

Describe the experiences of young Irish women as American domestic servants.

Evaluate the content of a letter reflecting the views of a young Irish woman in America.

Create a dramatic monologue.

STANDARDS

SS 1: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

SS 2: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

ELA 1: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

ELA 2: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

ELA 4: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

View historic events through the eyes of those who were there, as shown in their art, writings, music and artifacts.

Know the social and economic characteristics, such as customs, traditions, child-rearing practices, ways of making a living, education and socialization practices, gender roles, foods, and religious and spiritual beliefs that distinguish different cultures and civilizations.

Interpret and analyze documents and artifacts related to significant developments and events in world history.

Gather and interpret information from children's reference books, magazines, textbooks, electronic bulletin boards, audio and media presentations, oral interviews, and from such sources as charts, graphs, maps and diagrams.

Use details, examples, anecdotes, or personal experiences to explain or clarify information.

Recognize different levels of meaning.

Read aloud with expression, conveying the meaning and mood of a work.

Write stories, poems, literary essays, and plays that observe the conventions of the genre and contain interesting and effective language and voice.

DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

- . analytical thinking
- . evaluate and connect evidence
- . observe and conclude
- . reflective thinking
- . think rationally about content

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

English Language Arts

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1. Ask students to read Derek Mahon's dramatic monologue *To Mrs. Moore at Inishannon*. (A dramatic monologue is a poem in which a speaker addresses an imaginary audience.) What words strike the students as especially vivid? What are some of the visual images that Mahon uses? What are some of the auditory images? What does Bridget look like? Describe the *kind* of person the Mahon has created in his poem. Use specific details from the poem.

2. The poem is written in the voice of a young Irish girl, probably a teenager. She is from Inishannon, a once fortified town on the River Bandon, in Co. Cork. She emigrated from Cobh aboard the White Star Liner *Oceanic* in the summer of 1895. Her last glimpse of Cobh (then called Queenstown) was the spire of the St. Colman’s Cathedral. Roche’s Point is at the mouth of Cobh Harbor. Montock is Bridget’s phonetic spelling of Montauk.

Bridget is working for an American family near Washington Square. She says her employers are serious Protestants, “like the Bandon sort.” Bandon is a large market town. Land around Bandon belonging to the native Irish was “planted” or settled by English Protestants in the early seventeenth century; they became the big landowners of the area. The native Irish, who were Catholics, would have worked for the Protestant landlords or would have worked the land as tenants and not owners. Legislation wasn’t passed to allow tenant purchase until the Irish Land Act (1903). Bridget’s money that she sends home would help her family purchase their land. Would the competition for land or the resentment about dispossession cause tension between Catholics and Protestants? Why does Bridget mention that she works for Protestants? Do you think her mother would be concerned that she is not working for people of her own religion?

What is Bridget’s work life like? What does she think of the family? Where does she locate herself in the household? What does she do on her days off? How does she feel about her life in New York? Why does she say “they fling the stuff around like snuff at a wake?”

ASSESSMENT OPTION

Write a dramatic monologue about:

What it is like to visit a new place?

How it would feel to work as a domestic servant?

How it would feel to “go into exile?”

TEACHER REFLECTION

The handout *Mrs. Moore at Inishannon* can be misleading to students because it is upbeat and cheerful. One line expresses a longing for home. Which line? Then what does Bridget say? It is important to invite students to contemplate the drudgery and homesickness of being a domestic servant.

Many Irish women regarded domestic service as an opportunity for economic independence and prospered in the United States. But some Irish women were exploited or demeaned as servants; some suffered harassment. Can students think of other workers who have been exploited (e.g., children)?

Irish men often worked as stable hands, drivers, or gardeners on big estates. Students may want to write a monologue for one of those voices.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE

For advanced students:

Research what Mary Feeney’s life in the United States would have been like working as a domestic servant in a big house in Boston, on the North Shore of Long Island, in Brooklyn Heights, Manhattan, Albany, Syracuse, or Buffalo in the 1920s. Write a letter from Mary to her mother telling her in realistic terms about life in the United States. Would she advise her sisters to come?

To Mrs. Moore at Inishannon

The statue's sculptor, Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi, reacted with horror to the prospect of immigrants landing near his masterpiece; he called it a 'monstrous plan.' So much for Emma Lazarus...I wanted to do homage to the ghosts.
—Mary Gordon, *Good Boys and Dead Girls*

No. 1, Fifth Avenue, New York City, Sept. 14th, 1895
—and Mother dear, I'm glad to be alive
after a whole week on the crowded *Oceanic*—
tho' I got here all right without being sick.
We boarded in the rain, St. Colman's spire
shrinking ashore, a few lamps glimm'ring there
(*'Will the last to leave put out the lights?'*),
and slept behind the engines for six nights.
A big gull sat at the masthead all the way
from Roche's Point to Montock, till one day
it stagger'd up and vanish'd with the breeze
in the mass'd rigging by the Hudson quays...
Downtown, dear God, is like a glimpse of Hell
in a 'hot wave:' drunken men, the roaring 'El',
the noise and squalor indescribable.
(Manners are rough and speech indelicate;
more teeming shore than you cd. shake a stick at.)
However, the Kellys' guest-house; church and tram;
now, thanks to Mrs. O'Brien, here I am
at last, install'd amid the kitchenware
in a fine house a short step from Washington Square.
Protestants, mind you, and a bit serious
much like the Bandon sort, not fun like us,
the older children too big for their britches
tho' Sam, the 4-yr.-old, has me in stitches:
in any case, the whole country's under age.
I get each Sunday off and use the privilege
to explore Broadway, the new Brooklyn Bridge
or the Statue of Liberty, copper torch on top
which, wd. you believe it, actually lights up,
and look at the Jersey shore-line, blue and gold:
it's all fire and sunlight here in the New World.
Eagles and bugles! Curious their simple faith
that stars and stripes are all of life and death—
as if Earth's centre lay in Central Park
when we both know it runs thro' Co. Cork.
Sometimes at night, in my imagination,
I hear you calling me across the ocean;
but the money's good, tho' I've had to buy new clothes
for the equatorial climate. I enclose
ten dollars, more to come (here, for God's sake,
they fling the stuff around like snuff at a wake).
'Bye now; and Mother, dear, you may be sure
I remain

yr. loving daughter,
—Bridget Moore

Source: Derek Mahon. *The Hudson Letter*. Winston-Salem: Wake-Forest University Press, 1995. pp. 226-27. Reprinted with permission of Wake-Forest University Press.

Monuments to Young Emigrants

BACKGROUND

During the 150th commemoration of the Great Irish Famine, Irish people around the world commissioned many kinds of memorials to victims of the famine and to the Irish of the diaspora. Many of the monuments to the diaspora, like the one at the quay in Sligo, feature the departure of families, adults and teenagers. What is unique about the later Irish of the diaspora is that they did not usually emigrate as family units. Young people left Ireland, often as teenagers, to help support their parents in Ireland, to create their own lives in the United States and to provide the means for other, younger siblings and other relatives to follow them.

(Note: See the handout in the activity *Annie Moore: Ellis Island's First Immigrant*.)

RESOURCES

HANDOUTS

Annie Moore Monument

Sligo Emigration Monument

CLASSROOM MATERIALS

Paper, paint, pastels, charcoal, collage materials, clay, etc., for designing and creating a memorial

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Convey through works of art the images of the young Irish who came to the United States alone, as teenagers, to help their families in Ireland and to make lives for themselves in the United States.

STANDARDS

SS 2: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

Arts 1: Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theatre, and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts. (Visual Arts)

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Read historical narratives, myths, legends, biographies, and autobiographies to learn about how historical figures lived, their motivations, hopes, fears, strengths, and weaknesses.

Gather and present information about important developments from world history.

Consider different interpretations of key events and developments in world history and understand the differences in these accounts.

Know and use a variety of sources for developing and conveying ideas, images, themes, symbols, and events in their creation of art.

DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

- . acquire and organize information
- . probe ideas and assumptions
- . reflective thinking
- . view information from a variety of perspectives
- . communicate results of research and projects
- . make decisions about process
- . conceptualize and observe

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

Arts

MULTIPLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Visits to studios

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Ask students to design and execute a monument in any medium to the young people who emigrated from Ireland to America alone or with siblings and relatives, but not with parents. What image would convey the experience of emigrating Irish teens? What inscription would they put on their monuments?

ASSESSMENT OPTION

Ask students to write a descriptive paragraph telling why they conveyed their message the way they did. Why did they choose a particular medium, color, or detail in their art work?

TEACHER REFLECTION

Students may know of the statues of Annie Moore, which are at Cobh and at Ellis Island. They honor her not as a symbol of the young Irish immigrant girl, but because she was the first immigrant to arrive at Ellis Island. She represents so many other young people who arrived alone so that they could help their families back home. The object of this project is to create a tribute to the hundreds of thousands of young Irish immigrants.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

For younger students:

Ask students as a group to draw a full-size picture of what they believe a monument to immigrants should look like. They should include many details and be prepared to discuss their drawing with the class.

For advanced students:

Students can visit an artist's studio, glassworks company, or similar business where creating sculptures, statues, and monuments can be demonstrated.



Annie Moore and Her Brothers, Cork

Source: Photograph by Maureen Murphy. *The Great Irish Famine Curriculum Committee.*



Quayside Memorial, Sligo
The Emigrant Family

Bronze figure on a stone plinth 8 feet high

The Irish Brigade in the American Civil War

BACKGROUND

When the Civil War began, the Irish volunteered in record numbers for the Union Army, and also fought for the Confederate Army. One figure numbers 51,000 Irish in the New York regiments. The 69th Regiment, “The Fighting Irish,” commanded by Colonel Michael Corcoran, distinguished themselves at Bull Run where there were heavy casualties and Corcoran was taken prisoner. When the unit was filled again, the 69th joined with New York 88th and the 63rd to form the Irish Brigade, commanded by General Thomas Francis Meagher [MAR].

Meagher was born in County Waterford in 1823. A lawyer and nationalist politician, he was given his nickname “Meagher of the Sword” by the English writer William Makepeace Thackeray when he called the sword a “sacred weapon.” Meagher took part in the unsuccessful armed rebellion in 1848. He was sentenced to exile for life in Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania).

Meagher made a daring escape from Van Diemen’s Land in 1852 and sought asylum in the United States, where he received a hero’s welcome and worked as a journalist. He was a very effective speaker. When the Civil War began, Meagher organized and commanded the Irish Brigade as a brigadier general through the Battle of Fredericksburg. After the Civil War, Meagher was appointed Secretary and Acting Governor of the Montana territory, where he drowned in the Missouri River at the age of forty-three.

The Irish Brigade fought with conspicuous bravery throughout the war, but they are especially remembered for their part in the Battle of Fredericksburg. At 2:00 p.m. on December 13, 1862, the Irish Brigade was ordered to advance on Marye’s Heights toward Confederate forces massed behind stone walls on the high ground on the crest of the hill. Sustaining casualties of more than 75 percent (280 of 1,200 survived), the Irish Brigade was nearly destroyed at the Battle of Fredericksburg. The Irish Brigade went on to fight at Gettysburg, particularly at the Battle of Little Round Top, where a Celtic Cross marks the contribution of the Irish to the Union Army. In 1989, four unknown soldiers of the Irish Brigade were buried with military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

RESOURCES

HANDOUTS

Banished Children of Eve

The Irish Brigade

Letters of Peter Welsh to his Wife Margaret Prendergast Welsh

Letters of Peter Welsh to his Father-in-Law Patrick Prendergast

After First Fredericksburg

War is Kind

Departure of the 69th Regiment New York State Militia

Members of the Irish Brigade of the Confederate Army

Members of the all-Irish Union Army Regiment

General Meagher at the Battle of Fair Oaks

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Anderson, Philip M. and Gregory Rubano. *Enhancing Aesthetic Reading and Response*. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1991.

Beatty, Patricia. *Charley Skadaddle*. New York: Troll, 1987.

- Crane, Stephen. "War is Kind and Other Lines," *The Collected Poems of Stephen Crane*. New York: Knopf, 1930. pp. 77-78.
- Faulkner, William. *Intruder in the Dusk*. New York: Signet, 1960. pp. 125-126.
- Hansen, Harry. *The Civil War*. New York: New American Library, 1961.
- Jones, Paul. *The Irish Brigade*. New York: Luce, 1969.
- Keneally, Thomas. *The Great Shame: A Story of the Irish in the Old World and the New*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1998.
- Kohl, Lawrence Frederick ed., with Margaret Cosse Richard. *Irish Green and Union Blue: The Civil War Letters of Peter Welsh*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1986.
- Murphy, Jim. *The Long Road to Gettysburg*. New York: Clarion, 1992.
- Quinn, Peter. *Banished Children of Eve*. New York: Penguin, 1995.
- Whitman, Walt. *Specimen Days*. New York: Signet, 1961. pp. 42-43.
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STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Write poems in response to *War is Kind*
 - Describe the role of the Irish as soldiers in the American Civil War.
 - Describe different perspectives on fighting in the Civil War.
 - Interpret the meaning of literary passages written about the Civil War.
 - Explain how Irish involvement in the Civil War affected the image and goals of Irish-Americans.
 - Write and perform eulogies for the Irish Brigade.
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STANDARDS

- Arts 2:** Students will be knowledgeable about making use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles.
 - Arts 3:** Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought.
 - SS 1:** Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.
 - SS 3:** Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live—local, national, and global—including the distribution of people, places, and environments over the Earth's surfaces.
 - ELA 1:** Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.
 - ELA 3:** Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.
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PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Investigate key turning points in New York State and United States history and explain why these events or developments are significant.
- Gather and organize information about the important achievements and contributions of individuals and groups living in New York State and the United States.
- Describe how ordinary people and famous historic figures in the local community, State, and the United States have advanced the fundamental democratic values, beliefs, and traditions expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the New York State and United States Constitutions, the Bill of Rights, and other important historic documents.
- Describe historic events through the eyes and experiences of those who were there.

Analyze historical narratives about key events in New York State and United States history to identify the facts and evaluate the author’s perspectives.

Locate places within the local community, State, and nation; locate the Earth’s continents in relation to each other and principal parallels and meridians.

Interpret and analyze complex informational texts and presentations, including technical manuals, professional journals, newspaper and broadcast editorials, electronic networks, political speeches and debates, and primary source material in their subject area courses.

Establish an authoritative stance on the subject and provide references to establish the validity and verifiability of the information presented.

Understand that within any group there are many different points of view depending on the particular interests and values of the individual, and recognize those differences in perspective in texts and presentations.

DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

- . analytical thinking
- . observe and conclude
- . reflective thinking
- . take and defend positions
- . view information from a variety of perspectives
- . consult and interpret primary sources

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

English Language Arts

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1. Ask students to listen to the handout of Peter Quinn’s description of the Battle of Fredericksburg in *Banished Children of Eve*, his novel of the Irish during the Civil War. Students can make notes during the first reading and then compare their notes with a partner. Students can listen to the passage a second time and work with their partners to write a paragraph describing the Battle of Fredericksburg from the point of view of a soldier of the Irish Brigade.
2. Ask students to read the handout *The Irish Brigade*, Thomas Galwey’s eyewitness account of the battle. What did General Robert E. Lee mean when he said, “It is well that war is so frightful. Otherwise, we should become too fond of it.”? What was there about watching the Irish Brigade try to make Marye’s Heights that moved Lee? Was it the gallantry of the men?
3. Ask students to read the letter describing the Battle of Fredericksburg from Peter Welsh, an Irish-American Union soldier, who fought with the 28th Massachusetts Volunteers. The 28th joined the Irish Brigade in late November 1862, just before the Battle of Fredericksburg. Welsh was not watching from Lee’s position on high ground beyond his army’s lines; he wrote from his experience on the ground in the midst of the battle. What do students learn about the life of a Union soldier from Peter Welsh’s letter? Welsh was writing to his wife and did not want to worry her too much, so how does he tell her about the battle? What details does he give her? What might he have left out of his account? (In May 1864 Welsh minimized his wound in his last letter, “...I got slightly wounded on the 12th. It is a flesh wound in my left arm, just a nice one to keep me from any more fighting or marching this campaign.” The wound fractured a bone and Welsh died of blood poisoning on May 28, 1864.)
4. In June, 1863, Welsh wrote to his Irish father-in-law, Patrick Prendergast explaining why he felt it was the duty of the Irish and Irish-Americans to fight for the Union. What reasons does Welsh give for his support of the Union cause? What has the United States provided for the Irish? Why does Welsh believe the Irish are indebted to the United States? While Welsh’s motives are to support the Union, he also believes that the experience in the army serves Irish interests. Why?

Using the Welsh letter and other print and non-print sources, ask students to write a thematic essay taking a position on the question of whether Irish and Irish-Americans regarded the Civil War as a step toward Irish independence. The first paragraph will describe Irish and Irish-American participation in the Civil War. The next three paragraphs will identify and discuss three reasons why the Irish volunteered in record numbers. Based on the evidence, what is the student's conclusion?

5. General George Pickett was another witness to the Irish Brigade's six desperate attempts to advance toward Marye's Heights. In a little more than six months, Pickett would see his own troops demonstrate similar gallantry on July 3, 1863, at Gettysburg in a display of extraordinary courage that was doomed to failure. On that afternoon, lines of Confederate infantry, a force of about 15,000, advanced across an open field toward the Union army in a position of a rise above them. The casualties of the units of the advanced lines ran from 50 to 70 percent (Hansen 400). Pickett's Charge, as it has come to be known, has been identified by some as the most tragic spectacle of the Civil War. Compare the statistics of the Battle of Fredericksburg with those of the Battle of Gettysburg.

Some of the Irish who had fought with the Union Army Irish Brigade at Fredericksburg fought under General George Meade at Gettysburg where the Irish Brigade lost 40 percent of their force of 500. Some of them saw Pickett's Charge from the top of Little Round Top. They no doubt sympathized with Pickett's men walking into certain death as the Irish Brigade had done earlier at Fredericksburg. They also knew there were Irishmen and Irish-American soldiers in the Confederate Army who had its own Irish Brigade.

Nearly 100 years later, another Southerner, William Faulkner, wrote about Pickett's Charge as one of the "what ifs" of history:

For every Southern boy fourteen years old, not once but whenever he wants it, there is the instant when it's still not yet two o'clock on that July afternoon in 1863, the brigades are in position behind the rail fence, the guns are laid and ready in the woods and the furled flags are loosened to break out and Pickett himself with his long oiled ringlets and his hat in one hand probably and his sword in the other looking up the hill waiting for Longstreet to give the word and it's all in the balance, it hasn't happened yet, it hasn't begun yet, it not only hasn't begun yet, but there is still time for it not to begin...(Faulkner 125-126).

Ask students to consider other "what ifs" of history. What if the South had won the war? What if Kennedy or Martin Luther King had not been assassinated? What if the Russians hadn't sold Alaska to the United States?

6. Walt Whitman was at Fredericksburg between December 23 and 31, 1862. He wrote about the suffering he witnessed in an essay called "After First Fredericksburg" in *Specimen Days* (See handout.) Whitman did not see the battle; he saw soldiers dying of wounds which would not have been fatal if modern medicine were available. What details do Welsh and Whitman's accounts share? While Whitman made notes of his Civil War experiences, he did not publish *Specimen Days* until 1882. What insights does Whitman give his readers about the reality of the war that had been fought twenty years earlier?
7. Stephen Crane was another writer who wrote about the Civil War for a later generation. While he was born after the Civil War (1871), *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895), the novel he wrote describing the young Union soldier Henry Fleming, contrasts the heroic descriptions of war and its reality. The year of his death (1900), Crane published a collection of poems titled *War is Kind*. The title poem revisits the theme of *Red Badge* using irony and arresting imagery to contrast the romantic rhetoric about war with its suffering for the dying and their survivors.

Ask students to read the handout of the poem *War is Kind* and contrast the images of the rhetoric of war and its reality. To help students recognize the structural pattern of a poem, Philip Anderson and Gregory Rubano have suggested asking students to read the first two stanzas of *War is Kind* and then to predict the wording of the third and fourth stanzas. They also offer examples of student poems that respond to the irony of *War is Kind* using the same format: "Do not weep, worker, unemployment is kind" and "Do not mourn, father, because cancer is kind" (Anderson/Rubano 68-69). Challenge students to write their own poems in response to *War is Kind*. Students might want to write their poems to Peter Welsh's widow.

ASSESSMENT OPTION

Write a Fredericksburg Address for the dedication of the Fredericksburg National Cemetery, created in 1865 on Marye's Heights. Before writing it, think about Lincoln's famous Gettysburg address. Lincoln jotted the brief words of his Gettysburg Address on the back of an envelope; yet it is an immortal speech. What did Lincoln say about his words as compared with the deeds of the men he honored? How did he connect them with America's past and future? What was the purpose of Lincoln's speech? Was it simply to honor the dead and dedicate the cemetery or did Lincoln have something more in mind?

How did he use the deeds of the dead to engage his listeners so that they would feel the future of all liberty was tied to the survival of the Union? What does he ask his listeners to do? How would you have felt if you were among the listeners on that November day in 1863?

Based on your thoughts about Lincoln's address and your knowledge of the Battle of Fredericksburg, write the Fredericksburg Address. By this time the Civil War was over, so what needs to be done now? How can you inspire and challenge your listeners, especially those who served or were related to members of the Irish Brigade?

You can also choose to write and deliver a eulogy for the Irish Brigade. A eulogy is a speech given at a funeral or memorial service that praises the character and service of the deceased.

TEACHER REFLECTION

This activity can be broken up into several learning experiences that discuss the role of the Irish in the Civil War. Students are asked to think about whether the Irish participation in the Union Army changed attitudes about Irish immigrants and Irish-Americans. While Peter Welsh talked about the Civil War as a training course for soldiers to fight for Ireland's freedom, the crucible of the Civil War transformed the position of the Irish in America.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

For younger students:

Two books tell the story of the Civil War from the perspective of young Irish-American soldiers. Patricia Beaty's *Charley Skedaddle*, a Scott O'Dell Historical Fiction Award winner, is the story of Charley Quinn, a member of a New York immigrant gang called the Dead Rabbits. When Charley's brother is killed at Gettysburg, Charley joins the Union Army as a drummer boy to fight the Confederates.

Jim Murphy's *The Long Road to Gettysburg* uses the eye witness accounts of two young Irish Americans: 18 year-old Lieutenant John Dooley of the Confederate Army; and Thomas Galway, a Union soldier who was just 15. Using other primary sources (maps, drawings, and illustrations) Murphy traces both young men's journeys to Gettysburg.

For advanced students:

The activity uses *War is Kind* with World War I poems and other anti-war poems. Students in field experiences have used the poem with passages from the book *The Red Badge of Courage* and with the song *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* and noticed the addition of Divine righteousness to the language of romantic heroism.

Banished Children of Eve

On the other side of the parade ground, Ahearn came down the front steps of his quarters. He walked with his head down, the same deliberate, plodding step as on that morning seven months before, when the Irish Brigade had crossed the pontoon bridges into Fredericksburg. The men had picked their way through the debris and smashed furniture scattered around the narrow streets. A storm of soft, fluffy goose feathers, the innards of disemboweled mattresses, blew about like snow. Noonan stood with Ahearn at the top of Hanover Street, the last protected space before the open fields that swelled in gentle waves toward Marye's Heights. In the northern sky, above the rooftops and over the river, was an Army observation balloon, a large white sphere as bright and prominent as the moon. As the Union guns began to pound the heights above the town, the tiny figures in the basket suspended beneath the balloon waved signal flags that told the gunners how to adjust their fire.

In a short while, General Thomas Francis Meagher came up the crowded street on horseback. The men stood aside to let him pass. Ahead was a small bridge that they had to funnel together in order to cross. Once across, the brigade formed into battle ranks, and when Meagher rode out into the field, he was cheered. He leaned over a row of evergreen bushes, tore off a sprig of green, and stuck it into his hat. The men broke ranks. They clutched and ripped at the branches and stuck green sprigs into their caps. Noonan shouted for them to get back into line. Meagher sat facing the Heights, oblivious to the confusion behind him, and raised his sword. He yelled something that Noonan couldn't hear, and then the whole brigade went forward. They reached the first rise. The Rebels held their fire. Off to the right, Noonan saw Ahearn walking amid the ranks, encouraging the men, his face white and taut. As they approached the second rise, the thunderclap struck, Rebel artillery and muskets firing simultaneously; the entire front rank seemed to go down together, in unison, and the smoke rolled down on top of them. The gunfire was ceaseless. The sergeant in front of Noonan was hit in the mouth by a piece of canister that blew out of the back of his head. Noonan fell over him, then stood and brushed off his clothes, aware of the ridiculous futility of his gesture even as he did it. He ran forward, sword in hand, and yelled at the top of his lungs. Through the smoke he caught glimpses of the Rebels: indistinguishable faces beneath slouched hats.

One ball hit him in the side and stopped him cold. The next one passed through his right thigh and lodged behind his left knee. He limped forward a few steps before he fell, and a soldier with a shattered chest fell on top of him, his eyes open and blood spurting from his mouth and the hole in his chest. Noonan rolled him off. He tried to stand but couldn't. He looked up and saw Ahearn go past, quickly disappearing into a curtain of smoke.

Source: Peter Quinn. *Banished Children of Eve*. New York: Penguin, 1995. pp. 433-434.
Reprinted with permission of the author.

The Irish Brigade

The Irish Brigade suffered heavy losses at the Battle of Fredericksburg; casualties numbered 545 of 1300. One eyewitness to the battle was Thomas F. Galwey, who described the Irish Brigade approaching Marye's Heights from the direction of Fredericksburg carrying their regimental colors with the golden harp and sunburst:

Every man has a spring of green in his cap, and a half-laughing, half-murderous look in his eye. They pass just to our left, poor fellows, poor glorious fellows, shaking goodbye to us with their hats! They reach a point within a stone's throw of the stone wall. No farther. They try to go beyond, but are slaughtered. Nothing could advance further and live. They lie down doggedly, determined to hold the ground they have already taken. There, away out in the fields to the front and left of us, we see them for an hour or so, lying in line close to that terrible stone wall.

From the high ground behind the Confederate lines, General Lee and his staff could see the whole panorama of battle, like a colorful pageant of flags and little toy soldiers. It was at this point that he turned to an aide and said: "It is well that war is so frightful. Otherwise, we should become too fond of it."

General George Edward Pickett was there, too, and wrote his wife that his heart was wrung by the dauntless gallantry of the Irish attack on Marye's Heights. The correspondent of the London *Times*, by no means pro-Union, wrote his paper: "Never at Fontenoy, Albuera, or at Waterloo was more undaunted courage displayed by the sons of Erin than during those six frantic dashes which they directed against the almost impregnable position of their foe...The bodies which lie in dense masses on Colonel Walton's guns are the best evidence what manner of men they were who pressed on to death with the dauntlessness of a race which had gained glory on a thousand battlefields, and never more richly deserved it than at the foot of Marye's Heights on the 13th day of December, 1862."

Source: Paul Jones. *The Irish Brigade*, New York: Luce, 1969. pp. 155-156. Permission pending.

Letters of Peter Welsh to his Wife Margaret Prendergast Welsh

December 8, 1862:

You have heard of the battle before this. Thank God I came out of it safe. It was a fierce and a bloody battle. Our brigade got terribly cut up. It is so small now that it is not fit to go into any further action unless it is recruited up, so you need not be uneasy now about me for the rest of the fighting will have to be done without our aid.

December 25, 1862:

Now my dear wife I must tell you a little about the battle. On Thursday morning the 11th we had reveille at 4 o'clock. We got up and had our breakfast, got our luggage, packed up, left our knapsacks in camp and left some men to take care of them.

We started about sunrise and marched about two hours. The canonading was going on all day from daylight in the morning. We lay behind the hills opposite the city until evening, and then we moved into a small wood and camped till morning.

We started again about sunrise and crossed on the pontoon bridges into Fredericksburg. We lay there all day expecting to be going into the fight at any moment. When it became dark we moved our position a little and stacked arms for the night with mud ankle deep to lay down and sleep on. We hunted up pieces of boards and lay them down on the mud and then lay down and covered ourselves up in our blankets. I slept as sound I think as I ever slept in my life although our blankets were covered thick with frost in the morning.

We were woke up at four o'clock and cooked our breakfast and were ready to start before daylight. Every man cooks his own grub in our company when we are out. That way the cook was left in camp. About eight o'clock we were ordered to fall in and we were drawn up in line of battle in one of the streets ready to start into it at a moment's notice. While we were in that position, the enemy commenced to shell us and they done it with good effect too. They threw their shell into our line with great precision wounding a good many. One wounded two men in the next file to me. The first brigade of our division went in first and in a few minutes we got the word "Forward." Ball and shell were flying in all direction.

The rebels' position was on a range of hills about a mile outside of the city. We had to cross that distance which is low and level with their batteries playing on us both in front and from right and left. The storm of shell and grape and canister was terrible mowing whole gaps out of our ranks and we having to march over their dead and wounded bodies.

We advanced boldly despite it all and drove the enemy into their entrenchments but the storm of shot was then most galling and our ranks were soon thinned. Our troops had to lay down to escape the raking fire of the batteries, and we had but a poor chance at the enemy who was sheltered in his rifle pits and entrenchments.

I seen some hot work at South Mountain and Antietam in Maryland but they were not to be compared to this. Old troops say that they never were under such a heavy fire before in any battle. Every man that was near me in the right of the company was either killed or wounded except one. We lost twelve in killed or wounded out of 37 men in our company. Our captain was wounded in the foot and our second lieutenant was killed.

Source: Kohl, Lawrence with Margaret Cossé Richard, *Irish Green and Union Blue. The Civil War Letters of Peter Welsh*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1986. pp. 40, 42-43. Reprinted with permission of Fordham University Press.

Letters of Peter Welsh to his Father-in-Law Patrick Prendergast

America is Ireland's refuge, Ireland's last hope. Destroy this republic and her hopes are blasted. If Ireland is ever free, the means to accomplish it must come from the shores of America. To the people of different nations who have emigrated here and become part of its native population, Ireland owes nothing. In fact, they are rather her debtors. But to this country Ireland owes a great deal. How many thousands have been rescued from the jaws of the poorhouse and from distress and privation by the savings of the industrious sons and more particularly by the daughters of Ireland who have emigrated here. It is impossible to estimate the amount of distress and misery that has been warded off from the down trodden and tyrant crushed people of many poorer districts of Ireland by this means.

Such motives have influenced me with the desire that I have felt from my childhood that I might one day have an opportunity when the right man to lead should be found and the proper time should arrive to strike a blow for the rights and liberty of Ireland. For such an opportunity this war is a school of instruction for Irishmen and if the day should arrive within ten years after this war is ended an army can be raised in this country that will strike terror into the saxon's heart.

Source: Kohl, Lawrence with Margaret Cossé Richard, Irish Green and Union Blue. *The Civil War Letters of Peter Welsh*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1986. pp. 102-103. Reprinted with permission of Fordham University Press.

After First Fredericksburg

December 23-31:

The results of the late battle are exhibited everywhere about here in thousands of cases (hundreds die every day) in the camp, brigade, and division hospitals. These are merely tents, and sometimes very poor ones, the wounded lying on the ground, lucky if their blankets are spread on layers of pine or hemlock twigs, or small leaves. No cots, seldom even a mattress. It is pretty cold. The ground is frozen hard, and there is occasional snow. I go around from one case to another. I do not see that I do much good to these wounded and dying, but I cannot leave them. Once in a while some youngster holds on to me convulsively, and I do what I can for him; at any rate, stop with him and sit near him for hours, if he wishes it.

Source: Walt Whitman. "After First Fredericksburg," *Specimen Days*. New York: New American Library, 1961. pp. 42-43

War is Kind

Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind.
Because your lover threw wild hands toward the sky
And the affrighted steed ran on alone,
Do not weep.
War is kind.

Hoarse, booming drums of the regiment,
Little souls who thirst for fight,
These men were born to drill and die,
The unexplained glory flies above them,
Great is the battle-god, great, and his kingdom –
A field where a thousand corpses lie.

Do not weep, babe, for war is kind.
Because your father tumbled in the yellow trenches,
Raged at his breast, gulped and died,
Do not weep.
War is kind.

Swift blazing flag of the regiment,
Eagle with crest of red and gold,
These men were born to drill and die,
Point for them the virtue of slaughter,
Make plain to them the excellence of killing
And a field where a thousand corpses lie.

Mother whose heart hung humble as a button
On the bright splendid shroud of your son,
Do not weep.
War is kind.

Stephen Crane

Source: Stephen Crane. "War is Kind and Other Lines," *The Collected Poems of Stephen Crane*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1930. pp. 77-78.



Source: Maureen Murphy. *The Great Irish Famine Curriculum Committee*. Private collection



Members of the Irish Brigade of the Confederate Army

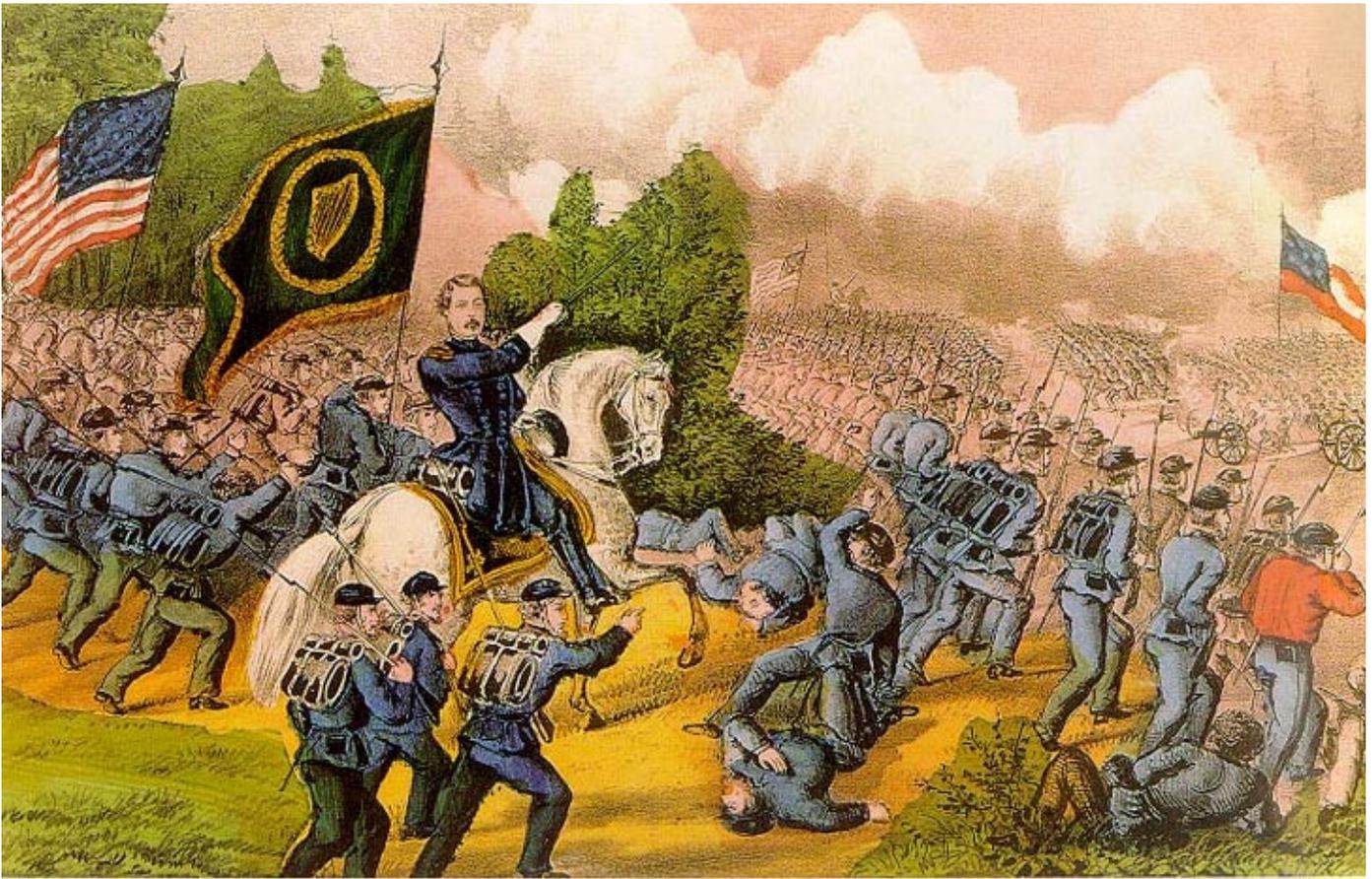
Source: Photographic collection, Library of Congress.



Members of the all-Irish Union Army regiment, New York's Fighting 69th, celebrating Sunday morning mass in camp.

Sunday Mass: New York's Fighting 69th

Source: Photographic collection, Library of Congress.



GENERAL MEAGHER AT THE BATTLE OF FAIR OAKS

Source: Kevin O'Rourke. "General Meagher at the Battle of Fair Oaks," *Currier and Ives: The Irish and America*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc, 1995. Permission pending.

THE NEW YORK CITY 1863 DRAFT RIOTS

BACKGROUND

This activity encourages students to understand the complexity of the Irish immigrant experience by asking why there were draft riots in New York City during the Civil War, and challenging them to think like historians as they examine and evaluate evidence from the past.

In this activity, students will consider the question of whether protest is legitimate during a time of war and whether a riot, or even violence, is justified if you feel your rights are being violated or if you feel that you are under attack.

Students will examine a series of headlines from *The New York Times* between July 13 and July 18, 1863, which mentions the new draft law and briefly describes the draft riots. (See the handout *The New York Times Headlines, 1863*.) They will create a basic time line of events, offer an explanation of what happened and why it happened, and then discuss what they have observed in their reading of the headlines. They will discuss such difficult questions as: were people justified in protesting against the draft in a time of war? How does a protest become a riot? How would you judge people who participated in a protest that turned violent?

Teaching this activity reminds students that history is a messy business. Experience with the activity has demanded that it can be very difficult for students to balance empathy for both Irish and African-Americans with the events that took place during the Civil War. It is especially difficult to understand that explaining an event does not mean that you are justifying that event. During the activity, teachers should be sensitive to racial and ethnic tensions and stereotyping in their classes, as well as language usage from past history. For example, in *The New York Times* headlines and articles in section G, African-Americans are referred to as *colored people* and *negroes*. It is also important to discuss the value of dialogue, mediation, and peaceable resolution to conflict.

(**Note:** This activity can be used in conjunction with *The Irish Brigade in the American Civil War*.)

RESOURCES

HANDOUTS

New York City 1863 Draft Riots

The New York Times Headlines, 1863

The New York Times Covers Civil War Draft Riots

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Bernstein, Ivar. *The New York City Draft Riots, Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War*. New York: 1990.

Gibson, Florence. "The Irish and the Union Cause," *The Attitude of the New York Irish Toward State and National Affairs, 1848-1892*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1951. pp. 140-173.

Hale, William Harian. *Horace Greeley: Voice of the People*. New York: Collier, 1961. pp. 279- 282.

Hodges, Graham. "'Desirable Companions and Lovers:' Irish and African Americans in the Sixth Ward, 1830-1870," in Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher, *The New York Irish*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996. pp. 107-124.

Phisterer, F. *New York in the War of the Rebellion*. Albany: J. B. Lyon, 1912.

Quinn, Peter. *Banished Children of Eve*. New York: Penguin, 1995.

Shannon, William V. *The American Irish: A Political and Social Portrait*. New York: Macmillan, 1963.

Spann, Edward K. "The Irish Community and the Civil War," in Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher, *The New York Irish*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966. pp. 193-209.

Takaki, Ronald. *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*. Boston: Little Brown, 1993.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Support positions with well-developed arguments to explain their views on the historical causes of and the responsibility for the 1863 New York City Draft Riots.

Work as “historians” (individually and in teams) to examine primary source documents about the New York City Draft Riots of 1863 for examples of bias in accounts

Evaluate the reliability of primary sources

Use primary sources in the form of newspaper accounts to reconstruct a time line of the events of the New York City Draft Riots of 1863.

Determine responsibility for the events that took place during the New York City Draft Riots of 1863 to assess responsibility for the events that took place.

STANDARDS

SS 1: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

SS 2: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

ELA 1: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

ELA 2: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

ELA 3: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Analyze historic events from around the world by examining accounts written from different perspectives.

Analyze evidence critically and demonstrate an understanding of how circumstances of time and place influence perspective.

Investigate key events and developments and major turning points in world history to identify the factors that brought about change and the long-term effects of these changes.

Interpret and analyze complex information texts and presentations, including professional journals, newspaper articles, political speeches and debates, electronic networks, and primary source materials.

Make distinctions about the relative value and significance of specific data, facts, and ideas.

Evaluate writing strategies and presentation features that affect interpretation of the information.

Recognize and understand the significance of a wide range of literary elements and techniques, (including figurative language, imagery, allegory, irony, blank verse, symbolism, stream-of-consciousness) and use those elements to interpret the work.

Make precise determinations about the perspective of a particular writer or speaker by recognizing the relative weight he/she places on particular arguments and criteria.

Understand that within any group there are many different points of view depending on the particular interest and values of the individual, and recognize those differences in perspective in texts and presentations.

Make effective use of details, evidence, and arguments and of presentational strategies to influence an audience to adopt their position.

DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

- . utilize multiple resources in research
- . consult and interpret primary sources
- . question arguments
- . reflect upon content/form opinions
- . make decisions about process
- . set up hypotheses
- . work with others to solve problems
- . probe assumptions for accuracy and viewpoints
- . analytical thinking
- . evaluate and connect evidence

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

English Language Arts

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1. Ask students to break into teams and examine the handouts that are excerpts from articles from the *New York Times*. The handouts discuss the conscription law and the riots in 1863. Students should prepare time lines and discuss the accuracy and bias of the newspaper reports.

Teams can then report their conclusions to the class. The activity can conclude with a class discussion about whether a jury charged to try the rioters for murder and other crimes should find them guilty based on the evidence provided in the *New York Times* accounts.

ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

Write an essay based on the jury discussion, responding as a jury member with an opinion that refers directly to the articles in *The New York Times*.

TEACHER REFLECTION

During this activity, students will struggle to understand the causes of the draft riots and to explain what happened during the riots. The newspaper accounts from *The New York Times* paint an unsympathetic picture of participants, though the *Times* focuses less on the rioters' Irish heritage than do other newspapers. There is also some opinion that newspapers like the *Daily News* (July 11, 13, 1863) and the *Freeman's Journal* (May 16, July 11, 1863) convinced the Irish that they had a grievance (Gibson 157). Students might consider the role of newspapers as makers of news as well as reporters of the news.

Teachers who field tested this and similar activities recommended discussing the issue of language with students early in the term and revisiting it periodically when antiquated or potentially offensive language appears in the text. In *Social Studies for Secondary Schools* (70-72), Alan Singer describes using Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman" speech in a high school class where students discussed whether they preferred to read edited or original versions of primary source documents.

A teacher may decide to use an activity like this to explore current tensions in our society and the impact on those tensions on our class as a community of learners and historians. One class compared the 1863 Draft Riots with events in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, in the 1990s when a Jewish man was killed by a crowd during rioting. While students did not arrive at a consensus about whether the events were similar, their discussion helped them to better understand the complexity of history, the importance of respecting diverse opinions, and the difficulties of unbiased reporting.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Students can research and write reports on the history of racial and ethnic conflicts in the United States and movements like the Populist Party, the labor movement and the Civil Rights movement that tried to bridge difference between groups and build strong alliances for a common cause.

Teachers and students interested in reading a fictional account of the 1863 New York City Draft Riots will find Peter Quinn's well-researched *Banished Children of Eve*, a novel of Civil War New York, an excellent introduction to the period. They will meet a gallery of New Yorkers who will evoke that complicated and turbulent moment in New York State history. The novel involves adult themes.

Students can follow newspaper accounts of a major current event, collecting from different papers during the duration of the event. A written observation or oral presentations can center around the style and approach of the newspaper articles and editorials.

New York City 1863 Draft Riots

Irish immigrants and African-Americans lived closely in places like New York City's tough Sixth Ward in the decades between 1830 and 1850. While they lived together with a certain tolerance, anti-abolitionist rioters attacked the established African-American community in the Sixth Ward in July 1834; nativists attacked the Irish in the Sixth Ward the following summer. But race relations were better in the Sixth Ward than in other parts of the city.

There was racial tension between African-Americans and Irish when they competed for available work; however, there were also instances when African-Americans and Irish cooperated to agitate for better working conditions. In 1853, both groups formed a waiters' union and struck for higher wages (Hodges 108). Ten years later any fragile cooperation between African-Americans and Irish workers was ruptured in April 1863, when African-American workers were brought in to break an Irish longshoremen's strike. This became one of the factors in one of the most disturbing events in Irish-American and New York State history: the New York City Draft Riots of 1863.

Another cause leading to the Draft Riots began with the 1860 Presidential election and afterwards, when New York's Democratic Party politicians charged that Republicans were willing to "spend" Irish blood to free southern African-Americans who would then be brought north to compete with the Irish for jobs. This referred to the early years of the war when there were high casualties among Irish enlistees who initially rushed to support the Union cause.

The Civil War historian F. Phisterer estimates that 51,000 Irish-born men fought in New York State regiments in the Union Army (70). The Fighting 69th fought gallantly and lost twenty percent of its men at the disastrous Battle of Bull Run. Irish recruits poured into the 63rd, the 69th and the 88th, which became the Irish Brigade under Thomas Meagher, an Irish nationalist hero who had been transported to Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania) for his part in the 1848 Rising, an unsuccessful rebellion during the Great Irish Famine. The Irish Brigade took heavy casualties at Antietam, at the charge of Marye's Heights during the Battle of Fredericksburg, which cost the Brigade nearly half of its men, at Chancellorsville, which reduced the brigade to about 500 men, and finally fighting as a battalion of six companies at Gettysburg in July, 1863, that demonstrated the loyalty of Irish immigrants to their new country.

The heavy casualties of the Irish Brigade added to the New York City Irish community's animosities against the war, against the Republicans, and against African-Americans. Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation had been unpopular with the Irish, who felt that the war had turned from a war to save to the Union to a war to free African-Americans who were regarded as competition for employment. It was the new draft law that sparked the riots.

In May 1863 Congress passed a military conscription law signed by President Abraham Lincoln that allowed an affluent draftee to avoid military service by providing a substitute or by paying \$300. Many of the first draftees were Irish immigrants who were too poor to pay the tax.

On July 13, 1863, after the publication of the first draft list, a mass protest against the draft in New York City was transformed into a rioting crowd that attacked government buildings and the press, and that eventually turned on the city's African-American population. Rioters destroyed an orphanage for African-American children, attacked and lynched African-Americans caught on the streets, and threatened employers who hired African-American workers. An interesting feature of the riot was that the Sixth Ward was quiet during the 1863 Draft Riots. It emphasizes the fact that race relations in the city were complicated and that the 1863 riots erupted in wards of greater segregation than the integrated Sixth (Hodges 124).

Most of the rioters appear to have been Irish immigrants. From newspaper accounts, it also appears that they turned on the city's African-American population after the police had opened fire on the protesters, killing and wounding many people, but that is not clear.

The New York City 1863 Draft Riot may have been the result of many variables of the Irish immigrant experience in the United States: the circumstance of their departure from Ireland during or just after the Great Irish Famine, the stereotyping and discrimination many faced upon their arrival, their competition with African-Americans for employment, and their hostility to the draft law, especially after the high number of casualties among Irish enlistees. The question is whether these unfavorable conditions justifies mob violence and racist attacks.

The *New York Times* (handout of *The New York Times* Headlines, 1863: excerpt K) mentions the *New York Tribune*. Students should know about its complicated relationship with the Irish. During the Great Irish Famine, *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley carried stories of the suffering in Ireland and listed those who contributed to Irish relief, but Greeley was an abolitionist and he and his paper were targeted by the rioters for their support of the emancipation of African-Americans. The *New York Tribune* was also responsible for the “Forward to Richmond” slogan that, some believe, urged the Union leadership to send troops into the rout at Bull Run.

Source: The Great Irish Curriculum Famine Curriculum Committee.

The New York Times Headlines, 1863

Examine the following headlines from The New York Times. What happened in New York City between July 13 and July 18, 1863? In your opinion, why did it happen?

THE CONSCRIPTION LAW.
IMPORTANT PROCLAMATION BY THE PRESIDENT.
May 9, 1863, p. 1

THE DRAFT BEGINS.
July 11, 1863, p. 3

THE MOB IN NEW YORK.
RESISTANCE TO THE DRAFT—RIOTING AND BLOODSHED.
CONSCRIPTION OFFICES SACKED AND BURNED.
PRIVATE DWELLINGS PILLAGED AND FIRED.
AN ARMORY AND A HOTEL DESTROYED.
COLORED PEOPLE ASSAULTED—AN UNOFFENDING BLACK MAN HUNG.
THE TRIBUNE OFFICE ATTACKED—THE COLORED ORPHAN ASYLUM RANSACKED AND BURNED—
OTHER OUTRAGES AND INCIDENTS.
A DAY OF INFAMY AND DISGRACE.
July 14, 1863, p. 1

THE REIGN OF THE RABBLE.
LARGE NUMBERS KILLED.
STREETS BARRICADED, BUILDINGS BURNED.
July 15, 1863, p. 1

ANOTHER DAY OF RIOTING.
MOBS ARMED WITH RIFLES.
NEGROES HUNG.
July 16, 1863, p. 1

THE RIOTS SUBSIDING.
TRIUMPH OF THE MILITARY.
July 17, 1863, p. 1

QUIET RESTORED.
CONTINUED PRECAUTIONS OF AUTHORITIES.
July 18, 1863, p. 1

THE DRAFT HERE AND ELSEWHERE.
THE LAWS AND THE MOB.
AID FOR THE INJURED.
JUSTICE TO THE VICTIMS.
July 18, 1863, p. 1

THE LAW OF THE DRAFT.
THE QUESTION OF EXEMPTIONS.
July 19, 1863

The New York Times Covers Civil War Draft Riots

Historians often use newspaper accounts from the past to understand events. However, newspaper accounts have to be read with a critical eye. Historians continually ask themselves questions like:

Are these articles based on eyewitness accounts?

Are the witnesses reliable? Are they telling the full story?

Do the editorials and news articles reflect the biases of the newspaper?

Because these articles are over one hundred years old, language, and spelling are sometimes different from today.

Team Instructions:

1. Working in teams of historians, examine the excerpts from the articles and editorials from *The New York Times* and answer the questions that follow each passage. Your team can decide to have all members read each article or to divide the articles up among team members.

2. Use the newspaper articles to construct a time line of events.

3. Teams should discuss the accuracy and biases of the reports. Whose voice is included in these excerpts? Whose voice is missing? Is there anything that makes you question the accounts? Explain.

4. Teams should discuss why people would protest during a time of war. Why did protests turn into riots? What actions, if any, should be taken against people who participated in the riots?

5. If you were sitting on a jury trying rioters for murder and other crimes, would you find them guilty based on the evidence provided here? Be prepared to explain your views to the class.

A) *The New York Times*—Editorial, Friday, February 20, 1863

“The Conscription Act, which has just passed the Senate, is the greatest pledge yet given that our government means to prevail, and will prevail. It is really the first assertion of a purpose to command the means of its own preservation. We say [it] is the best of all guarantees of its final success.”

What does this editorial discuss?

How does an editorial differ from a news article?

What is *The New York Times*' position on this issue?

B) *The New York Times*—Editorial, Friday, July 10, 1863

“The Administration is acting wisely in ordering the immediate enforcement of the draft. The conscription is necessary. Even after the late great victories, a new army of 800,000 men must get ready to move upon the Confederacy. Let the rebel States see that not only are they beaten now by the forces at present in the field, but that in the Fall they meet the same veteran armies 800,000 stronger.”

This editorial was printed the day before the draft was scheduled to begin. What opinion is expressed by *The New York Times* in this editorial?

In your opinion, why does *The New York Times* take this position?

C) The Draft—Regulations, Saturday, July 11, 1863

“All able-bodied male citizens of the United States and persons of foreign birth who shall have declared on oath their intention to become citizens...between the ages of 20 and 45, with certain exceptions, to be subject to draft.”

“Any person drafted and notified to appear may, on or before the day fixed for his appearance, furnish an acceptable substitute to take his place in the draft, or he may pay to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue...the sum of \$300.”

According to this article, who is eligible for the draft?

How can a man avoid serving in the military?

In your opinion, are these exemptions fair? Explain.

In your opinion, who might object to this plan? Why?

D) The Attack on the Armory in Second Avenue—July 14, 1863 (part 1)

“At about 4 o’clock the crowd proceeded from...Lexington Avenue and Forty-fourth street to the armory situated on the corner of Second Avenue and Twenty-first street. The building was a large four-story one, and was occupied for the manufacture of rifles for the Government. In the early part of the day the police authorities had placed in the building and the property inside, and to resist with force any attempt of the invaders to enter the premises...At the time the first attempt was made to force the doors of the building, the mob amounted to from three to four thousand, the greater part of whom were boys. The doors were burst open by means of heavy sledges, and the crowd made a rush to enter the building. Those in charge of the building, acting under instructions, fired upon those who were entering and four or five were wounded. One man was shot through the heart and died immediately.”

According to this article, what does the “mob” do?

Who is in the “mob”?

How do the guards respond to the “mob”?

Do you think this response was necessary? Explain.

E) The Attack on the Armory in Second Avenue—July 14, 1863 (part 2)

“By the time the Fire Department of the District arrived on the ground, and were preparing to work on the fire, but were prevented from doing so by the mob, who threatened them with instant death if their orders were disobeyed. The cars were stopped from running and the horses in several instances were killed...The rioters meanwhile danced with fiendish delight before the burning building, while small boys sent showers of stones against the office, smashing its doors and windows...The military soon appeared, but was immediately routed, they fled to the side streets.”

What does the “mob” do when the fire department tries to put out the fire?

What happens when the military arrives?

In your opinion, why did the crowd act like this?

The article describes the crowd as *fiendish*. In your opinion, is this a fair description? Explain.

F) Burning of the Orphanage for Colored Children—July 14, 1863

“The Orphan Asylum for Colored Children was visited by the mob after 4 o’clock...Hundreds, and perhaps thousands of the rioters, the majority of whom were women and children, entered the premises and in the most excited and violent manner they ransacked and plundered the building from cellar to garret...It was a purely charitable institution. In it there are on an average 600 or 800 homeless colored orphans...After an hour and a half of labor on the part of the mob, it was in flames in all parts.”

In your opinion, why did the crowd attack the Orphanage for Colored Children?

Did the attack on the orphanage happen before or after the attack on the armory? Does the sequence of events make a difference in how we explain what happened?

G) Outrage Upon Colored Persons—July 14, 1863

“Among the most cowardly features of the riot was the causeless and inhuman treatment of the negroes of the City. It seemed to be an understood thing throughout the city that the negroes should be attacked wherever found. As soon as one of these unfortunate people was spied, he was immediately set upon by a crowd of men...There were probably not less than a dozen negroes beaten to death in different parts of the city during the day.”

What was happening to them during the day?

In your opinion, why was the crowd seeking out “colored persons?”

The article says that “[It] seemed to be an understood thing throughout the city that the negroes should be attacked.” Do you think the attacks were planned? Explain.

H) Character of the Mob—July 14, 1863

“In the early part of the day yesterday, there were a number of respectable workmen and persons engaged in different occupations in the City, who were momentarily seduced from their labors and their work-shops, and went with the crowds in the street. But they at once saw the horrible character of the mob and the atrocious work they had on hand; they heard their threats and saw their shocking brutalities, and were only too glad to get out from among them. At last the mob or mobs were composed of only the vilest men in the City, and there was not a crime conceivable, from firing houses to hanging negroes, of which they (the observers) were not capable...Our reporter observed in one gang, several women armed with sticks...; but it is only justice to say that the voluble tongues of these women gave vent to their thoughts with an accentuation which was never acquired on this side of the Atlantic ocean.”

According to *The New York Times*, how did the crowd change during the day?

The New York Times claims that women rioters spoke with accents from across the ocean. Where do you think these women came from? Why?

I) Eighteen Persons Reported Killed—July 15, 1863

“Between 12 and 1 o’clock yesterday, the rioters commenced their attack upon the Union Steam Works...The rioters turned out in large force numbering from 4,000 to 5,000 people—including children...At 3 p.m. three hundred Policemen arrived upon the ground...When the police made their appearance, the rioters attempted to escape by the rear windows, but too late. Finding themselves caught in a tight place, they made an attack on the Police. This assault the officers met by a volley from their revolvers and five of the mob were shot...About twenty rioters remained in the building and there was but one way for them to make their exit. The mob made a deadly assault upon the police. They in turn used their weapons effectively, and fourteen of the mob were instantly killed.”

What happened at the Union Steam Works?

What did the police do when they had part of the “mob” trapped?

Do you agree with these police actions? Explain.

Why would a violent “mob” bring along children? Does this make you question the accuracy of the *New York Times* report? Explain.

J) Shall Ruffians Rule Us? Editorial—July 15, 1863

“The mob yesterday was unquestionably started on the basis of resistance to the draft. But that was a very small part of the spirit which really prompted and kept it in motion. It was, probably in point of character, the lowest and most ruffianly mob which ever disgraced our City...There is but one way to deal with this coarse brutality. It is idle to reason with it—worse than idle to tamper with it; it must be crushed. Nothing but force can deal with its open manifestation.”

How does *The New York Times* describe the rioters?

Do you agree with this description? Explain.

What does *The New York Times* propose to solve the problem?

Do you agree with this solution? Explain.

K) The Nationality of the Rioters, July 16, 1863

“The *New York Tribune* of yesterday morning had the following: ‘It is a curious fact that of all the arrests made, every one is Irish.’ However, this may be, it is a fact patent to everyone who has seen anything of the mob that it is composed exclusively of Irishmen and boys.”

In your opinion, what does the *New York Tribune* mean when it writes that it is “curious” that everyone arrested was Irish?

How does *The New York Times* respond to the statement by the *New York Tribune*?

Assume the reports are accurate. Why do you think the rioters were overwhelmingly Irish?

What does this article tell us about ethnic relations in New York City at that time? Explain.

L) An Appeal to the Irish Catholics from Archbishop Hughes—July 16, 1863

“In the present disturbed condition of the City, I will appeal not only to them, but to all persons who love God and revere the holy Catholic religion...to return to their homes...and disconnect themselves from the seemingly deliberate intention to disturb the peace and social rights of the citizens of New York.”

John Hughes was the Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York. In your opinion, why did he make this statement?

M) The Spirit of the Mob and its Promoters, Editorial—July 17, 1863

“What most amazes is not the existence of this mob, but its hideousness...The rabble exhibit of abandonment of human feeling, that was hardly deemed possible in any portion of American society, even the foreign-born.”

What does *The New York Times* say about immigrants in this editorial?

N) Speech of Archbishop Hughes, July 18, 1863

“Men of New York. They call you rioters, and I cannot see a riotous face among you...I am a minister of God, and a minister of peace, who in your troubles in years past,...never deserted you...I will not enter into the question which has provoked all this excitement. No doubt there are some real grievances...If you are Irishmen, and the papers say the rioters are all Irishmen, then I also am an Irishman, but not a rioter, for I am a man of peace.”

How does Archbishop Hughes address the people *The New York Times* described as ruffians?

In your opinion, why did Archbishop Hughes announce that he is both an Irishman and a man of peace?

Do you agree or disagree with the way Archbishop Hughes addresses the crowd? Explain.

Source: *The New York Times*, 1863. Permission pending.

How the Irish Contributed to Life in America

BACKGROUND

The Great Irish Famine altered more than the course of Irish history, it changed the shape of world history, especially that of Canada, Australia, and England, and the United States of America. In the 1990 federal census, 44 million Americans reported their ethnicity as Irish.

Irish immigrants and Irish Americans have made significant contributions to every phase of American life including politics, labor, sports, religion, arts, entertainment and business. They produced American mayors, governors and presidents. They invented both the submarine and Mickey Mouse; they made fortunes and Fords. They earned more Congressional Medals of Honor than any other ethnic group, and they helped build the American labor movement. They wrote about the American dream, and they lived it. Irish immigrants have also known discrimination, poverty and hunger and the harrowing details of their lives have been described by Irish-American writers.

New York State is especially proud of its Irish heritage. In 1855, 26 percent of the population of Manhattan was born in Ireland. By 1900, 60 percent of the population was of Irish descent. Today thousands of New Yorkers trace their ancestry to famine-era immigrants who helped develop the infrastructure, economy, social and political institutions of New York State.

RESOURCES

HANDOUTS

Irish in America

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Coffey, Michael with text by Terry Golway. *The Irish in America*. New York: Hyperion, 1997.

Fanning, Charles. *The Irish Voice in America*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1990.

Glazier, Michael, ed. *The Encyclopedia of the Irish in America*. South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1999.

Griffin, William D. *A Portrait of the Irish in America*. New York: Scribner, 1983.

McCaffrey, Lawrence J. *The Irish Diaspora in America*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976.

Miller, Kerby and Paul Wagner. *Out of Ireland: The Story of Irish Emigration to America*. Washington: Elliott and Clark, 1994.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Name successful Irish-Americans.

Complete a biography of a successful Irish-American.

Advocate for a selected Irish-American to be nominated for the *Top Ten Irish-Americans*.

STANDARDS

SS 2: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

ELA 1: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

ELA 2: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Read historical narratives, myths, legends, biographies, and autobiographies to learn about how historical figures lived, their motivations, hopes, fears, strengths, and weaknesses.

Understand the roles and contributions of individuals and groups to social, political, economic, cultural, scientific, technological, and religious practices and activities.

View history through the eyes of those who witnessed key events and developments in world history by analyzing their literature, diary accounts, letters, artifacts, art, music, architectural drawings, and other documents.

Produce oral and written reports on topics related to all school subjects.

Establish an authoritative stance on the subject and provide references to establish the validity and verifiability of the information presented.

Organize information according to an identifiable structure, such as compare/contrast or general to specific.

Develop arguments with effective use of details and evidence that reflect a coherent set of criteria.

DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

- . acquire and organize information
- . inquire, question, probe
- . draw conclusions
- . consult and interpret databases
- . synthesize information
- . consult and interpret primary sources
- . take and defend positions

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

English Language Arts

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1. Ask students to develop criteria they would use if they were asked to choose the ten most important people in United States history.
2. Ask students to select a name from the Irish in America list that in part was prepared by WGBH and PBS for their 1998 series about *The Irish in America*.
Students can write a biography of the one person using print and non-print sources and explain how that individual influenced life in the United States.
3. Using the class criteria developed to select the ten most important persons in United States history, students can make their class presentations, advocating that their Irish-American person should be listed among the Top Ten Irish-Americans, the 10 most important Irish or Irish-American figures in the history of the United States.

ASSESSMENT OPTION

The Great Irish Famine caused thousands of Irish people to relocate around the world. How would you describe the contributions of the Irish to American culture?

TEACHER REFLECTION

This activity gives students an opportunity to do some reading about an historical figure who has made a significant contribution to an area of student interest. Students might be interested to know the *Irish-America Magazine* produces a Top 100 Irish Americans list every year. Teachers may want to bring in the magazine for the current year and discuss their choices with the class. The class may want to write to Niall O'Dowd, publisher of *Irish-America Magazine* (432 Park Avenue South, Suite 1000, New York, NY 10016) and ask him about their criteria or share the class criteria and list with him.

Students might want to check out the Ulster American Folk Park website (www.folkpark.com). Among their exhibitions are the homes of Judge Thomas Mellon and Bishop John Hughes. The Ulster American Folk Park is an outdoor museum which tells the story of emigration from Ulster to the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Irish in America

Barry, John (1745-1803): Commodore, United States Navy, American Revolution.

Biouicault, Dion (1820-1890): Playwright, actor, theatre manager.

Bly, Nellie (born Elizabeth Cochrane, 1864-1922): Journalist who went around the world in 72 days.

Bourke-White, Margaret (1904-1971): Photographer.

Brady, Matthew (1823-1896): Civil War photographer.

Brennan, William J., Jr. (1906-1997): United States Supreme Court Justice.

Cagney, James (1904-1986): Actor whose Oscar-winning role in 1942 was in *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, the life of Irish-American composer George M. Cohan.

Carroll, Charles III (1737-1832): Served as a United States Senator in the first Congress, reputedly the richest man in America when he died.

Cody, Buffalo Bill (1846-1917): Western scout and showman.

Cohan, George M. (1872-1942): Composer of American musicals including *Yankee Doodle Dandy*. His World War I composition *Over There* won him a Congressional Medal.

Corcoran, Michael (1827-1893): Brigadier General, Union Army. Commanded the New York State "Fighting 69th."

Coughlin, Father Charles (1891-1979): Pastor of the Shrine of the Little Flower. Broadcaster and political commentator.

Crockett, Davy (1786-1836): Pioneer, Congressman, died at the Alamo.

Croker, Richard (1843-1922): "Boss Croker." Tammany Hall Leader.

Crosby, Harry L. "Bing" (1904-1977): Entertainer who won an Oscar for *Going My Way* (1944).

Daley, Richard J. (1902-1976): Mayor of Chicago from 1955 until his death.

Day, Dorothy (1891-1980): Journalist and peace activist; founder of the Catholic Worker movement.

Disney, Walt (1901-1966): Animator. Producer of movies, entertainment.

Dunne, Finley Peter (1867-1936): Journalist. Creator of Mr. Dooley.

Embury, Philip (1728-1773): Founder the Methodist Church in the United States with Barbara Heck (1734-1804).

Farell, James T. (1904-1979): Writer. Author of the Studs Lonigan trilogy.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott (1896-1940): Novelist. Author of *The Great Gatsby* (1925).

Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley (1890-1964): Labor activist and organizer for the Industrial Workers of the World ("IWW"); first woman to head the United States Communist Party.

Ford, John (1895-1973): Film director who won Oscars for *The Informer*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *How Green Was My Valley*, *The Battle of Midway*, and *December Seventh*.

Ford, Henry (1863-1947): Pioneering automobile manufacturer.

Gleason, Jackie (1916-1987): Actor known for his comedy, including his role as Ralph Kramden in *The Honeymooners*.

Grace, W.R. (1832-1904): Business leader, steamship line operator and first Roman Catholic mayor of New York.

Harnett, William (1848-1892): Painter.

Hayes, Helen (1900-1993): The "first lady of American theater," who won Oscars for the *Sin of Madelon*, *Claudet*, and *Airport*.

Hearst, William Randolph (1863-1951): Editor and publisher of the largest newspaper chain in America, he was a member of Congress

Herbert, Victor (1859-1924): Composer of light opera and popular music.

Hoban, James (1762?-1831): Architect. Designed the White House.

Holland, John Philip (1840-1914): Invented the submarine.

Hughes, John Joseph (1797-1845): Archbishop of New York.

Jackson, Andrew (1767-1845): 7th President of the United States.

Johnson, William (1715-1774): Pioneer owner of vast estates in upper New York State, knighted for defeating French at Lake George.

Jones, Mary Harris ("Mother Jones") (1830-1930): Foremost labor agitator in the United States.

Keaton, Buster (1895-1966): Vaudevillian and early film star.

Kelly, Gene (1912-1996): Entertainer who danced his way into American hearts in the musicals *On the Town*, *An American in Paris*, and *Singin' in the Rain*.

Kelly, Grace (1928-1982): Film and stage actress who won an Oscar for *The Country Girl*, married Prince Rainier of Monaco.

Kennedy, John Fitzgerald (1917-1963): Elected the 35th President of the United States in 1960.

Kennedy, Joseph P. (1888-1969): Businessman, Ambassador to Court of St. James 1937-1940.

McCarthy, Joseph (1908-1957): Senator from Wisconsin.

McCarthy, Mary (1912-1989): Writer and author of, among others, *The Group* and *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood*.

McCloskey, John (1810-1885): First American cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church.

McCormack, John (1884-1954): Tenor.

McKenna, Joseph (1834-1926): United States Attorney General and Justice of the Supreme Court.

Meagher, Thomas Francis (1823-1867): "Meagher of the Sword." Sentenced to penal servitude, escaped from Van Diemen's Land to the United States. Organized the Irish Brigade during the Civil War.

Meany, George (1894-1980): President of the American Federation of Labor; instrumental in merger of AFL with CIO.

Mellon, Andrew W. (1855-1933): Banker, capitalist and Treasury Secretary under President Harding.

Murrow, Edward R. (1908-1965): CBS Correspondent.

O'Connor, Flannery (1925-1965): Novelist and short-story writer; author of *A Good Man is Hard to Find* and *Other Stories*.

O'Dwyer, Paul (1907-1998): Civil Rights Lawyer.

O'Hara, John (1905-1970): Novelist and short-story writer, author of, among others, *Butterfield 8*, and *From the Terrace*.

O'Keefe, Georgia (1887-1986): Painter.

O'Neill, Eugene (1888-1953): Playwright. Nobel Laureate (1936). Author of *The Iceman Cometh*, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, and *Moon for the Misbegotten*.

O'Reilly, John Boyle (1844-1890): Editor of the *Boston Pilot*. Made a daring escape from Australia to the United States.

Sanger, Margaret (1879-1966): Pioneer birth-control advocate.

Smith, Alfred E. (1873-1944): Governor of New York for four terms. Unsuccessful Democratic nominee for President of the United States in 1928.

Stewart, Alexander T. (1803-1876): Entrepreneur; "invented" the American department store.

Sullivan, Ed (1902-1974): Journalist and television producer whose *Ed Sullivan Show* ran for 22 years.

Sullivan, John L. (1858-1918): World champion boxer.

Sullivan, Louis H. (1856-1924): Modernist architect and father of the skyscraper.

Mother Jones: An Immigrant's Role in the American Labor Movement

BACKGROUND

Background information on this activity can be found in the handout *The Autobiography of Mother Jones* found in this activity.

RESOURCES

HANDOUTS

The Autobiography of Mother Jones

Growing Up in Coal Country

Mother Jones

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *Growing up in Coal Country*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996.

Fetherling, Dale. *Mother Jones, the Miner's Angel: a Portrait*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974.

Jones, Mary Harris. *The Autobiography of Mother Jones*. ed. Mary Field Parton. Foreword by Clarence Darrow. Chicago: The Charles Kerr Publishing Co., 1972. [1926]

Gilbert, Ronnie. *Ronnie Gilbert on Mother Jones: Face to Face with the Most Dangerous Woman in America*. Berkeley: Conari Press, 1993.

Nies, Judith. *Seven Women*. Portraits from the American Radical Tradition. New York: Penguin, 1977, pp. 95-123.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Describe the working conditions of child laborers in the 19th century.

Describe the role of Mother Jones in the American Labor Movement.

Describe how the relationship between labor and management was transformed by the American Labor Movement.

Create editorials about the American Labor Movement.

Discuss how the relationship between management and workers was transformed by the American Labor Movement.

STANDARDS

SS 1: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

SS 4: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of how the United States and other societies develop economic systems and associated institutions to allocate scarce resources, how major decision-making units function in the United States and other national economies, and how an economy solves the scarcity problem through market and nonmarket mechanisms.

SS 5: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the necessity for

establishing governments; the governmental system of the United States and other nations; the United States Constitution; the basic civil values of American constitutional democracy, and the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship, including avenues of participation.

ELA 1: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

ELA 3: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Investigate key turning points in New York State and United States history and explain why these events or developments are significant

Gather and organize information about the important achievements and contributions of individuals and groups living in New York State and the United States.

Describe historic events through the eyes and experiences of those who were there.

Analyze how the values of a nation and international organizations affect the guarantee of human rights and make provisions for human needs.

Interpret and analyze information from textbooks and nonfiction books.

Establish an authoritative stance on a subject and provide references to establish the validity and verifiability of the information presented.

Analyze, interpret, and evaluate information, ideas, organization, and language from academic and nonacademic texts.

DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

- . analytical thinking
- . probe ideas and assumptions
- . interpret information and data
- . draw conclusions
- . take and defend positions
- . view information from a variety of perspectives

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

Arts

English Language Arts

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1. Ask students to read accounts of the boys working in the coal mines, described in the handout *Growing Up in Coal Country*. Many of the boys in mines were immigrant boys or the sons of immigrant parents. Young boys called *breaker boys* worked at breaking and sorting coal from slate. While an 1885 law required that the boys be twelve years old and a 1900 law raised the age to fourteen, boys as young as five or six were breaker boys. The boys worked from 7 a.m. till 6 or 6:30 p.m. bent over their boxes full of coal which was tipped in at intervals. Because their work involved picking through the coal, they were not permitted to wear gloves. Their hands were cut badly by sharp fragments of slate.

Manus McHugh was a boy who lost his life on the breaker. His job was to oil the breaker machinery. At noontime one day he was in a hurry because he wanted to get outside to play with the others. Rather than take the time to shut the machinery drum, he attempted to oil it while it was still in motion. His arm got caught in the gears and he became hopelessly entangled.

After an investigation of McHugh's death a 1903 report stated, "Boys will be boys and must play unless they are held under by strict discipline." But other than that, no changes were made to make conditions

safer for the boys (23).

Manus Mc Hugh's death did not prompt officials of the mines to make any changes in the working conditions for boys. Ask students to take on the role of the editor of a local paper who is writing an editorial about one of the episodes. Editorials should state the problem, consider different approaches to the issue and propose a solution. The official report about the Manus McHugh case said "boys will be boys" and implied that boy workers need closer supervision. Do students agree with that approach? If so, what kind of supervision would be appropriate? Are there other solutions to the problem of fatalities among boy workers? What kind of solutions?

2. During the West Pittstown mine shaft fire in 1871, Martin Crahan, a 12-year-old mule driver, refused to ride the cage to safety because he knew there were 19 miners who needed to be warned of the fire.

Martin found the miners, told them about the fire, then raced back to the elevator cage. It was too late; the cage had already been destroyed. Realizing there was no hope for rescue, he found his way back to the miners through the smoke and flames. In the meantime, the miners had built a barricade in hopes of keeping out the poisonous fumes. Martin begged the miners to let him in, but they refused because that would also let the gasses in.

Rather than die alone, Martin headed for the mule stable. He found his mule, scratched a final message for his family and then died next to his mule. The other miners died, too (37-38).

What does this story say about safety and working conditions, as well as child labor in the mines?

3. One person who gave her life to improving the conditions of all workers—especially child workers was Mary Harris Jones (1830-1930) who was known as "Mother" Jones. Ask students to read the handout *The Autobiography of Mother Jones*. What early experiences might have contributed to her sympathy for workers, many of whom were immigrants, and for children?
4. Mother Jones was involved with all workers, but it was the miners for whom she had a particular concern and it was a miner who first called her "Mother" Jones. Mother Jones worked among the miners and brought the terrible conditions in the mines including those of the breaker boys and of mining towns to the attention of the public. She helped organize the United Mine Workers enlisting miners' wives as well as the workers.

In 1903, Mother Jones led a march of mill children, textile workers, from Kennington, Pennsylvania, to President Theodore Roosevelt's home at Oyster Bay, Long Island. The march received a great deal of publicity and public support. While federal employment laws were not changed and those addressing children's issues were not enforced, some states raised the minimum age for young workers. Working in groups and using print and non-print sources, students can investigate one of Mother Jones's campaigns on behalf of child labor.

ASSESSMENT OPTION

Mother Jones was called "The Most Dangerous Woman in America;" however, on her 100th birthday, which she celebrated on May 1, 1930, John D. Rockefeller Jr. telegraphed her a congratulatory message saying, "Your loyalty to your ideas, your fearless adherence to your duty as you have seen it is an inspiration." Mother Jones had organized the miners of the Rockefeller-controlled Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. Using information gathered about Mother Jones' work to have child labor laws changed, debate whether Mother Jones was "the most dangerous woman in America" or whether she was a woman who acted on matters that she considered her duty.

TEACHER REFLECTION

In discussions with students about Mother Jones and her work to protect children, some students were surprised to learn that while child labor laws are enforced in the United States, children and teenage workers continue to be exploited labor in places around the world. It was suggested that students investigate incidents of child labor exploitation, study the provisions of New York State's child labor laws and outline a series of appropriate labor laws for children working in a particular area and industry.

The Autobiography of Mother Jones

I was born in the city of Cork, Ireland, in 1830. My people were poor. For generations they had fought for Ireland's freedom. Many of my folks have died in that struggle. My father, Richard Harris, came to America, and as soon as he had become an American citizen he sent for his family. His work as a laborer with railway construction crews took him to Toronto, Canada. Here I was brought up but always as a child of an American citizen. Of that citizenship I have ever been proud.

After finishing the public schools, I attended the Normal school with the intention of becoming a teacher. Dress-making, too, I learned proficiently. My first position was teaching in a convent in Monroe, Michigan. Later, I came to Chicago and opened a dressmaking establishment. I preferred sewing to bossing little children; however I went back to teaching again, this time in Memphis, Tennessee.

I was married in 1861. My husband, George Jones, was an iron moulder and a staunch member of the Iron Moulders' Union. We lived near the foundry in a poor section of Memphis. We had four children—three boys and a girl. The Civil War did not touch our lives except to give George and the iron moulders more work.

In 1867, a yellow fever epidemic swept Memphis. Its victims were mainly among the poor and the workers. The rich and the well-to-do fled the city. Schools and churches were closed. People were not permitted to enter the house of a yellow fever victim without permits. The poor could not afford nurses. Across the street from me, ten persons lay dead from the plague. The dead surrounded us. They were buried at night quickly and without ceremony. All about my house I could hear weeping and the cries of delirium. One by one, my four little children sickened and died. I washed their little bodies and got them ready for burial. My husband caught the fever and died. I sat alone through the nights of grief. No one came to me. No one could. Other homes were as stricken as was mine. All day long, all night long, I heard the grating of the wheels of the death cart. After the union had buried my husband, I got a permit to nurse the sufferers. This I did until the plague was stamped out.

I returned to Chicago and went again into the dressmaking business with a partner. We were located on Washington Street near the lake. We worked for the aristocrats of Chicago, and I had ample opportunity to observe the luxury and extravagance of their lives. Often while sewing for the lords and barons who lived in magnificent houses on the Lake Shore Drive, I would look out of the plate glass windows and see the poor, shivering wretches, jobless and hungry, walking along the frozen lake front. The contrast of their condition with that of the tropical comfort of the people for whom I sewed was painful to me. My employers seemed neither to notice nor to care.

Summers, too, from the windows of the rich, I used to watch the mothers come from the west side slums, lugging babies and little children, hoping for a breath of cool, fresh air from the lake. At night, when the tenements were stifling hot, men, women and little children slept in the parks. But the rich, having donated to the charity ice fund, had, by the time it was hot in the city, gone to seaside and mountains.

In October, 1871, the great Chicago fire burned up our establishment and everything that we had. The fire made ninety thousand people homeless. We stayed all night and the next day without food on the lake front. We often went into the lake to keep cool. Old St. Mary's Church at Wabash Avenue and Peck Court was thrown open to the refugees and there I camped until I could find a place to go. From the time of the Chicago fire I became more and more engrossed in the labor struggle and I decided to take an active part in the efforts of the working people to better the conditions under which they worked and lived.

Nearby in an old, tumbled down, fire scorched building, the Knights of Labor held meetings. The Knights of Labor was the labor organization of those days. I used to spend my evenings at their meetings, listening to splendid speakers. Sundays we went out into the woods and held meetings. Those were the days of sacrifice for the cause of labor. Those were the days when we had no halls, when there were no high salaried officers, no feasting with the enemies of labor. Those were the days of the martyrs and the saints.

I became acquainted with the labor movement. I learned that in 1865, after the close of the Civil War, a group of men met in Louisville, Kentucky. They came from the North and from the South; they were the "blues" and the "greys" who a year or two before had been fighting each other over the question of chattel slavery. They decided that the time had come to formulate a program to fight another brutal form of slavery—industrial slavery. Out of this decision had come the Knights of Labor.

Source: Adapted from Mary Harris Jones. *The Autobiography of Mother Jones*. ed. Mary Feld Parton. Forward by Clarence Darrow. Chicago: Charles Kerr, 1996 (1926). Reprinted with permission of Charles Kerr, Chicago, 1996.

Growing Up in Coal Country

Manus McHugh was another boy who lost his life on the breaker. His job was to oil the breaker machinery. At noontime one day he was in a hurry because he wanted to get outside to play with the others. Rather than take the time to shut the machinery drum, he attempted to oil it while it was still in motion. His arm got caught in the gears and he became hopelessly entangled.

After an investigation of McHugh's death a 1903 report stated, "Boys will be boys and must play unless they are held under by strict discipline." But other than that, no changes were made to make conditions safer for the boys.

During the West Pittston mine shaft fire in 1871, Martin Crahan, a 12-year-old mule driver, refused to ride the cage to safety because he knew there were 19 miners who needed to be warned of the fire.

Martin found the miners, told them about the fire, then raced back to the elevator cage. It was too late; the cage had already been destroyed. Realizing that there was no hope for rescue, he found his way back to the miners through the smoke and flames. In the meantime, the miners had built a barricade in hopes of keeping out the poisonous fumes. Martin begged the miners to let him in, but they refused because that would also let the gasses in.

Rather than die alone, Martin headed for the mule stable. He found his mule, scratched a final message for his family and then died next to his mule. The other miners died, too

Source: Susan Campbell Bartoletti. *Growing Up in Coal Country*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996. pp. 23, 37-38.



MOTHER JONES

Source: Martha Cooker, Viesti Associates, Inc.

Irish Stereotypes in Long Day's Journey Into Night

BACKGROUND

In his analysis of political cartoons in his books *Anglo-Saxons and Celts* and in *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*, L. Perry Curtis has demonstrated the link between negative images of the Irish and the shaping of English public opinion about Irish affairs. The American cartoonists Thomas Nast (*Harper's Weekly*) and Frederick Opper (*Puck*) appropriated the stereotypes, especially the simian Irishman, to create negative images of immigrant Irish. This activity will introduce students to O'Neill's cartoons of Irish domestic servants and compare them with O'Neill's characterization of Irish domestic servants in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.

RESOURCES

HANDOUTS

An Irish Duster
Kerosene
The Irish Declaration of Independence
The Surprise Party

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Curtis, L. Perry. *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971.
Murphy, Maureen. "Bridget and Biddy: Images of the Irish Servant Girl in *Puck* Cartoons (1880-1890)," in Charles Fanning ed., *The Irish Diaspora*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999.
Raleigh, John Henry. "O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night* and New England Irish Catholicism," in John Gassner ed., *O'Neill: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964. pp. 124-141.

Classroom Materials

Copies of *Long Day's Journey Into Night*

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Describe how the Irish immigrant experience is represented in O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.
Explain the way that O'Neill draws on Irish stereotypes to create a minor character in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.
Describe political cartoons and literary stereotypes of Irish immigrants and the role they play in forming political opinions.

STANDARDS

SS 2: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

ELA 1: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

ELA 2: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

Arts 3: Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought. (Visual Arts)

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Identify significant literary elements (including metaphor, symbolism, foreshadowing, dialect, rhyme, meter, irony, climax) and use those elements to interpret the work.

Recognize different levels of meaning.

Present responses to and interpretations of literature, making reference to the literary elements found in the text and connections with their personal knowledge and experience.

Explore the lifestyles, beliefs, traditions, rules and laws, and social/cultural needs and wants of people during different periods in history and in different parts of the world.

View history through the eyes of those who witnessed key events and developments in world history by analyzing their literature, diary accounts, letters, artifacts, art, music, architectural drawings, and other documents.

Investigate important events and developments in world history by posing analytical questions, selecting relevant data, distinguishing fact from opinion, hypothesizing cause-and-effect relationships, testing these hypotheses, and forming conclusions.

Demonstrate an increasing level of competence in using the elements and principles of art to create art works for public exhibition.

DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

- . inquire, probe
- . analytical thinking
- . interpret primary sources
- . reflect upon content
- . form opinions

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1. Minor characters in a story or book are often more significant than they first appear. They are frequently *flat* or *type* characters who are presented without details that individualize them. Playwrights rely on their audience's associations with *type characters*.

Two minor characters in *Long Day's Journey Into Night* are the family Irish servants. We do not meet Bridget the cook. We know she has a temper and that Mary Tyrone sends whiskey into the kitchen to make peace with her. We do meet Cathleen, the young maid, in Act 2, Scene I.

Ask the students to read the description of Cathleen ("She is a buxom Irish peasant, in her early twenties, with a red-cheeked comely face, black hair and blue eyes—amiable, ignorant, clumsy, and possessed by a dense, well-meaning stupidity.")

In pairs or groups, ask students to examine the handouts of the Puck cartoons of Irish domestic servants. How are Irish servant girls portrayed in the cartoons? How are Irish cooks characterized? Identify the stereotypes of Irish servant girls that O'Neill uses for his characterization of Cathleen.

2. While O'Neill tells us that Cathleen is stupid, she is responsible for giving the audience some very important information about what is going on in the Tyrone family in Act 3. What do we learn from Cathleen? O'Neill says she is stupid. What is Cathleen telling the audience?

ASSESSMENT OPTION

O'Neill presents us with a "typical" Irish servant girl in the character of Cathleen; however, her relationship with Mary Tyrone is more complicated. While Cathleen really likes her employer, there are things about Mary Tyrone that make her very uncomfortable. Using quotations from the text to illustrate their points, write an essay that discusses Cathleen's feelings about Mary Tyrone.

TEACHER REFLECTION

This activity can be used in conjunction with *The Influence of Poverty in the Long Day's Journey Into Night* and *Lyddie: The Irish in New England Mill Towns*.

Puck did not limit its stereotypes to the Irish. Jewish immigrants dressed in long, black coats were depicted as moneylenders; barefoot African-Americans in overalls were chicken or watermelon thieves, and Chinese in pigtails and mandarin jackets were sinister laundry workers.

Our mention of other *Puck* stereotypes led to a discussion of the persistence of stereotypes. Where do we see them? Where do we hear them? For example, while the *Puck* type of racial cartoons are no longer acceptable, stereotypes of the Irish as drunks and brawlers appear annually on St. Patrick's Day cards produced by manufacturers who are unresponsive to the objections of Irish-American organizations. How do manufacturers justify such cards?

Stereotypes persist in the shorthand of ethnic slurs. Students discussed how to develop greater awareness and sensitivity about stereotyping.



AN IRISH DUSTER.

Mrs. UPTON FLATTE.—What *arz* you dusting the furniture with, Bridget?

BRIDGET.—Wiv ther dust-pan, mum, what else?

Source: Maureen Murphy. "Bridget and Biddy: Images of the Irish Servant Girl in *Puck* Cartoons (1880-1890)," in Charles Fanning ed., *The Irish Diaspora*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999.



Frederick Opper, "Modern Miracles"

Source: Maureen Murphy. "Bridget and Biddy: Images of the Irish Servant Girl in *Puck* Cartoons (1880-1890)," in Charles Fanning ed., *The Irish Diaspora*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999.

VOL. XIII.-No 322.

MAY 9, 1883.

Price 10 Cents

"What fools these Mortals be!"
MIDSUMMER-NIGHTS DREAM



Puck

PUBLISHED BY
KEPPLER & SCHWARZMANN.

NEW YORK
TRADE MARK REGISTERED 1878

OFFICE No 21-23 WARREN ST.

"ENTERED AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, AND ADMITTED FOR TRANSMISSION THROUGH THE MAILS AT SECOND CLASS RATES."



THE IRISH DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE THAT WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH.

Source: Maureen Murphy. "Bridget and Biddy: Images of the Irish Servant Girl in *Puck* Cartoons (1880-1890)," in Charles Fanning ed., *The Irish Diaspora*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999.



Der letzte "Empfang" der Saison. — Eine "Surprise Party" für die Familie.

Source: Maureen Murphy. "Bridget and Biddy: Images of the Irish Servant Girl in *Puck* Cartoons (1880-1890)," in Charles Fanning ed., *The Irish Diaspora*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999.

The Influence of Poverty in Long Day's Journey Into Night

BACKGROUND

The characters of James and Mary Tyrone in *Long Day's Journey Into Night* are based on the playwright Eugene O'Neill's parents, James O'Neill and Ella Quinlan. O'Neill's family emigrated to America during the post-famine exodus (1855). The playwright gave the play's protagonist the surname Tyrone, a name that means literally Tír Eoghan, the land of the O'Neills. The O'Neills were very important Irish kings. Conn O'Neill was created Earl of Tyrone when he pledged his loyalty to Henry VIII.

Hugh O'Neill, the 2nd Earl of Tyrone, fled to the continent in 1607 after losing to the English at Kinsale (1601). In naming his character Tyrone, O'Neill drew on a shared heritage of dispossession. (It shows that O'Neill could be as romantic as James Tyrone).

RESOURCES

HANDOUTS

Two Lovely Beasts

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Daly, Mary E. *The Famine in Ireland*. Dublin: Dublin Historical Association, 1986.

Raleigh, John Henry. "O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night* and New England Irish Catholicism," in John Gassner ed., *O'Neill: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964. pp. 124-141.

CLASSROOM MATERIALS

Copies of *Long Day's Journey into Night*

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Describe the influence of childhood poverty on the character of James Tyrone in a *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.

Use historical information about evictions during the Great Irish Famine to describe the conditions that led to O'Neill's father's family leaving Ireland in the 1850s.

Analyze James Tyrone's obsession with property and compare his obsession with Colm Derrane's obsession with his "two lovely beasts."

STANDARDS

ELA 1: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

ELA 2: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

SS 2: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Identify significant literary elements (including metaphor, symbolism, foreshadowing, dialect, rhyme, meter, irony, climax) and use those elements to interpret the work.

Recognize different levels of meaning.

Present responses to and interpretations of literature, making reference to the literary elements found in the text and connections with their personal knowledge and experience.

Explore the lifestyles, beliefs, traditions, rules and laws, and social/cultural needs and wants of people during different periods in history and in different parts of the world.

View history through the eyes of those who witnessed key events and developments in world history by analyzing their literature, diary accounts, letters, artifacts, art, music, architectural drawings, and other documents.

Investigate important events and developments in world history by posing analytical questions, selecting relevant data, distinguishing fact from opinion, hypothesizing cause-and-effect relationships, testing these hypotheses, and forming conclusions.

DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

- . gather information
 - . reflect upon content
 - . probe ideas and assumptions
 - . view information from a variety of perspectives
 - . draw conclusions
-

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1. In the Second Act of *Long Day's Journey Into Night* Mary Tyrone speaks about her husband's obsession with property:

McGuire: He must have another piece of property on his list that no one would think of buying except your father. It doesn't matter any more, but it's always seemed to me that your father could afford to keep on buying property but never to give me a home.

2. Tyrone's family emigrated from Ireland after the Great Irish Famine when the Irish poor often faced eviction and the poorhouse. Some 188,346 families were served with eviction notices or actually evicted between 1846 and 1854. Even after they emigrated to America, the Tyrones were not secure. After his father left the family to return to Ireland, Tyrone recalls being evicted from his American home at age 10.

As a result of his early poverty, Tyrone impoverished his family to speculate in land deals. What are the consequences of his behavior on other members of the family? Ask students to describe the impact on Mary, James Jr., and Eugene.

3. Ask students to read the handout Liam O'Flaherty's *Two Lovely Beasts*, another story that examines what happens when a man sacrifices his family for an obsession. Ask students to trace the change in Colm from a neighborly man and a father to a man driven by his goal to raise his "two lovely beasts." How is Colm's family affected by his behavior? What are the consequences of his behavior?
4. How does Kate Higgins get Colm to buy her calf? She flatters him and she intimidates him. What does she say? She uses the word *courage* when she tries to convince Colm to take the calf. What does she mean by courage? How does the meaning of courage change in the course of the story?

5. In the fragile economy, people depend on neighbors to survive. When a cow goes dry in one household, others share their milk. A traditional law in the village is that calves are not fed on the people's milk. How does the rest of the village treat Colm when he breaks the traditional law? Do students think their treatment of the Derrane family (ostracism) is effective? How would students feel if they were ostracized? What behaviors would lead them to ostracize others? Is it an appropriate response to a problem? (Remember that the term *boycott* was coined in Ireland!)
6. Colm not only withholds milk from his neighbors, he takes his family's share of milk to feed his "two lovely beasts." What are the consequences for his family as a result? Can students think of other examples of situations where a parent sacrifices his or her family for a personal goal?

ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

Read Liam Flaherty's *Two Lovely Beasts* and compare and contrast the father with James Tyrone.

REFLECTION

The handout *Mrs. Fitzgerald and the Milk* from the activity *Stories of Famine Generosity* involves the same question of who gets scarce resources: children or calves? Students have discussed this question in terms of what our obligations are to our neighbors.

Another question for discussion or for an essay topic asks students to relate the proverb, "The child is the father of the man" to the play *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Teachers may want to show scenes from the film *The Field* based on John B. Keane's play. Students can compare the Bull land obsession with Colm Derrane's. In *The Field*, the result is murder.

Two Lovely Beasts

The Derranes were having breakfast when a neighbor called Kate Higgins came running into their kitchen. She squatted on the floor by the wall to the right of the door, threw her apron over her face and began to wail at the top of her voice in most heartrending fashion.

“God between us and harm!” said Mrs. Derrane as she came over from the table. “What happened to you?”

She put an arm about the shoulder of the wailing neighbor and added tenderly:

“Tell us what happened, so that we can share your sorrow.”

Colm Derrane came over with his mouth full of food. He had a mug of tea in his hand. The six children followed him. They all stood in a half-circle about Kate Higgins, who continued to wail incontinently.

“Speak up, in God’s name,” Colm said, after swallowing what he had been munching. “Speak to us so that we can help you, woman.”

It was some time before Kate desisted from her lamentation. Then she suddenly removed her apron from before her face and looked fiercely at Colm through wild blue eyes that showed no sign of tears. She was a skinny little woman, with a pale face that was deeply lined with worry. Her husband had died a few months previously, leaving her with a large family that she was struggling to rear on next to nothing.

“Will you buy a calf?” she said to Colm in an angry tone.

“A calf?” said Colm in surprise. “I didn’t know your cow had...”

“She dropped it a little while ago,” the woman interrupted. “Then she died herself. Lord save us, she lay down and stretched herself out flat on the grass and shook her legs and that was all there was to it. She’s as dead as a doornail. There isn’t a spark left in her. It must have been poison that she dragged up out of the ground with her teeth, while she was mad with the calf sickness.”

The whole Derrane family received this news in open-mouthed silence. It was a calamity that affected every household in the village. Each family had but a single cow. By traditional law, those who had milk were bound to share with those who had none. So that the death of one cow, no matter to whom she belonged, was a calamity that affected all.

“Bloody woe!” Colm said at length. “Bloody mortal woe! That’s a terrible blow, and you after losing your husband only the other day. There you are now with a house full of weak children and no cow. Ah! Bloody woe!”

“No use talking, Colm,” Kate Higgins said fiercely. “Buy the calf from me. I’m asking you to do it for the love of God. He must get suck quickly or else he’ll die of hunger. He’ll stretch out there on the grass beside his mother and die, unless he gets suck. Buy him from me.”

Colm and his wife looked at one another in perplexity. Their faces were racked with pity for their neighbor.

“Bloody woe!” Colm kept muttering under his breath.

There was no sign of pity in the faces of the children. They moved back to the table slowly after a few moments of open-mouthed consternation. They kept glancing over their shoulders at Kate Higgins with aversion. They hated her, now that they understood that her calamity threatened to diminish their milk supply.

“I’m asking you for the love of God,” Kate Higgins continued in a tone that had become quite savage. “The price will help me buy a new cow. I must have a cow for the children. The doctor said they must have plenty of milk, the two youngest of them especially. They are ailing, the poor creatures. Your cow has a fine udder, God bless her. She calved only a few days ago. She won’t feel my fellow at her teats in addition to her own. She’ll be well able for the two of them, God bless her. She will, faith and she’ll leave plenty of milk for yourselves into the bargain. Praise be to God, I never saw such a fine big udder as she has.”

Colm was on the point of speaking when his wife interrupted him.

“You know how it is with us,” Mrs. Derrane said. “We are giving milk to three houses already. Their cows aren’t due to calve for more than three weeks yet. We’ll have to help you as well, now that your cow is gone. So how could we feed a second calf? It would be against the law of God and of the people. We couldn’t leave neighbors without milk in order to fill a calf’s belly.”

Kate Higgins jumped to her feet and put her clenched fists against her lean hips.

“The calf will die unless you buy him,” she cried ferociously. “There is nobody else to take him but you people. Nobody else has a cow after calving. The price would help me buy another cow. I must have a cow for the children. The doctor said...”

“That’s enough, woman,” Colm interrupted. “I’ll put him on our cow for a couple of days. In the meantime, maybe you could get someone in another village to buy him.”

Kate Higgins grew calm at once on hearing this offer. Tears came into her wild blue eyes.

“God spare your health, Colm,” she said gently. “I was afraid he’d die of hunger before he could get suck. That would be the end of me altogether. I’d have nothing at all left if he died on me, stretched out on the grass beside his mother. When you have a few pounds, it’s easier to borrow more than if you have none at all. God spare the two of you.”

Colm went with her to the field, where they were already skinning the dead cow. He took the red bull calf in his arms to the paddock where his own cow was grazing. She consented to give the stranger suck after some persuasion.

“He’s lovely, sure enough,” Colm said as he looked with admiration at the wind-dark hide of sucking calf. “I thought my own calf this year looked like a champion, but he’s only in the half penny place compared to this one.”

“Hell be a champion all right,” Kate Higgins said. “He has the breed in him. Why wouldn’t he? Nothing would do my husband, Lord have mercy on him, but to spend ten royal shillings for the use of the Government bull. Nothing less would satisfy him, faith. He wasn’t much to look at, poor man, but he always liked to have the best of everything.”

She suddenly rushed over to Colm and put her lips close to his ear. Now her wild blue eyes were full of cunning.

“You should buy him, Colm,” she whispered. “Buy him and put him with your own calf. Then you’ll have the makings of the two finest yearlings that were ever raised in this townland. “You’ll be the richest man in the village. You’ll be talked about and envied from one end of the parish to the other.”

Colm turned his back to her and took off his cap. He was a quiet young man and yet his skull had already begun to go bald along the crown. He was a big awkward fellow with pigeon toes and arms that were exceptionally long, like those of an ape. He was noted in the district for his strength, his immense energy and his eagerness for work.

“Arrah! How could I buy him from you?” he said in a low voice. “How could I feed him and so many people depending on the milk?”

Then he turned towards her suddenly and raised his voice to a shout, as if he were arguing with some wild thought in his own mind.

“I have only twenty acres of land,” he cried angrily. “The whole of it is practically barren. You wouldn’t find more than a few inches of soil in the deepest part of it. You wouldn’t find a foot of ground in all I possess where you could bury a spade to the haft. Bloody woe! Woman, I tell you that I haven’t one good single half-acre. There is hardly enough grass for my cow, not to mention my unfortunate horse. You could count the bones right through my poor horse’s hide. I’m hard put every year to find grass for my yearling, Woman alive, sure there isn’t a man in this village that could feed two yearlings. It would be madness for me to try it.”

“The English have started fighting the Germans a second time,” Kate Higgins whispered. “They won’t stop until they have dragged the whole world again into the war with them. The fight will last for years and years, same as it did before. There will be a big price for everything fit to eat. A man that would have two lovely beasts for sale...”

“Stop tempting me with your foolish talk, woman,” Colm interrupted.

“Your cow could easily feed the two calves,” Kate continued. “She could do it without any bother at all. She’d have plenty, besides, for yourselves and the neighbors. You needn’t worry about grass, either. There’s always plenty of grass for rent in the village of Pusach. You’ll have plenty of money to spare for buying any extra grass you’ll need, because there is going to be a great price for potatoes and fish. Man alive, there will be lashings of money, same as before. During the other big war, you remember, they were even buying rotten dog-fish. I declare to my God they were. They paid famine prices for the rotten dog-fish that the storms threw up on the beach beyond there.”

Colm turned away from her again and lowered his voice to a whisper.

“It would be madness for me to try it,” he said. “Nobody ever tried to raise two yearlings in this village. We all have the same amount of rocky land, twenty acres a head.”

“You’re different from everybody else, Colm,” Kate said, raising her voice and speaking very rapidly. “The others only do what they have to do. They do barely enough to keep themselves and their families alive. You go out of your way looking for work. You never turn aside from an opportunity to earn an extra shilling. You are at it night and

day, whenever you get the chance. The spunk is in you. There is no end to your strength. Oh, indeed, it's well known that there is no holding you, when there is a job of work to be done. You spit on your hands and away you go like a wild stallion. God bless you, there is the strength of ten men in your body and you're not afraid to use it. You deserve to prosper on account of your willingness. You deserve to be rich and famous. All you need is courage.

"Nobody ever tried it," Colm whispered hoarsely. "Nobody ever did. It would be madness to try it."

Kate Higgins stepped back from him and threw out her arms in a dramatic gesture.

"Let you be the first, then" she shouted. "There's nothing stopping you but a want of courage. Let you be the first. Let you show them how to do it, Colm."

Colm also raised his voice to a shout as he answered her fiercely.

"Stop your foolish talk, woman," he said. "He can suck on my cow for a couple of days, but I promise you no more."

Kate walked away from him hurriedly, gesticulating with both arms.

"Two lovely beasts!" she shouted back at him, when she was at a distance. "Think of that now. There's nothing standing in your way but a want of courage."

"Not another word out of you now," Colm shouted after her at the top of his voice. "What you're saying is against the law of God."

Even so, he could hardly sleep a wink that night through thinking of what the woman had said. In the morning he broached the idea of buying the calf during conversation with his wife.

"That's a lovely calf Kate Higgins has," he said. "It's a pity we can't buy it."

"Buy it?" said his wife. "Yerrah! How could we do that?"

"There is going to be a great price for beasts on account of the war," Colm continued. "With the English and the Germans at it again..."

"Have sense, man," his wife said. "Unless you've taken leave of your gumption, you know well it's impossible for us to buy that calf. Not even if we had grass for it, which we haven't."

"All the same," Colm said, "that fellow makes my mouth water. I never saw such a young champion."

"Yerrah! How could we leave the neighbors without milk?" his wife said.

"I'm only talking, that's all," Colm said. "There is no harm in talk."

"Well! Say no more about it," his wife said. "People might hear you and be scandalized."

"You never saw such a color as that calf has," Colm said as he went out of the house. "He's so red that he's almost black."

Kate Higgins came to him again that day, while he was smashing rocks with a sledgehammer in the corner of a little field that he was trying to make arable. She began to pester him once more with the idea of having two lovely beasts. He threw down the sledgehammer and ran over to the fence against which she leant.

"Why don't you leave me alone?" he shouted at her. "Go to some other village and find a buyer for him."

"I've inquired everywhere," Kate Higgins said. "It's no use, Colm. Unless you buy him, I'll have to give him to the butcher at Kilmacalla. The few shillings that I'll get for his flesh and his hide won't be much. However, they'll be better than nothing."

"I promise to let him suck for a couple of days," Colm shouted. "I can promise you no more. I can't let the neighbors go without the milk that is due to them."

"It will be a mortal sin to slaughter such a lovely young fellow," Kate said as she walked away hurriedly. "What else can I do, though? I must get a pound or two, by hook or by crook. Then I can borrow more. I have to make up the price of a new cow one way or another. The doctor said that the young ones must have plenty of milk. Otherwise they'll die. So he said. He did, faith."

After the woman had gone, Colm went to the paddock for another look at the young bull calf that had a wine dark hide.

"It would be a mortal sin surely to slaughter such a lovely creature," he said aloud. "He'll be every inch a champion if he lives."

Then his heart began to beat wildly as he watched the two calves cavort together with their tails in the air. He

became intoxicated by the idea of possessing them both.

“Two lovely beasts!” he whispered.

He went for a walk to the cliff tops instead of returning to his sledgehammer. He stood on the brink of the highest cliff and looked down into the sea.

“Two lovely beasts!” he whispered again.

Then a frenzied look came into his pale blue eyes. He took off his cap and threw it on the ground behind him.

“Sure I have the courage,” he muttered fiercely.

He spread his legs, leaned forward slightly and held out his hands in front of his hips, with the palms upturned and the fingers lightly crooked. He began to tremble.

“I have plenty of courage,” he muttered.

The skin on the upper part of his forehead and on the top of his baldish skull looked very pale above the brick red color of his bony cheeks. He had a long, narrow face, thick lips and buckteeth. His short nose had a very pointed ridge. His mouse colored hair stuck out in ugly little bunches above his ears and at the nape of his neck. His shoes were in tatters. His frieze trousers were covered with patches of varying colors. His grey shirt was visible through the numerous holes in his blue woolen sweater.

Yet he looked splendid and even awe inspiring, in spite of his physical ugliness and his uncouth dress, as he stood poised that way on the brink of the tall cliff above the thundering sea, leaning forward on widespread legs, with his long arms stretched out and his fingers turned slightly inwards on his open palms, trembling with a frenzy of desire.

After a while he turned away from the sea and picked up his cap. He felt very tired as he walked homewards with downcast head. His arms swung limply by his sides. He kept glancing furtively from side to side, as if he were conscious of having committed a crime up there on the cliff top and feared pursuit as a consequence. There was a hard look in his pale blue eyes.

Again that night he could not sleep. He lay on his back thinking of the two lovely beasts and how he wanted to possess them. The thought gave him both pleasure and pain. The pleasure was like that derived from the anticipation of venery. The pain came from his conscience.

During the morning of the following day, Kate Higgins came to him again. She was wearing her best clothes.

“I’m on my way to the butcher at Kilmacall,” she said to him.

“All right,” Colm said to her. “How much do you want for the calf?”

He was so excited by the decision at which he had arrived that he consented to the price she asked without bargaining.

“Come to the house with me,” he said “I’ll hand over the money to you.

“God spare your health,” Kate Higgins said. “With that money I can begin at once to look for another cow. When you have a few pounds you can always borrow more.”

Mrs. Derrance got very angry when her husband came into the kitchen with Kate Higgins and asked her for the family purse.

“Is it to buy that calf?” she said.

“Hand me the purse,” Colm repeated.

“Devil a bit of me,” his wife said. “It would be against the law of God to put the people’s milk into a calf’s heathen belly. I won’t give it to you.”

Colm gripped the front of her bodice with his left hand and shook her.

“Hand it over, woman,” he said in a low voice.

Her anger passed at once. She was a big, muscular woman almost as strong as her husband and possessed of a stern will. Indeed, she had dominated Colm’s simple nature ever since their marriage until now. Whenever he tried to rebel against her decisions, he had always been easily defeated. He had shouted, broken articles of furniture and even struck her cruel blows from time to time. She had always merely waited with folded arms and set jaws until his foolish anger had spent itself. Now it was different. He did not shout and she saw something in his pale blue eyes that frightened her.

So that she went quickly to the great chest and brought him the long cloth purse.

“What’s come over you?” she said to him while she was undoing the string. “What are the neighbors going to say about this?”

Colm rolled the purse and thrust his hand deep down into the long inner pocket. He again looked his wife straight in the eyes.

“Shut up woman,” he said quietly. “From now on don’t meddle with things that don’t concern you. I’m master in this house. Do you hear?”

Again she became frightened by what she saw in his eyes. She turned away from him.

“May God forgive you,” she said. “I hope you have thought well about this before doing it.”

“I’ve never in my life thought more about anything.” Colm said.

Kate Higgins never uttered one word of thanks when she was given the money. She stuffed the notes into the front pocket of her skirt and rushed from the house.

“I’ll go now,” she cried as she hurried down the yard, “to try and get company for these few pounds. When you have money, it’s always easier to borrow more. Those that have give only to those that have. To those that have not only crumbs are given, same as to a dog.”

When Colm went that evening to the meeting place on the brow of the little hill that faced the village, silence fell among the men that were assembled there. He threw himself on the ground, put his back to the rock and lit his pipe.

The others began to discuss the weather in subdued tones after a little while. Then again there was silence.

At length a man named Andy Gorum turned to Colm and said:

“Do you intend to rear him?” Gorum said.

“I do,” said Colm.

Gorum got to his feet slowly and clasped his hands behind the small of his back. He came over and stood in front of Colm. He was an elderly man, very small and thin, with a wrinkled face that was the color of old parchment. His eyes were weak and they had hardly any lashes, like those of a man blind from birth. He was the village leader because of his wisdom.

“I’m sorry you are doing this, Colm,” he said. “You are a good man and everybody belonging to you was good, away back through the generations. This is a bad thing you intend to do, though.”

“How could it be bad to help a widow?” Colm said.

“You know well it won’t help a widow if you rear that calf on the people’s milk,” Gorum said.

“She begged me and begged me,” Colm said, raising his voice. “She kept at me the whole time. How could I refuse her? She said that she had to have the money for another cow. She said her children would die unless...”

“You know you are breaking the law,” Gorum interrupted. “It’s no use trying to talk yourself out of it.”

“How could it be against the law to help a widow?” Colm shouted.

“Indeed, it isn’t,” Gorum said. “We’ll all help her, please God, as much as we can. That’s how we live in our village, by helping one another. Our land is poor; and the sea is wild. It’s hard to live. We only manage to live by sticking together. Otherwise we’d all die. It’s too wild and barren here for any one man to stand alone. Whoever tries to stand alone and work only for his own profit becomes an enemy of all.”

Colm jumped to his feet. He towered over Gorum.

“Are you calling me an enemy for helping a widow?” he shouted.

“If you put into a calf’s belly,” Gorum said, “the milk that you owe your neighbors, everybody will be against you.”

“I’ll do what I please,” Colm shouted.

Thereupon he rushed from the meeting place.

“Come back, neighbor,” Gorum called after him in a tone of entreaty.

“I have courage to do what I think is right,” Colm shouted.

“We are all fond of you,” Gorum said. “We don’t want to turn against you. Come back to us and be obedient to the law.”

"I'll do what I think is right," Colm shouted as he crossed the stile into his yard. "I'll raise those two beasts if it's the last thing I'll do in this world. Let any man that dares try to stop me."

The Derranes became outcasts in the village from that day forward. Nobody spoke to them. Nobody gave them any help. Nobody entered their house. All other doors were closed against them.

Even Kathy Higgins turned against her benefactors in a most shameful fashion. Contrary to her expectations, the hapless woman was unable to borrow any more money, except for a solitary pound that she got from an aunt after lengthy importunities. Neither was she able to find any cow for sale, although she tramped the parish from end to end, over and over again. Her house went to rack and ruin during her continued absence. The ungoverned children burned the furniture to keep themselves warm. They grew so savage and filthy that the neighbor women removed their own children from all contact with them.

Unbalanced by her misfortunes, Kate forsook her peasant frugality and brought tidbits home to her starving brood after each fruitless day of wandering. The poor woman lacked courage to face them empty-handed. In that way she soon spent every penny of the money that she got from Colm and her aunt. There was none of it left after two months. When she had nothing more to give the little ones on her return, as they clutched at her apron with their filthy hands and whined pitifully for food, her mind began to get crazed.

She took to reviling Colm at the top of her voice in the roadway outside her house as she shuffled homeward with the fall of night.

"Colm Derrane is old to the devil," she cried. "He put bad luck on me. I was grateful to him when he bought my calf, thinking he was doing me a favor and that I could borrow more, to put with what he gave me and make up the price of a new cow. Devil a bit of it. There was a curse on his money. People told me it was on account of the war they were not willing to part with any of their share. They said they were bound to clutch all they had, for fear of disaster. The truth is that they would not lend a woman that sold a calf to an enemy of the people. Here I am now without a red copper in my skirt, without a cow or a husband and my children ailing. They'll die on me, the poor little creatures, without the milk that the doctor ordered for them. I have no strength to care for them. I'm so tired every evening after my walking that I can't even pick the lice out of their hair. Ah! The poor little creatures! May God have pity on my orphans!"

Colm paid no more heed to this abuse than he did to the hostility of people. After his outburst of anger on being told he was to be treated as an outcast, he maintained strict control over his temper. He became dour and silent and indifferent, except when he was in the presence of the two young beasts that he loved. It was only then that he smiled and uttered words of tenderness.

"Oh! You lovely creatures!" he said to them as he watched them suck at the cow's teats. "Drink up now and be strong. Don't leave a drop of that milk in the udder. I want the two of you to be champions."

He was as ruthless towards his family as he was tender towards the calves. He only brought enough milk to color the tea into the house. He let the calves swallow all the rest. Lest there might be any cheating, he forbade his wife and children to go near the cow under threat of dire punishment.

His wife came to him shortly after the calves were weaned and protested.

"I can go without butter" she said, "although the children tear the heart in me with their whining. They keep asking when there is going to be some. It is too much, though, when I can't get enough buttermilk to make our bread rise. All I ask is enough milk for one churning."

"You can't have it," Colm said coldly. "I can't let the calves go in want, just for the sake of making our bread rise. We can eat it flat just as well. Calves must get a good foundation during the first few months, by having every hole and corner of their bellies well stuffed the whole time. That's how they get bone and muscle and balance and plenty of room. Then it's easy, when the time comes, to pile on the good hard meat. The foundation will be there to carry the load."

His wife kept looking at him in amazement while he spoke. She could not understand how a man, who had formerly been so kind and considerate of his family's needs, could suddenly become ruthless. She burst into tears after he had finished.

"God will punish you for being cruel." She said.

"Silence," said Colm. "Don't take liberties, woman."

Midsummer came. That was the season of abundance for the poor people of that village. The new potatoes were

being dug. The young onions were succulent in the house gardens. There was plenty of milk and butter in the houses. Great baskets of pollock and rockfish and bream and mackerel were brought each day from the sea. The hens were laying and the spare cockerels from the spring hatchings made broth for the delicate. At suppertime, the people gorged themselves on their favorite dish of mashed new potatoes, with butter and scallions and boiled fish and fresh potatoes. Then a great lump of yellow butter was pressed down into the center of the steaming dish. The table was laid before the open door, so that they could hear the birds singing in the drowsy twilight and see the red glory of the sunset on the sea while they ate. The men waddled out afterwards to the village meeting place, sending clouds of tobacco smoke into the air from their pipes. They lay down on their backs against the rocks and listened to the bird music in raptured content. Now and again, one of them joined his voice to those of the birds and gave thanks to God for His gracious bounty.

It was then that Mrs. Derrane rose up in rebellion against her husband. She took the tongs from the hearth one evening and stood in front of him.

"I'll stand no more of this, Colm," she said fiercely. "Here we are, living on potatoes and salt, while the neighbors are feasting. Everything is put aside for the calves. My curse on the pair of them. You won't even let us eat a bit of fresh fish. By your leave, you made me salt every single fish that you brought into the house this spring, to be sold later on, so that you can have money to buy grass for your beasts. We have to scavenge along the shore, the children and myself, looking for limpets and periwinkles, same as people did during the famine. Lord save us, the lining of our stomachs is torn into shreds from the purging that the limpets give us. We are put to shame, rummaging like sea gulls for stinking food, while the people of our village are feasting. There has to be an end to this, or else I'll take the children and follow my face out of the house. You'll have to get rid of that calf you bought. Then we can live as we did before. We'll be outcasts no longer."

Colm got to his feet and looked at her coldly.

"I'm going to raise those two calves," he said solemnly, "even if you and children and myself have to eat dung while I'm doing it. Let other people fill their bellies in midsummer and remain poor. I want to rise in the world. A man can do that only by saving."

His wife raised the tongs and threatened him with them. "I'll have none of it," she cried. "I'm telling you straight to your face. You have to give in to me or I'll split your skull with these tongs."

"Put down those tongs," Colm said quietly.

"Are you going to get rid of that calf?" said his wife.

"Put them down," said Colm.

"I'll kill you with them," shouted his wife, becoming hysterical.

She struck at him with all her force, but he jumped aside nimbly and evaded the blow. Then he closed with her and quickly locked her arms behind her back.

"I'm going to give you a lesson now," he said quietly. "I'm going to chastise you in a way that you'll remember."

He dragged her down to the hearth.

"Call the neighbors," his wife cried to the children "Run out into the yard and call the people to come and save me from this murderer."

The children ran out into the yard and began to call for help as Colm took down a dried sally rod that lay stretched on wooden pegs along the chimney place.

"You'll be obedient in future, my good woman," he said. "On my solemn oath you will."

He began to flog her. She tried to bite his legs. Then he put her flat on the ground and laid his foot to her back.

"I'll kill you when I get a chance," she cried. "I'll have your life while you are asleep."

Then she folded her arms beneath her face, gritted her teeth and received his blows in silence. He had to go on beating her for a long time before the sturdy creature surrendered and begged for mercy.

"All right then," Colm said calmly when she had done so. "Do you promise to be obedient from now on and to make no more trouble about the calf?"

"I promise," his wife said.

"Get up, then, in God's name," Colm said gently, "and call in the children." His wife looked up at him sideways

in amazement. She did not rise. It puzzled her that he was so calm and spoke to her with tenderness, after having beaten her without mercy.

“Get up, then, in God’s name,” Colm said gently, “and call in the children.”

Then he took her tenderly in his arms and raised her to her feet. She ran out into the yard without looking at him.

“Get into the house,” she said sternly to the children. “In with you.”

She turned to some neighbors who had come in answer to the children’s cries for help. They were standing out in the lane, in doubt as to whether they should enter the yard of a household that was outcast.

“What brought you here?” Mrs. Derrane shouted at them. “It’s not for our good you came. Be off now and mind your own business.”

That night in bed, she clasped Colm in her arms and put her cheek against his breast.

“I thought it was the devil got into you,” she whispered as tears rolled down her cheeks. “Now I know different. You are trying to raise your family up in the world, while I’m only a hindrance to you and a dead weight around your neck. From now on, though, I’m going to help you. I will, faith!”

Colm took her head between his big round hands and kissed her on the crown.

“God spare your health, darling,” he said. “With your help there will be no stopping us.”

Seeing their parents happily united again, the children also became imbued with enthusiasm. They willingly consented to make sacrifices for the common effort. Even the youngest boy, barely five years old, had a little job to do every day. The whole family worked like bees in a hive.

The village people soon became so impressed by this turn of events that they began to question the justice of their conduct towards the Derrance family.

“If what he is doing is bad, why does he prosper?” they said to one another. “Isn’t it more likely that God is blessing his effort to rise in the world? Maybe it’s us that are wicked on account of our laziness?”

At the village meeting place, Andy Gorum strove with all his skill to hold the men steadfast against Colm.

“You’ll soon see him come back to us on his knees,” Gorum said, and he begging for mercy. He may seem to prosper now. His two calves are growing powerfully. His wife and children and himself are working night and day. He has a nimble hand in everything worth money. Wait till winter comes, though. Then he won’t be able to find grass for his beasts. The butcher of Koomacalla has bought a herd of black cattle, to fatten them for the fighting English. He has rented all the spare grass in the village of Pusach. Many more big people in the district have bought herds on account of the war. There won’t be a single blade of grass left anywhere for a poor man to rent. The big people will have it all clutched. Colm will have to slaughter that dark-skinned calf. I declare to my God we’ll be eating that dark fellow’s meat when the Christmas candles are lit.”

Gorum’s prophecy proved false and Colm was able to find grass owing to the tragedy that again struck the Higgins family. As summer passed, the village people were no longer able to give more than the barest help to the widow and her orphans. Neither did the distraught woman put to the best use what little there was given. Indeed, she now turned on the whole village as she had formerly turned on Colm, denouncing the community at the top of her voice.

“Ah! Woe!” she cried as she marched back and forth before the houses in her bare feet. “Almighty God was cruel when he left me a widow among people that are worse than the heathen Turks. There I am, with my clutch of delicate creatures, without bite or sup from morning to night. You wouldn’t see a good rush of smoke out of my chimney top from Monday to Saturday. All I have to burn on my hearth is cow dung and a few miserable briars. There isn’t a hot drop for the children’s bellies. Ah! Woe! My curse on the hard hearts of my neighbors!”

There was a spell of cold weather towards the end of September and the two youngest children fell victim to it. They both died in the same week of pneumonia. The second death unhinged the mother’s reason. Leaving the child unburied in the house she wandered away at dead of night with hardly a stitch of clothes on her starved body. They found her marching along the cliff tops on the evening of the following day and took her to the lunatic asylum. The remaining five children, finding no relatives willing to shelter them, were also lodged in a public institution. It then became apparent that the widow owed money right and left. Her creditors, who were chiefly shopkeepers of Killmacalla, began to quarrel about disposal of the house and land. The case was brought into the district court.

“Here is my chance,” Colm said to his wife. “Here is where I might be able to get grass this winter for my beasts.”

On the day the case was to be tried, he put on his best clothes, took the family purse and went to the courthouse at

Kilmacalla. After listening to the arguments of the rival lawyers for some time, he got leave to address the magistrate.

“Your honor,” he said, it would be an injustice to the children if that farm is auctioned now, or divided up among these shopkeepers. It would be taking the bread out of the children’s mouths. They have a right to do what they please later on with that land. When they grow up and come out into the world, it’s for them to say if the land is to be sold, or given to one of themselves in order to raise a family on it. In the meantime, let me rent it from them, your honor. Year after year, I’ll pay a good rent for it on the nail. Everybody knows me, sir. I’m a man of my word. I never went back on a pennyworth of promises in my natural life. Any man will tell you that from the parish priest on down. The mother’s debts can be paid out of the rent in no time at all. What more would these shopkeepers want, unless they are land grabbers? In God’s name your honor, you’ll be behaving like a Christian if you let me rent it, instead of letting these people slice it out among themselves. Gold bless you, sir!”

The magistrate finally agreed to Colm’s suggestion for settling the dispute.

“Praised be God!” Colm cried on his return home. “I am secure now against the winter. Nothing can stop me from now on. In God’s name, the two beasts are as good as raised.”

Gorum was furious at this turn of events. He attacked Colm savagely that evening at the meeting place.

“There is a bloody heathen for you!” he cried. “The two little ones are barely dead in their graves when the blood-sucker that robbed them of their milk puts his two calves grazing on their mother’s share. Ay! His two calves are lovely, sure enough. Why wouldn’t they? Didn’t they grow fat and strong on the milk that the little dead children should have drunk Ah! The poor little dead creatures! It’s a fine state of affairs truly, with two children dead and two beasts rolling in fat on their share of food. Mother of God! That’s a cursed state of affairs for you! Beasts given rich food and children let die of hunger! Damnation has surely fallen on our village when such things are let happen here.”

The men jeered at these remarks. They had lost faith in the old man.

“You are envious of Colm,” they said to Gorum. “You are jealous of his success and his wisdom. You are no longer a wise man. Hatred has made a windbag of you.”

One by one, they entered Colm’s house, sat by his hearth and shared their pipes with him. Their wives brought presents to Mrs. Derrance and knitted with her on Sunday after Mass, at the woman’s hillock. The men came to Colm for advice, just as they had hither to gone to Gorum. They put Colm in the place of honor at the meeting place. There was silence when he spoke.

“God is good to us,” Colm said to his wife.

“He is, faith,” Mrs. Derrane said. “Praised be His name.”

Even so it became more and more difficult for the family to make ends meet. The rent for the widow’s farm put a heavy strain on their purse. The children’s enthusiasm vanished during the winter in face of continual hunger. It became almost impossible to make them do a hand’s turn.

Mrs. Derrane also forgot her solemn promise of cooperation and began to grumble out loud when Colm would not even allow an egg for Christmas dinner.

“Great God!” she said. “There is a limit to everything. We haven’t seen fish or meat since spring. You wouldn’t let us buy a piece of holly or a colored candle. We are a disgrace to the whole village, with nothing on our table but potatoes and salt for the feast of our Lord.”

“Silence,” Colm said. “This is no time of the year to become impudent.”

To cap it all, he ordered that the cloth made from that year’s wool be sold, instead of turning it into garments for the household.

“Our rags will do us well enough for another year,” he said. “In any case, patched clothes are just as warm as new ones”

Everybody in the house got terribly thin and weak. Yet Colm’s iron will buoyed them up to such an extent that there was no illness.

“We have only to hold on a little while,” he kept saying, “and have courage. Then we’ll rise in the world. We’ll be rich and famous, from one end of the parish to the other.”

He himself looked like a skeleton, for he practically went without food in order that the children might have as much as possible.

“You’ll kill yourself,” his wife said when he began to prepare the ground for the spring sowing. “You look like a

sick man. For God's sake, let me take money out of the purse and buy a pig's cheek for you."

"Silence, woman," Colm said. "Not a penny must be touched. I have a plan. We'll need all we have and more to make my new plan work. It's not easy to become rich, I tell you."

The cow relieved the desperate plight of the family by having her calf a month earlier than usual, during the first week of March. The children became gay once more, for they were given plenty of the new milk to drink. There was buttermilk to make the bread rise. There was even beautiful, salty yellow butter, fresh from the churn and with pale drops of water glistening on its surface, to spread thickly on the long slices of crusty griddlecake.

The happy children began to whisper excitedly to one another in the evenings about the coming spring fair, when great riches were to come into the house from the sale of the pigs and the yearlings. Over and over again, they discussed the toys and trinkets that their mother would buy them in the town on fair day, as a reward for their help in raising the two beasts.

They were continually running to the field where the yearlings were goring themselves on the luscious young grass.

"They are champions," they cried boastfully as they stared at the animals over the top of the stone fence. "Nobody ever before saw such lovely beasts."

Colm put an end to the children's dreams a few days before the fair.

"Listen to me, all of you," he told the family one evening after super. "You have worked hard helping me with the two beasts. They are now fine yearlings, God bless them. We'll all have to work a little harder, though, so as to make them the two best bullocks that were ever seen."

Mrs. Derrance was dumfounded on hearing this news. She dropped on to a stool and fanned her face with her apron.

"Are you out of your mind, Colm?" she said at length. "How could we keep those two beasts for another year? How could we keep two bullocks? Won't we have this year's calf, too, growing up and eating on us?"

"I have a plan," Colm said. "We are going to open a shop."

His wife made the sign of the Cross on her forehead and looked at him in horror.

"Why not?" said Colm. "It's only shopkeepers that rise in the world."

"Are you crazy?" his wife said. "Where would we get the money to open a shop?"

"All we need is courage," Colm said. "The few pounds we have saved, together with the price of the pigs, will be enough to open it. I'm telling you, woman, that all we need is courage and willingness. If we all work hard together, night and day..."

God Almighty!" His wife interrupted. "You've gone mad. Those two beasts hone to your head."

"Now, then," said Colm. "That's not true at all. I was never wiser in my life. The war will last for years yet. It's only now the real fury is coming on the fighting nations. Very well, then. While the mad people are fighting and killing each other, let us make money out of them and rise in the world. There is going to be a demand for everything that can be eaten. There will be a price for everything fit to make your mouth water. Food is going to be more precious than gold. So will clothes. In God's name, then, let us open a shop and stock it with goods. Let us go around the parish with our horse and cart, buying up everything the people have to sell, eggs and butter and carrigeen moss and fish and wool and hides and potatoes. We'll buy everything that can be parted away. We can pay them for what we buy with shop goods. Do you see? Then we'll sell what we buy from the people over in the town at a profit. Later on, we can buy sheep as well and..."

"Arrah! You're stark crazy," his wife interrupted angrily. "Stop talking like that man alive, in front of the children."

At this moment all the children burst into tears, no longer able to contain their disappointment.

"Stop whining," Colm shouted, as he leaped to his feet. "Is it crying you are because there will be nothing for you from the fair? Is it for sweets and crackers you are crying and dai-dais? All right, then. I'm telling you now there will be plenty of sweets and dai-dais for you when we have a shop. There will be sweets every day and dai-dais, too. Do you hear me? Every day in the year will be like a fair."

His uncouth face, worn to the bone by privation and worry, now glowed with the light of ecstasy, as he struggled to wheedle his family into cooperation with his ambition to "rise in the world." Such was the power of the idea that possessed him that the children stopped crying almost at once. They listened with eagerness to his fantastic promises. Their little faces became as radiant as his own.

His wife also became affected as she saw her dour husband trying to win over the children by means of smiles and gaiety and honeyed words.

“I wouldn’t believe it,” she said, “only for I see it with my own two eyes.”

Tears rolled down her cheeks and her upper lip trembled. “In fifteen years,” she muttered as she rubbed her eyes with a corner of her apron. “I never once saw him dance one of he children on his knee. No, ‘faith, I never once saw him shake a rattle in front of a whining baby. Yet there he is now all of a sudden, trying to make a showman of himself. God Almighty! Only for I see it with my own two eyes...”

“There will be no end to the riches we’ll have when we are shopkeepers,” Colm continued. “We can have bacon for breakfast. Yes, indeed, we can get great big rashers of it every morning in the year, except Fridays. The people of the village will be coming to smell the lovely food that’s frying in our pan. Oh! I’m telling you that we can have bellies on us like tourists. We’ll hardly be able to carry ourselves as we walk the road, on account of our fat. We’ll have ribbons as well and velvet and a mirror in every room.”

His wife and children were won over completely to his side once more. So they all went to work with enthusiasm and the shop was speedily installed. It was an immediate success. People came especially from a long distance in order to trade with the courageous man, who was trying to raise two bullocks on twenty acres of barren rocks.

“Blood in ounce!” the people said. “He’ll never be able to do it, but you have to admire his courage all the same. He’ll very likely end up in the asylum with Kate Higgins, but more power to him for trying. He’s a credit to the parish.”

When Colm went round with his horse and cart, accompanied by one or other of the children, everybody was eager to do business with him. The people sold him whatever they had available and they forbore to drive a hard bargain. He soon had to take the house and barn that belonged to Kate Higgins, in order to store the great mass of his goods. Within a few months he was making trips to the town twice a week and getting high prices for all he had to sell.

Money kept coming into the house so quickly and in such large quantities that his wife became frightened.

“May God keep pride and arrogance out of our hearts,” she used to say as she stuffed the notes into the long cloth purse. “It’s dangerous to get rich so quickly.”

“Have no fear, woman,” Colm said to her. “We denied ourselves and we didn’t lose heart when times were bad. So God is giving us a big handsome reward. Be grateful woman, and have no fear.”

The promises that he had made to the children were fulfilled. There was full and plenty in the house. The little girls had ribbons to their hair and dai-dais to amuse their leisure. His wife got a velvet dress and a hat with feathers. There was bacon for breakfast.

“He must have touched the magic stone,” said the astonished people of the village. “Everything he handles turns into lashings of money.”

Andy Gorum alone continued to prophesy that misfortune would fall on Colm for attempting to “stand alone and rise above the people.”

“You just wait,” Gorum kept shouting on the hill before the village. “God will strike him down when he least expects it. Those two beasts, that are now so lovely will never reach the fair green alive on their four legs.”

This prophecy proved to be just as false as the previous one that Gorum had made. All through the winter and the following spring, Colm and his family lavished the greatest care on the two beasts that had brought them prosperity. So that they were really champions on fair day. The bullock with the wine-dark hide was acknowledged by all to be the finest animal of his age ever seen in the district. He fetched top price.

Tears poured down Colm’s cheeks as he walked back from the railway station with his wife, after parting with his beasts.

“Those two lovely beasts brought them luck,” he said. “I feel lonely for them now that they are gone. Only for them, I’d never think of rising in the world. Praised be God! He works in strange ways. He strikes one down and raises up another.”

“True for you,” his wife said. “Praised be His holy name! Who are we, miserable sinners that we are, to question His mysterious ways?”

“Only for that cow dying on Kate Higgins,” Colm continued, “we’d always be land slaves, wrestling with starvation to the end of our days and never getting the better of any bout. Look at us now woman. We’re on our way towards riches. God alone knows where we’ll stop.”

“Enough of that talk now,” his wife said. “Don’t let arrogance get hold of us. Don’t let us be boastful. The people are already becoming envious of us. I can see a begrudging look in the eyes of the neighbors.”

“That’s true,” Colm said. “That’s why I’m thinking of opening a shop in the town. It might be better to take ourselves out of the sight of people that knew us poor.”

“A shop in the town?” his wife said. “Don’t get to big for your boots, Colm.”

“No fear,” Colm said. “I know what I’m doing. I’m going to hire a few men and begin buying in earnest. There’s money to be picked up by the bushel all over the place. All we need is courage, woman.”

“In God’s name!” his wife said.

When they were hitching the mare to their new jaunting car for the journey home, Andy Gorum came along with a group of intoxicated men.

“The mills of God grind slow,” Gorum shouted, “but they grind sure. The bloodsuckers are taking the food out of our country. They are giving it to the fighting foreigners, while our children die of hunger. We are barefooted and in rags, but they give our wool and our hides to the war people. They’re taking our lovely beasts across the sea to fill the bellies of pagans. The time will soon come, though, when the bloodsuckers that are robbing us will be struck down by the hand of Almighty God. They will roast in Hell for the everlasting ages.”

As Colm drove away in his new green jaunting car, quite a number of people whistled after him in hostility and derision. Now that he had risen so far, he had again become an enemy.

His gaunt face looked completely unaware of their jeers. His pale blue eyes stared fixedly straight ahead, cold and resolute and ruthless.

Source: Liam O’Flaherty *The Collected Stories 2*. Ed., A. A. Kelly. Dublin: Wolfhound, 1999. pp. 131-151. Reprinted with permission of PFD on behalf of the estate of Liam O’Flaherty.