



**Tithe an
Oireachtas**
**Houses of the
Oireachtas**

Lesson Plan: Bunreacht Na hÉireann / Constitution of Ireland

Junior Cycle/Cert CSPE: One of a series of three lessons

Learning Intentions: At the end of this lesson students will

1. Understand what a constitution means for a country
2. Explore the key points of our Constitution from its origins to present day
3. Appreciate the difference between rights and responsibilities and what each entails

Key Skills: Communicating / Working With Others / Managing Information / Thinking

Co-Curricular: History, English

Resources:

Bunreacht na hÉireann slide show (available on our website)

Full text of the Constitution of Ireland <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/cons.html>

Citizens Information website

http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/irish_constitution_1/

Video about Bunreacht na hÉireann <http://education.oireachtas.ie/democracy/how-democracy-works-in-ireland-and-the-constitution/>

Introduction: To help introduce students to the upcoming activity watch the video on [Bunreacht Na hÉireann](#)

Development: Deliver the Bunreacht na hÉireann slide show. Then follow up with [this short animation](#) to reinforce the key points.

Conclusion: Arrange a debate around issues such as ‘Should school uniforms be required?’ or ‘Should students be allowed to use mobiles and other electronic devices during school?’ These strategies take account of the recent findings from the department of children and Youth Affairs Report entitled ‘How was school today’ where the two strategies identified as helping students learn best were taking part in class discussions and using active methods.

Strategies might include:

1. Role play debate: Students assume the roles of various stakeholders in a debate and will consider/discuss a variety of issues up for debate, list various people with a stake in the debate, play the role of one of the stakeholders in a debate of an issue of high interest and assess their own and/or their peers' performances in a debate.
2. Four corner debate: Students will listen to a statement on a controversial topic and decide if they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement, work in groups to record information in support of their position, reconsider their stance in light of new information and write a concise paragraph expressing their opinion about the statement. Create four posters/signs printed in large letters with the following labels, one label per sign:
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

Place each poster in a different corner of the classroom. Give students 5 minutes to collect their thoughts about the topic. Then ask students if they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement. Direct those who strongly agree to move to the corner of the classroom where the Strongly Agree sign is posted, those who agree to move to the corner of the classroom where the Agree sign is posted, and so on. Hopefully, you will have four groups gathered in different corners of the classroom. Appoint one student in each corner to be the note taker, and give students 5-10 minutes to discuss with the other students in their corner the reasons they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. At the end of the discussion period, ask one student from each group to share with the class some of the ideas they discussed in their group.