



LESSON PLAN

Government in Ireland

Learning outcome 3.3

Compare two or more systems of government, taking particular note of the ways in which the state interacts with its citizens, and citizens can shape their state

Learning outcome 3.4

Use the correct terminology to describe Irish and European democratic institutions, structures, political parties and roles

Students will learn

- ▶ To understand the institutions which make up the State in Ireland
- ▶ The correct terms to use to describe democratic roles
- ▶ About how the state interacts with citizens

Materials

- ▶ Slide show
- ▶ Worksheet 1: Keywords – one for each student
- ▶ Worksheet 2: TD profile – one for each student (extension activity)

Assessment for learning/Key skills

- ▶ Discussion
- ▶ Group work activities
- ▶ Being creative

Note: This lesson succinctly but thoroughly covers the key institutions of the state. The slide show contains 24 slides and will require at least two lessons to be covered in its entirety.



1 Discussion

Recap on the comparison between different systems of government.

SLIDE 3

Ask students who is the State in Ireland.

Show the video on democracy.

2 Slide show

Give each student a copy of the **Worksheet: Keywords** (see page 4) and ask them to jot down keywords under each heading as you progress through the slide show presentation to slide 24.

3 Role play: Form a Government

Ask the class to imagine they are a newly elected Dáil. They must elect a Taoiseach, and the Taoiseach must form a Government.

Nominate, or ask the class to nominate, two candidates.

Ask the class to vote on which candidate should be Taoiseach. They could do this by a show of hands or by moving to opposite sides of the classroom.

Declare the winner Taoiseach and ask them to choose their Government from the people who voted for them.

They should nominate the following posts:

- ▶ Minister for school food
- ▶ Minister for sport
- ▶ Minister for culture and extra-curricular activities
- ▶ Minister for health and well-being

Reiterate that the Government is a group of 7 to 15 Ministers selected by the Taoiseach from among the elected members of the Dáil.

Note: The Constitution allows the Taoiseach to choose up to two members of the Seanad to be Government Ministers.

4 Group work

Divide the class into the following four groups:

1. President of Ireland
2. Dáil Éireann
3. Seanad Éireann
4. Oireachtas Committees

Ask each group to share their keywords and knowledge about this branch of the Oireachtas and prepare to teach the rest of the class the key facts about how it interacts with citizens.

Note: You could print and distribute copies of the slide show.

Assign one of the following activities to each group:

1. Prepare a mind map
2. Create a meme
3. Make a poster
4. Make a collage

Ask each group to present their creation to the class and teach the class the key facts about their branch of the Oireachtas.

SLIDE 25

Ask the groups to discuss the question on the slide and suggest answers for their branch of the Oireachtas. Note the responses on the slide.

The following are some suggested responses:

WAYS OF INTERACTING WITH CITIZENS

Dáil Éireann	Seanad Éireann	Oireachtas Committees	President of Ireland
Proposes new laws	Proposes new laws	Debates proposed laws	Signs Bills into law
Debates proposed laws	Debates proposed laws	Holds consultations on issues	Represents citizens
Represents constituents' interests	Canvasses support at election time	Considers submissions and petitions by members of the public	Hosts special events and award programmes
Canvasses support at election time			Sends birthday greetings to centenarians
			Canvasses support at election time

→ Extension activity

If your school has an information-sharing platform, share the four groups' creations with the class.

Find your local Oireachtas Member on the Houses of the Oireachtas website, www.oireachtas.ie/en/members. Complete **Worksheet 2: TD profile** (see page 5).



Worksheet 1: Keywords

Introduction

President

Dáil Éireann

Seanad Éireann

Committees



Worksheet 2: TD profile

Name	
Constituency	
Political party	
Number of Dáil terms served	
Topic of most recent contribution	
Topic of most recent question	
Topic of most recent vote and which way they voted	
Name one Bill the TD is sponsoring	