

JC TODAY

The Official Newsletter of Junior Cycle for Teachers

Issue 28 | May 2022

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí
JuniorCYCLE
for teachers

Welcome to the 28th edition of our newsletter, JC Today.

The theme of this newsletter is **REFLECTION in JUNIOR CYCLE**.

As we approach the end of another school year, it is a good moment perhaps to stand back and reflect on all that has happened this year. From our own perspective in JCT it was a year that brought with it many challenges, but also many successes. We appreciate the individual and collective engagements that we have had with teachers throughout the 2021/2022 school year, which has amounted to thousands and the vast majority of which have taken place in the online space.



We have worked hard to ensure that we provide teachers with the best possible online experiences. The expansion of the provision of CPD online is just one significant change that has been brought by Covid-19, and it is likely one that is to stay for the foreseeable future.

Successive surveys of teachers indicate that the provision of online CPD has been a positive development, it cuts down on unnecessary travel, it provides teachers with a wider choice of courses to choose from and it is more convenient to be able to 'log on' from wherever is convenient, including home and work. JCT plans to keep elements of our work in the online space in 2022/2023, but we also recognise the importance of being able to engage with teachers in a face-to-face scenario. For that reason, we are planning a more blended approach to the provision of our CPD next year it's a case of watch this space!

Dr. Pádraig Kirk, Director

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Reflection in Junior Cycle



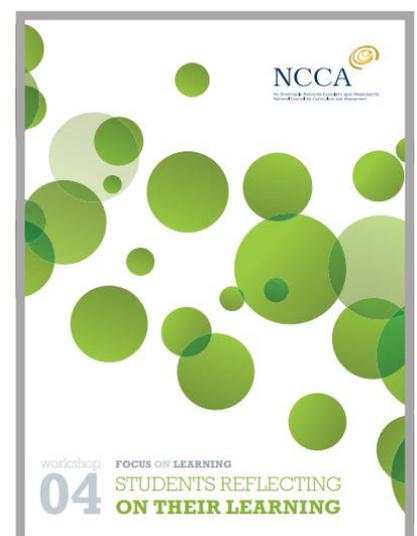
Key Skills of Junior Cycle



Click on the image to download



Click to access NCCA Focus on Learning Booklet 4:
Students reflecting on their learning



Business Studies

In line with the ongoing collaboration between JCT and the Education Centres, the JCT Business Studies Team has developed a series of face-to-face workshops (two per Education Centre) across the country in September 2022. The purpose of these workshops will be to support Junior Cycle Business Studies teachers in establishing their own Education Centre-based Communities of Practice across all twenty-one full-time Education Centres in Ireland. The project is designed to promote collaboration and reflection among participants.

Our plan is to host an initial two-hour workshop at each Education Centre. This initial workshop will be followed by a three-week window of online engagement. We will then host a second two-hour workshop in each Education Centre to further support the Community of Practice, and to ensure that it can continue to develop and thrive.

In essence, our core aims are to establish a community of practice in each Education Centre-based region, facilitate the collaborative development of content to support planning and implementation of the Junior Cycle Business Studies Specification and develop the skills necessary to share, co-create and organise digital materials.

This is a ground-breaking initiative for JCT and for Junior Cycle Business Studies teachers and it has the potential to set and support the agenda of and for Business Studies teachers for years to come. It is our hope that two representatives from each participating school's Business Studies team will opt to participate in this initiative.

In establishing each of the twenty-one Communities of Practice, we will be supporting teachers specifically to develop their subject 'Areas of Focus' as well as providing the infrastructure to share resources and to collaborate with each other. This Initiative will support any Business Studies subject team wishing to develop their Subject Plan and it will provide a transformative opportunity for the sharing and co-creating of ideas and resources. It is also an opportunity for participants to reflect on their Junior Cycle journey to date.

Technologies

'The Junior Cycle Key Skill 'Managing Myself' encourages the development of the ability for students to reflect on their own learning. Within the suite of Technology subjects, there are many existing supports and resources available for teachers to adapt and include in their units of learning that encourage students to reflect and acknowledge what learning has taken place but also to identify how they can move forward with their learning. The emphasis is 'not just about teaching towards the technology but towards the skills that are fundamental to the technology subjects and are transferable into other areas of their learning.'

Technologies Specifications, page 4

Applied Technology

As students of Applied Technology move through their learning journey, they continually make decisions, solve problems and develop skills. Students can capture their learning and reflect on it through different formats such as sketches, notes and annotations, photographs, audio recordings, etc. The Applied Technology team has designed several reflection strategies such as *Thinking Map*, *Supporting the Realisation of a Solution*, *Skills Development* and *What? So What? Now What?*



Click to access these reflection strategies on the JCT website.

Graphics

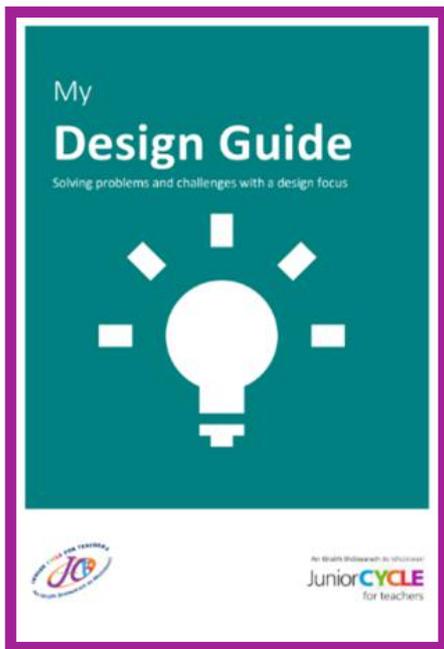
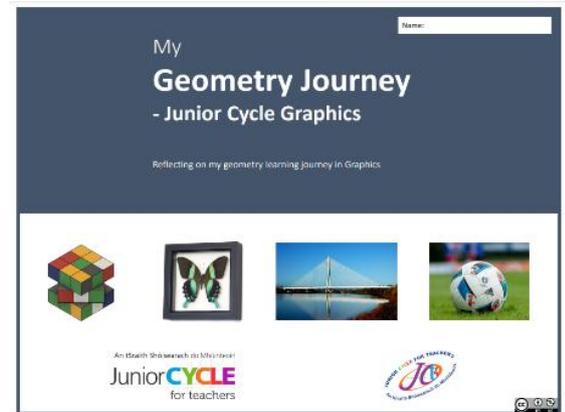
In Graphics, students are continuously encouraged to reflect on their development of knowledge, skills, understanding and values. **'My Geometry Journey'** is designed to act as a journal for students to reflect on their progress throughout aspects of their Graphics learning journey. Students are encouraged to explore and document geometry in an object or image but also to reflect on geometry in the world around them and make connections to geometric principles. See some evidence of the **'Looking In' activity in action.**



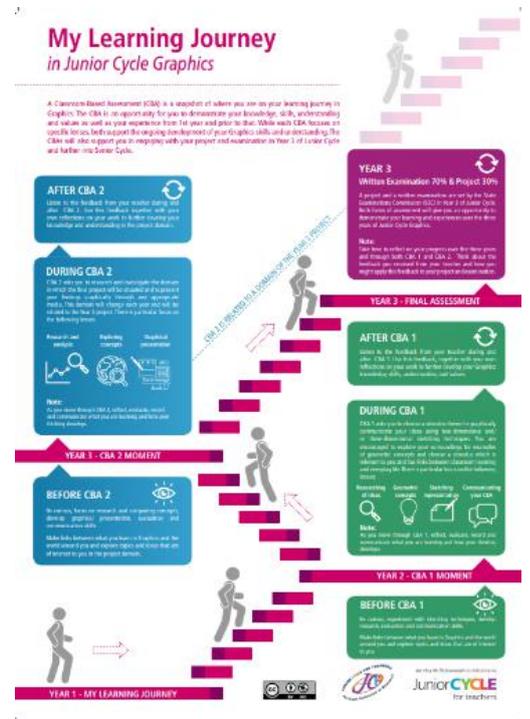
Technologies



The 'My Design Guide' resource helps to guide students as they discover, define, develop and deliver an idea, a solution to a specific problem or a concept generated from a design brief. Each stage encourages the student to take time to reflect, adapt and make changes. Students are encouraged to continually ask questions, to log their learning and to identify how they can move forward in their learning journey.



During the Graphics CPD 2021/2022, teachers were afforded the time and opportunity to reflect on the learning journey of their students to date, but also on the journey they have been on in implementing the Graphics Specification in their own schools. Teachers collaborated in an activity using the graphics design platform, **Canva**. This encouraged them to reflect on moments in relation to their graphics learning journey and to share their experiences with colleagues. The reflective activity is supported by the 'My Learning Journey' poster.

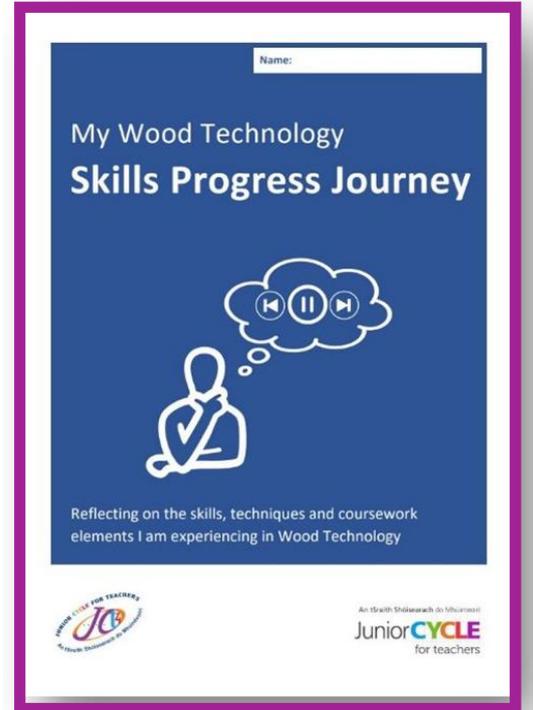


Technologies



Wood Technology

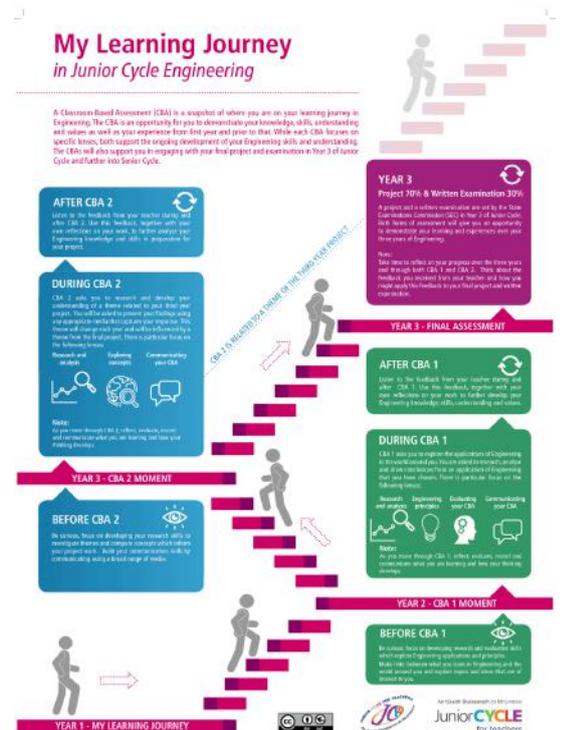
In Wood Technology students will experience and learn many new skills. They will explore the use of wood through the medium of design and use it to bring their design ideas to life. As students reflect on learning, it is important that they record their thinking through whatever media works best for them. They may like to include sketches or pictures of the skill or task that they are working on to explain their thinking. It is important to keep all reflections in one place so students can check in and track their progress. Students might like to use a written journal, video recordings, a vlog, OneNote or any other appropriate media.



The JCT4 Wood Technology team have designed several reflection strategies which teachers and students alike may like to explore. These include **'My Wood Technology Skills Progress Journey'** which can be found on the JCT website.

Engineering

In the subject Engineering, students engage in a multitude of activities which encourage a process of reflection to enhance their knowledge and understanding. Across the strands and elements, there are opportunities for reflection along the path of the students' learning journey. Design is an integral part of the students learning, and it is supported by the ongoing reflection on the prior and new knowledge of engineering principles and processes, balanced with an understanding of mechanisms and mechatronics.



Click to enlarge



English

Literature is a mirror. It often reflects truth, in the mirror of literature we see ourselves, our virtues and our vices. Reflection gives us an opportunity to consider who we are, where we are at and what's next.

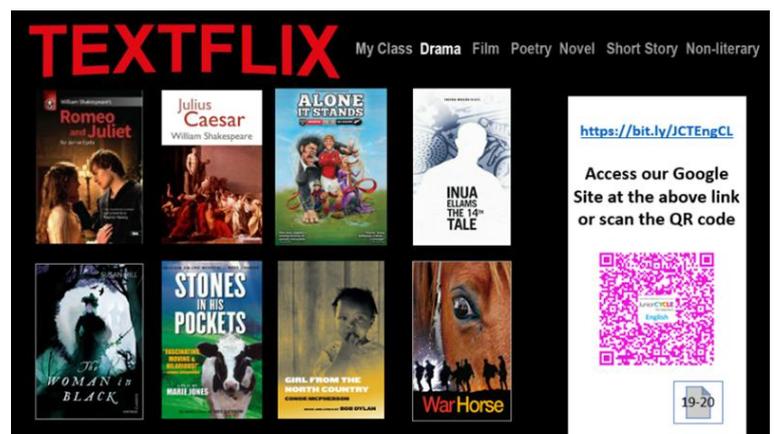
Reflection is central in core and elective English CPD, realised through effective questioning and by offering teachers opportunities to pause and think, both individually and collaboratively about how their practice might improve.

The most recent English CPD (2021-2022) included Department of Education Inspectorate recommendations on reflection from Looking at English in Our School. In part one of the CPD, teachers worked collaboratively in their English departments to create summative assessment and reflect on how to enhance this further in their own schools.

Teachers, in part two, had a choice of four self-directed workshops to engage with, each offered moments of reflection in relation to pedagogy, planning, differentiation and assessment.

Part three of the CPD focused on individual and collaborative reflection in relation to diversity and inclusion. Teachers were invited to consider how they might 'engage personally with and think critically about an increasingly broad range of spoken, written and multimodal texts' in their diverse, mixed ability English classroom. Working in their own department's teachers reflected on the range of texts (both literary and non-literary) that they used from first through to third year and considered the extent to which this range suited the needs of all learners.

Teachers were invited in part two and three of the CPD to contribute their thoughts, ideas, strategies and pedagogies on an interactive Padlet which was available for all to view as a collaborative, reflective resource.





Student Reflection in the History Classroom

The Task



Reflect on what you have learned

Prompts

1. The most important/interesting thing I learned today was...
2. Before this topic I used to think...but now I think...
3. I could do with more help with...
4. What really made me think was...
5. What I enjoyed most was...
6. I want to know more about...
7. A skill I used/ developed was...

The Process



Reflect on how you learned

Prompts

1. What can I do now that I couldn't do before?
2. What do I know or understand now that I didn't understand before?
3. What helped me when I faced something difficult?
4. I might have learned better if...
5. I enjoyed/didn't enjoy learning in this way because...
6. I chose to present my work this way because...

Working with others



Reflect on how you worked with others

Prompts

1. How well did my team and I work together?
2. Did everyone have a voice in the group?
3. Did I actively listen to others?
4. What did I learn from others that helped me?
5. I could work better with others by...
6. What did I learn about myself during this experience?

The Future



Reflect on how you can use this learning in the future

Prompts

1. What are my next steps?
2. What does this tell me about my strengths?
3. Are there still things I am not sure of?
4. What can I do to develop my understanding and/or increase my knowledge?
5. How does this learning link to other topics?

Note: This resource aims to offer guidance on various approaches to reflection. The prompts are intended to be used in a flexible way to allow teacher and student agency and ownership.
References: NCCA Focus on Learning Toolkit: 4 Students reflecting on their learning.

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Teacher Reflection in the History Classroom



The Task



Reviewing planning

Prompts

1. Were the learning intentions linked to learning outcomes?
2. Did the way I linked learning across the strands support student understanding and meaning-making?
3. Were the learning intentions suitable for my students?
4. Did I ask questions that challenged and engaged my students?
5. Were students able to demonstrate learning aligned to success criteria?

The Process



Reflecting on classroom practice

Prompts

1. How did students experience the key learning?
2. What type of historical thinking skills have been developed in this lesson?
3. Did every student access the learning and feel challenged?
4. Did the success criteria reflect the learning intentions?
5. How did my feedback encourage knowledge or skills development?

The Future



Considering changes to future practice

Prompts

1. What are my targets and goals for moving forward?
2. How might I adapt the lesson for another cohort?
3. How might the skills learned in this lesson be developed in the future?
4. What did I learn from this experience that may help me in the future?
5. How might I offer an opportunity for student agency or ownership moving forward?

Working with colleagues



Reflecting on how you might plan with your department.

Prompts

1. How do we share examples of good practice in this area?
2. How effective was formative assessment in reflecting learning?
3. How might the learning be linked to other areas or Learning Outcomes?
4. How can we further develop reflective practice in our classroom?
5. How can we further develop student skills in our classroom?



Mhaígh an fealsamh Gréagach cáiliúil, Socrates, nach bhfuil luach ag baint le saol muna ndéantar iniúchadh air. Ón ráiteas sin, tá sé soiléir gur tuigeadh an tábhacht a bhaineann leis an machnamh fiú ag an uair úd. Téann an machnamh go smior na Sraithe Sóisearaí mar tá sé le feiceáil ag beagnach gach uile chiseal den teagasc, den fhoghlaim agus den mheasúnú. Mar a deirtear sa tSonraíocht (T1 lch 11, T2 lch 10), “Tuigfidh an scoláire an tábhacht a bhaineann le machnamh, le heagar agus le soiléireacht ar mhaithe le spriocanna a bhaint amach go héifeachtach.”



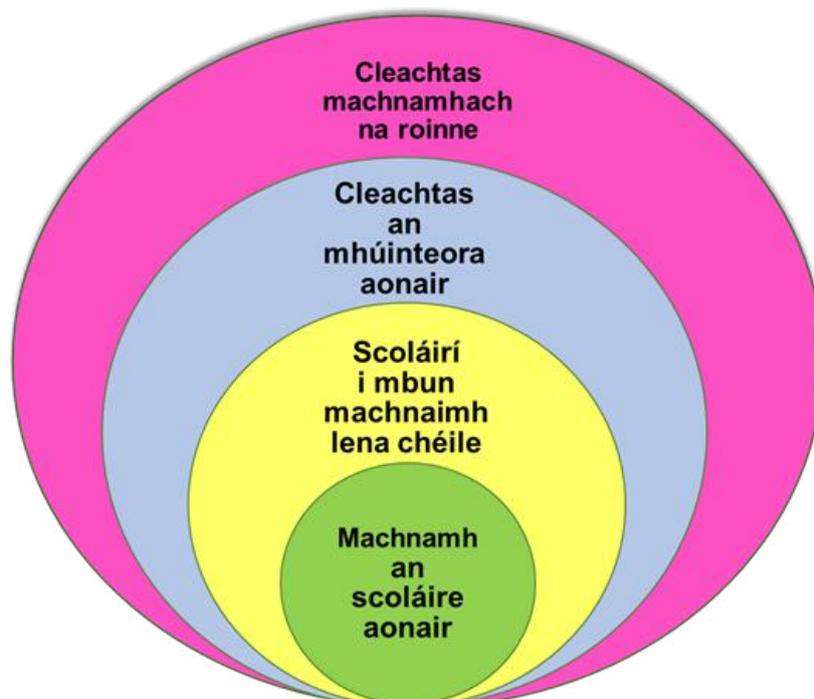
Leis an gcur chuige seo, tosaíonn an machnamh ag leibhéal na roinne ar scoil, sileann sé síos go leibhéal an mhúinteora aonair, téann sé níos doimhne fós go leibhéal an ranga agus críochnaíonn sé leis an scoláire aonair. Tacaíonn snáithe a trí go mór leis an machnamh a leabú sa chaoi ina “nDíríonn an scoláire ar na tréithe aonair atá aige féin mar fhoghlaimeoir teanga.” (An tSonraíocht, T1 lch 24, T2 lch 23) Cuirtear béim ar mhachnamh a dhéanamh, ní amháin ar an ábhar atá le foghlaim, ach ar an bhfoghlaimeoir mar fhoghlaimeoir. Aithnítear go dtagann forbairt ar dhearcthaí an fhoghlaimeora tríd an “an machnamh a dhéanann siad orthu féin mar fhoghlaimeoirí teanga” (An tSonraíocht, T2 lch 3).

Cé gur próiseas pearsanta é an machnamh, is féidir leis an múinteoir ceisteanna áirithe a chur ar an scoláire chun iad a stiúradh agus a threorú sa bhealach ceart go dtí go dtuigean siad an chaoi ina ndéantar é go héifeachtach. Tá cáipéisí atá an-chabhrach leis seo curtha ar fáil do mhúinteoirí ar an suíomh www.jct.ie sa bhforannán dar teideal ‘Acmhainní’ sa rannán Gaeilge. Anuas air sin, is í ceann de na huirlisí is úsáidí í an measúnú chun an machnamh a spreagadh agus a threisiú. Tacaíonn an t-aiseolas ón measúnú foirmitheach le cleachtas an mhachnamh a leabú agus aithnítear go tréan an tábhacht a bhaineann le haiseolas éifeachtach ón múinteoir ranga agus ó chomhscoláirí. “Tá ról tábhachtach ag a chomhscoláirí i ndul chun cinn an fhoghlaimeora. Trí idirghníomhú lena chomhscoláirí agus machnamh a dhéanamh, fásann tuiscint an scoláire air féin mar fhoghlaimeoir agus mar úsáideoir teanga.” (An tSonraíocht, T1 lch 15, T2 lch 14)

Tá i bhfad níos mó i gceist leis an machnamh ná mar chuid eile den aistear foghlama. Méadaíonn an machnamh feasacht an duine agus is tríd an bhfeasacht seo a thagann forbairt ar an duine ina iomláine, ní hamháin mar fhoghlaimoir, ach mar scoláire, mar shiblín, mar chara, mar fhostaí agus araile. Sa saol gnóthach seo, áfach, ní minic a chuirtear luach ar an machnamh ná ar an gciúnas a bhaineann leis an machnamh mar ní eascraíonn aon rud ábharach astu. Tá íoróin i gceist leis seo, ar ndóigh, mar tá réimse leathan gnéithe dearfacha ag baint leis an machnamh ar nós peirspictíocht chuimsitheach a fháil, an fhoghlaim agus an fheasacht a mhéadú, deis anáil a thógail, an smaointeoireacht a cheadú, an t-am chun cinntí eolacha a dhéanamh agus spás chun fás agus forbairt. Oibríonn an machnamh mar comhartha 'STOP' inár saol agus tá luach ollmhór leis. Tugann an machnamh deis athnuachan a dhéanamh.

An tsaintréith a bhaineann leis an machnamh ná an dul chun cinn a thagann dá bharr. An tréith is fearr ná go soilsíonn sé an bealach chun an dul chun cinn a dhéanamh. Bronnann an machnamh an t-am agus an spás chun rochtain a fháil ar an rud atá ann cheana ach atá ceilte orainn.

Déan ganmheas ar an machnamh agus ar an gciúnas ar do phriacal féin!



In Junior Cycle SPHE, one of the most important skills students develop is their capacity to reflect on their learning in the different strands and its meaning for them in their lives. You may find our **Reflection in SPHE resource** useful when supporting your students to reflect on what they are learning in SPHE and its meaning for them.

During our recent SPHE Online CPD 2021/2022 workshop, we encouraged SPHE teachers to reflect on their SPHE teaching, learning and assessment. We also explored the NCCA's SPHE/RSE Toolkit, which contains resources to support teachers in progressing their professional development in SPHE independently, at a team or whole staff level. A useful resource in this **SPHE/RSE Toolkit is Student reflection in SPHE** which explores the how, when and what of student reflection in SPHE.

Encouraging Student Reflection

- Noting reflections on post-it notes at different intervals in the class.
- Keeping a reflective blog.
- Recording reflections on video or vlog.
- Taking a mindful minute at various stages throughout the class to encourage students to reflect.
- Peer observation (encouraging students to develop their reflective skills by reflecting on the work of their peers).
- Sketch Reflections- Encouraging students to use pictures & symbols as well as words to reflect.
- Students pick a song, poem or quote that reflects their thoughts or feelings about a particular issue- this encourages the student to identify with the thoughts & feelings in the poem, song or quote.
- Reflection break- students get 1 minute to quickly note down their thoughts and feelings about an issue. This could be done several times during a class.
- 3-2-1 Students write down 3 thoughts, 2 questions and 1 example with regard to a particular topic. This acts as a bridge between their prior thoughts and their new learning about that topic or issue.
- Breakout rooms online- students meet up in pairs or threes to share their reflections on a particular topic.
- Reflection snowballs- Students write a reflection on a piece of paper, then scrunch it up and throw it to the other side of the room. Each student then picks up a snowball, adds another reflection to that piece of paper and then crumples it up and throws it on again.
- Teachers can model reflective behaviour themselves or can share with students the way in which they reflect- this would be encouraging to students and would help them develop their own reflective skills.

Catherine O'Connor,
Coláiste na Trícaire,
Limerick

www.jct.ie

Teaching SPHE/RSE
Student reflection in SPHE

In SPHE, one of the most important skills that students develop is the capacity to reflect on their learning and its meaning for them in their lives. Like all skills, reflection takes time and practice to develop. When students are encouraged and supported in reflecting regularly as part of their learning in SPHE, the benefits are countless.

Benefits for Students

- To make sense of your learning
- To develop your self-knowledge
- To think about your personal growth
- To allow you to change your mind
- To help you to achieve your ambitions
- To make your own judgments about or weigh in

HOW?
 Reflection can be structured or semi-structured. It can be done individually or with others. It can be made private to the student or it can be used to support conversations with other students and/or the SPHE teacher.

WHAT?
 Reflection in SPHE is specifically focused on a learning activity or a series of activities. It focuses on two questions:
 ■ **what students are learning** - the insights they are gaining about themselves and others.
 ■ **what does this mean for them** - how it will inform their choices, behaviour and relationships?

WHEN?
 Reflection can happen at the beginning of a topic, during the learning activity or at the end.

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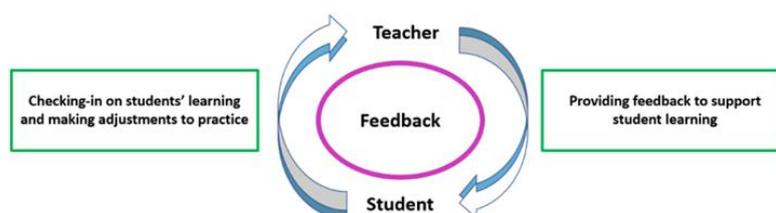
Renewed thanks to all the SPHE teachers who attended and participated in our workshop and to our Associate who shared some tips for 'Encouraging Student Reflection' with us.



Maths

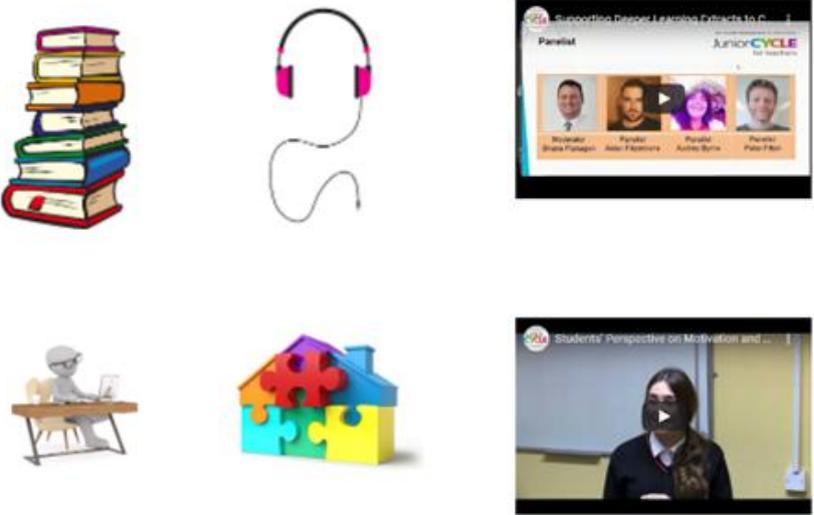
The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) places a significant emphasis on the use of formative assessment and notes that feedback 'between teachers and students [can] inform teaching and learning to a greater extent' (p.30). The Mathematics specification (p.21) further develops the point by noting that 'providing focused feedback to students on their learning is a critical component of high-quality assessment and a key factor in building students' capacity to manage their own learning and their motivation to stick with a complex task or problem.'

During cluster CPD, Mathematics teachers were provided with structured opportunities to reflect on the reciprocal nature of feedback between the teacher and student using classroom generated materials, testimony, and artefacts. The morning session focused on the practice of checking-in on students' learning and how the feedback from students was used to inform real-time, in the moment changes to practice to maximise student learning. Teachers were also provided with structured opportunities to reflect on their use of verbal, digital and written feedback and discussed strategies that they have used to make their feedback more effective and impactful. Over the course of the morning session, teachers also discussed how feedback gathered informs adjustments to planning, pacing, differentiation, and task selection. The variety of school and educational settings, teaching experience, teacher specialisms and interests in mathematical content contributed significantly to the learning of teachers and JCT advisors alike.



Maths

The pre-lunch session of the day was designed to illustrate Universal Design for Learning in action using a Read, Listen, Watch, Explore approach. This self-directed session allowed participants to explore a variety of materials focused on student motivation and perseverance and consider the role of feedback in this regard. Whilst teacher and student voice framed some of the activities in this session, there were also activities designed to prompt individual reflection on professional routines and habits. The development of professional practice requires developing new routines or habits for teachers (and students) and small deliberate changes to practice can positively impact teaching and learning.



Supporting Deeper Learning

In this video you will hear a number of extracts from the webinar 'Supporting Deeper Learning in Junior Cycle Mathematics'. The extracts are used to prompt some thinking around Open-ended Questions, Strategies for Problem-Solving, Group Work, a Culture of Perseverance and Productive Disposition for supporting student learning and motivation.

While engaging with this video you might like to consider the following question: *What strategies might support the development of productive disposition in our students?*

Students' Perspective on Motivation and Perseverance

In this video you will hear from a number of students from a school in the East. They discuss what motivates them to learn, how their teachers motivate them in class as well as sharing advice they have for other students who might get a little stuck when learning.

While engaging with this video you might like to consider the following question: *What strategies might we use to help our students persevere when engaging with challenging work?*

The Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines note the connection between teaching and learning methodologies associated with development of the Key Skills and students feeling more confident, connected, and actively engaged in their learning. In the afternoon session, teachers worked with their subject colleagues to explore the role of the Key Skills in the Mathematics classroom and reflect on how the elements of the Key Skills might be further developed.



Student Reflection

Student reflection is a core element of the Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages Specification. Reflection plays a key role for students in progressing their learning and takes place throughout the learning process. Indeed, studying a language allows for deep reflection, 'By reflecting on other cultures and making comparisons they develop a deeper understanding of their own while appreciating diversity (MFL Specification, p. 4).

Additionally, the Student Language Portfolio provides students with many opportunities to 'set personal learning goals across the five skills in strand one, to engage with and reflect on their language learning as outlined in strand two and to develop and document their sociocultural awareness, thereby supporting the learning outcomes in strand three' (MFL Specification, p. 21).

This process of reflection activates the key skills of communicating, managing myself and managing information and thinking.



Supporting Reflection JuniorCYCLE for teachers

SOME OF THE FOLLOWING PROMPTS MAY SUPPORT YOU IN DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR REFLECTION IN YOUR LANGUAGE CLASS

Before

- What can I already do in the language?
- What do I know about the language that will help me?
- What do I need to learn?
- What am I learning to do?
- What are my goals?
- How will I know if I have achieved the learning?
- What strategies can I already use to help me learn?
- How will I demonstrate what I have learned?

During

- Do I understand what I am doing?
- Do I know the success criteria?
- What do I need to do to improve my work?
- Do I need to make changes?
- Am I working towards my goals?

After

- Have I achieved my learning goals/intentions?
- The main thing I learned is...
- I like/did not like this way of learning because...
- What skill(s) have I developed?
- What skills do I need to improve?
- What worked/did not work? Why?
- What would I do differently next time? Why?
- What further supports do I need to improve?

Reflection on Feedback

- What have I learned?
- What went well?
- What can I improve upon?
- What goal(s) am I setting for next time?
- Do I have any questions about my feedback?

Adapted from resources created by Erasmus+ ATRosso Project

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Modern Foreign Languages

Reflective Practice

Core and elective CPD events provide a dedicated space for teacher reflective practice. During our core day 2021/22, the model we used was: What? So What? Now what? This was used to support engagement with new learning. Whilst we took opportunities for collaborative, professional conversations throughout our CPD day, the significance of individual reflection was reiterated, as teacher autonomy is core to classroom practice. Throughout each session, reflection moments were included to allow for assimilation of new learning and in order to consider implications for classroom practice. Reflective practice invites us to form honest considerations about this year's journey, individually and collaboratively, and establish approaches for further consideration.

Below is a visual which supports teacher reflection during our CPD day.

WHAT?
What is the key learning here?
What concepts are being explored?

SO WHAT?
What does this mean to me?
How does this connect with previous ideas?

NOW WHAT?
What will this mean for my classroom practice?

Click on this support to view teacher reflection on effective questioning



Personal Reflection

| | Sometimes | Often | Rarely |
|--|-----------|-------|--------|
| I think about the questions I am going to ask in class and plan several effective questions per lesson, related to the learning intentions and learning activities | | | |
| Before teaching a new unit of learning, I use questions to assess students' prior knowledge and understanding | | | |
| I ask a mix of open and closed questions | | | |
| I ask higher-order questions and try to avoid asking too many lower-order questions | | | |
| I allow time for thinking/repeating after a question is asked in class | | | |
| I encourage students to collaborate before answering | | | |
| I encourage students to ask questions | | | |
| I encourage students to explain and justify their answers | | | |
| I involve all students in asking and answering questions | | | |
| Both correct and incorrect answers are followed up with appropriate feedback and, where the opportunity arises, with further discussion | | | |
| I ask questions that encourage students to use and develop existing knowledge or understanding | | | |
| I ask questions and encourage students to ask questions that spark curiosity and critical thinking | | | |

Adapted from the NCCA, Effective Questioning (pp. 5-6)
https://ncca.ie/media/1325/assessment-booklet-2_en.pdf

www.jct.ie



Home Economics

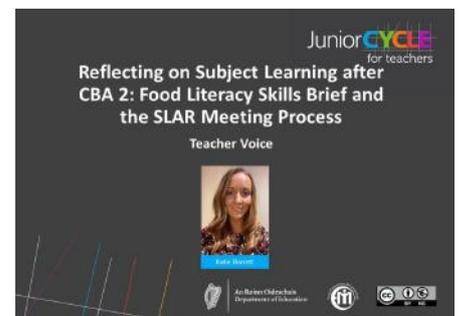
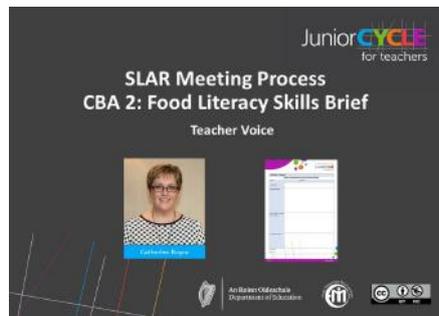
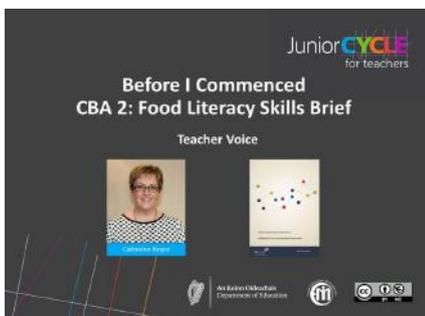
Supporting student and teacher reflection were features of our recent Home Economics Online CPD 2021/2022 workshop.

We shared a Reflection Activity – **I See, I Hear, I Think, I Wonder**, which is a resource which can support students to reflect on their learning.

Click to download



We also shared several **audio and video clips** of our Associates sharing their reflections on the CBA 2: Food Literacy Skills Brief and SLAR meeting processes. While listening to their colleagues, teachers were invited to reflect on their experience and their students' experiences of the CBA 2: Food Literacy Skills Brief process.



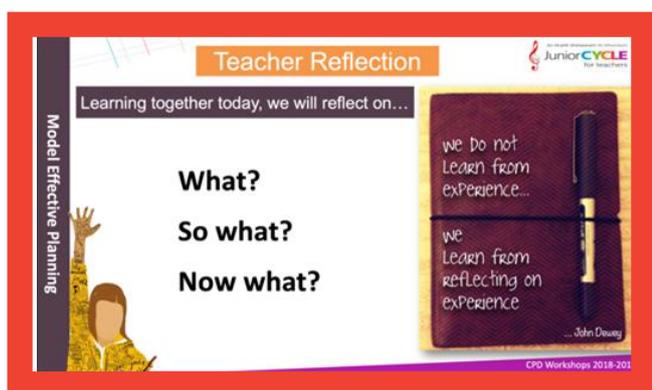
Renewed thanks to all the Home Economics teachers who attended and participated in our workshop and to our Associates who shared their reflections on their implementation of the Junior Cycle Home Economics Specification.



Music

Reflection in Junior Cycle Music permeates student learning through developing an understanding of how to evaluate and critique their own work and the work of others. Through reflecting 'in' and 'on' learning students can become more aware of the knowledge and skills they have developed, identify strengths and areas for improvement, decide on their next steps, gain a greater understanding of how they learn and take more responsibility for their own learning.

Rolfe et al.'s (2001) reflective model, which comprises three questions of What? So what? Now what?, enables our music teachers to reflect 'in' and 'on' their enactment of Junior Cycle Music. John Dewey tells us that we learn from reflecting on experience which further supports the maxim that reflection without action is as unproductive as action without reflection.



These two Reflection Templates are accessible supports for students when engaging 'in' and 'on' reflective practice. Another reflection template is provided by the NCCA. Every student will submit a reflection on each of their two pieces for their Composition Portfolio (CBA1).

Click to download



Music

Throughout all our engagement, time and space are provided for teachers to reflect on their own learning and the collaborative learning taking place during each engagement. For our cluster day 2021/2022 the Rolfe reflective model was used again when teachers were invited to reflect on...

- 🎵 **WHAT** was their context, their students and their learning
- 🎵 **SO WHAT** learning did they engage with during the cluster
- 🎵 **NOW WHAT** learning can they take away for their context, their students and their learning

Two possible supports for you when reflecting as a department are:

- Questions to further your conversations when considering planning, professional time, assessment, etc.
- Reflective Planning Template when auditing the learning achieved from the learning outcomes for each cohort of students

Click on the images to access



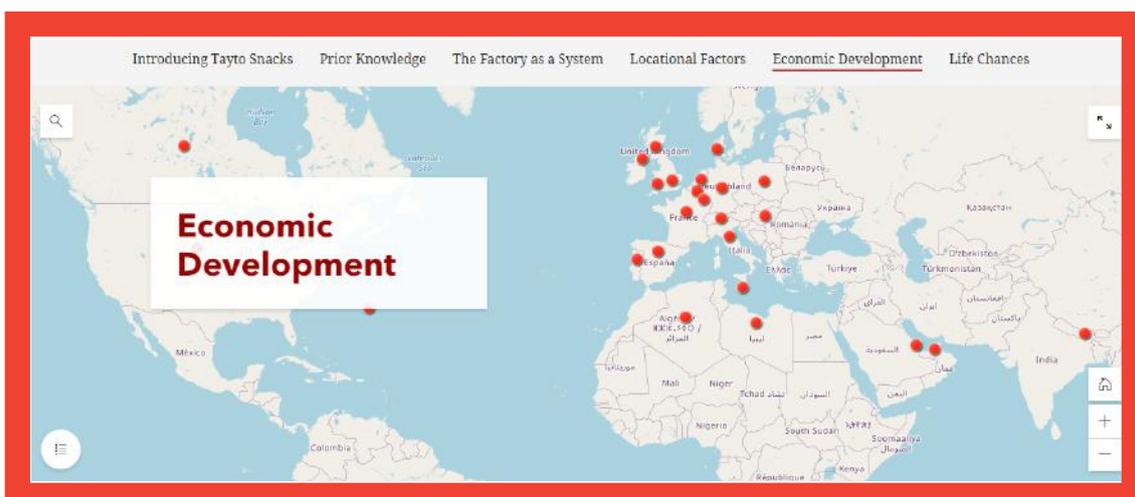
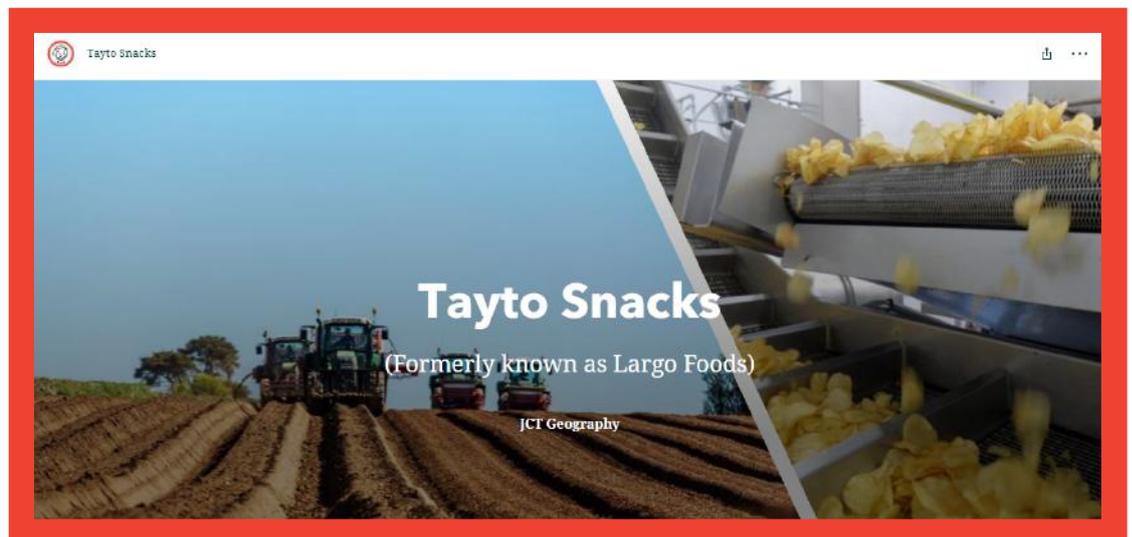
Geography

Prompt Questions Supporting Reflection

An integral part of our cluster day this year was the non-linear approach in teaching, learning and assessment. Through the non-linear approach, we modelled how to link the learning outcomes across the strands and threaded the Elements and Geoliteracy through a unit of learning.

We used StoryMap as an online platform with a variety of interactive maps, videos and worksheets. Throughout this resource we illustrated how prompt questions can support student reflection on prior learning. Engaging with prompt questions enables students to gain a deeper understanding of Junior Cycle Geography and the world around them.

click here!
→



Geography

Continuing to focus on the power of prompt questions, we moved onto support teachers in preparing students for CBA2 My Geography and the Assessment Task. We examined how to create prompt questions to support student reflection through the CBA process.

The NCCA Guidelines for the Classroom-Based Assessment and Assessment Task have identified 5 areas that will assess student learning: geographical thinking, new knowledge and understanding, applied skills, appreciation of geography and attitudes and values.

As students reflect on each of these areas, they embody the Junior Cycle Key Skill of managing information and thinking as they are thinking creatively and critically and reflecting on and evaluating their learning. They are also embracing the Junior Cycle Principle of learning to learn as it clearly encourages our students to think independently on how to evaluate new knowledge, on how they learned and on how their attitudes have been influenced. This supports students meeting the challenges of life beyond school, of further education and working life.

| Student Reflection for CBA 2 | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Geographical Thinking | New knowledge & understanding | Applied Skills | Appreciation of Geography | Attitudes & Values |
| <i>What connections did you make?</i> | <i>What new information did you learn?</i> | <i>Identify skills you developed during your investigation.</i> | <i>Who might be interested in your findings from your investigation?</i> | <i>How has your thinking changed?</i> |
| Prompt REFLECTION Questions for your Local Investigation | | | | |
| | | | | |

Click the image to download



Science

Teacher reflection is a process led by the teacher, for both the teacher and the learning needs of the students. Reflection in education is not new. For over 100 years now, reflection has been seen as an important part of teaching. Joyce (1897) in 'The Handbook of School Management' states:

'Reflection is that power by which one looks into his own mind turning his intention on what is going on there so as to get ideas of the mental operations. In this way we come to have ideas of such mental actions of loving, hating, doubting, believing approving, guiding, rejoicing, and so forth. The faculty of reflection is so slow in development and has so little to do in elementary school education that we may pass it by without formal notice.'

For some reflection may be more implicit than explicit but what the Junior Cycle reform process is doing is bringing it to the fore and demonstrating how it can benefit both the teaching process and student learning. Reflection can have such a positive impact on what we do as teachers. Our thinking on reflection has evolved since 1897 and reflection features in all our key documents. Some examples of its importance and how the Junior Cycle reform process is moving reflection forward are given below.

Junior Cycle both encourages and facilitates reflection. Reflective practice now plays a huge role in any improvement process. It's also a way that we, as teachers make sense of our professional practice and learning. It's where we think about what went well and what could have gone better.

There are many different types of reflective models. The Brookfield model of reflection is one tool that can help teachers engage in critical self-reflection. To this end, Brookfield (1995) proposes 4 lenses that can be engaged by teachers in a process of critical reflection:

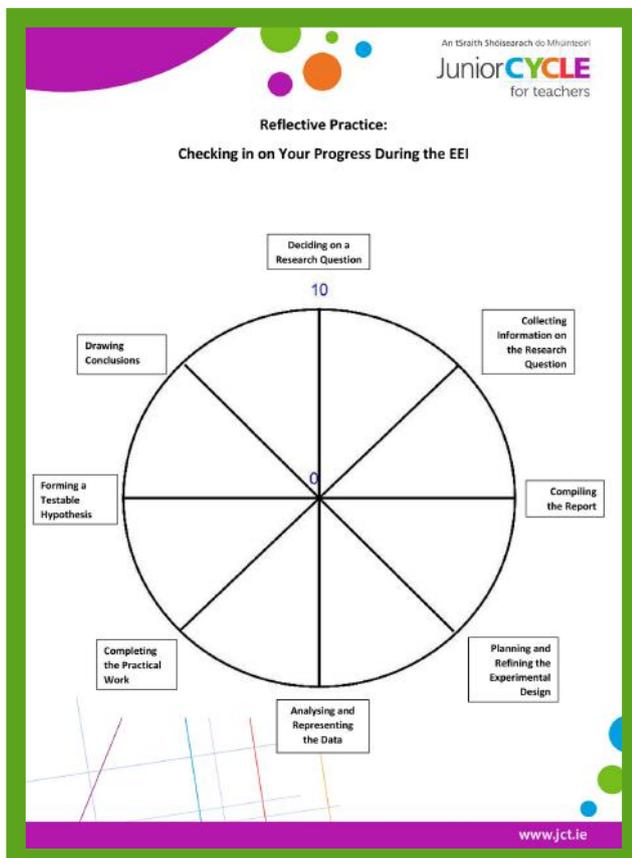
1. The autobiographical
2. The students' eyes
3. Our colleagues
4. Theoretical literature



Science

He talks about the safest place for teachers to start the reflective process as being the autobiography of self-reflection. Internally reflecting on your own practice, is not just a safe starting place but it's also personal and has more meaning. The reflection process needs to be engaged with in a critical way and if we want students to reflect we also need to be comfortable with the reflective process. How often as teachers do we model reflection for our students? For teachers, reflection shouldn't be seen as an add-on but as an approach to how we work. We have to be able to stop and ask are we doing it effectively and to interrogate practice in light of all the theories. As professionals, we have to make time to stop, think and look back to improve and move forward.

The JCT Science team has developed this resource to support **Teacher reflection in the Science Classroom** before, during and after a learning experience. **Being a Safe Scientist** is another support developed that demonstrates how a Science teacher can reflect before engaging with a student-led activity.



Click the images to download



Science

The 2nd lens that Brookfield mentions is reflecting from the perspectives of your students. Again, this can take time to develop. One approach teachers could take that would support student voice is encouraging students to give constructive feedback to help inform teachers in their self-reflection.

There are other ways students can reflect such as self-reflection, and peer-reflection. Taken from Looking at our Schools 2016 one statement of highly effective practice states that students 'reflect on their behaviour and attitude to learning, and are able to set meaningful personal goals as a result of their reflection.' To support this the JCT Science team has developed a resource to support **Student Reflection on their Extended experimental Investigation (EEI)**.

Looking through other lenses Brookfield writes about reflecting through the lens of colleagues. This can sometimes be challenging, less comfortable and it can take time for teachers to be at ease with receiving feedback from their peers. However, one area where Junior Cycle reform supports this is with the introduction of the Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) process. Teachers are now given space to reflect on their work, and students' work, in a formal setting. To encourage reflection, the addition of the SLAR facilitator ensures the conversation is led in a manner that promotes collaborative conversation in a safe and comfortable environment. As a result, teachers are now more confident to have these professional conversations. Reflection needs to be looked on as an incremental process – and needs to have a collective endeavour to offer different perspectives, formalise the process and create a collective vision.

Collaborative reflection may bring challenges at the start such as a sense of vulnerability and issues of confidence around our own professional identity but it's incredibly powerful if it's done together.

Brookfield's last lens is reflection from literature or what the theory says. Collaborative engagement with colleagues and appropriate literature as part of ongoing learning can support practice and can offer a broader context to our teaching and learning. Teachers can use literature, and existing research to frame and support their practice, and can also highlight opportunities for further learning.

Reflection in Visual Art

The Visual Art specification 'recognises that the voice of the student is very important in any explanation of their work. While this voice can emerge through the work itself, it must also be a reflective voice. As the student progresses through their work, they will naturally question their choices and decisions. This reflection is to be welcomed as it indicates a concern about the work itself as well as their own personal artistic development.' (Visual Art Specification, page 19)

Making Thinking Visual

As students work, they are forming and developing ideas. 'By learning to use their own critical judgement, they will be empowered to make decisions with their own learning which will be reflected in their ongoing drawings, research, studies, and realised work.' (Visual Art Specification, page 13)

Opportunities for reflection are embedded throughout the learning outcomes. Creating opportunities for discussion, self and peer assessment, and classroom conversation provides students with the chance to learn collaboratively and from one another.

Creative and Critical Thinking in Visual Art

Students are encouraged to work through a creative process, reflecting on successes and failures, evaluating their work, adjusting, and refining as their work progresses. This year's Visual Art workshop focuses on how we might develop this culture for creative and critical thinking in Visual Art.

Here is a link to the presentation and resources from this year's workshop **Creative and Critical Thinking** in the Visual Art Classroom. The accompanying **website**, hosts a range of resources to support students reflecting on their learning in Visual Art.



Flow of Ideas

This strategy could be used to interpret a theme, topic, idea or problem. It may support students to evaluate their thinking and justify their ideas and actions.

What do I already know?

....about a theme, topic, idea or problem?
What is my experience? What is my knowledge?

How do I know?

Is my information reliable? Have I made assumptions?
Do I have biases?

What is important?

Do I have an interest in this area? How have I chosen my Primary sources? Are they personal? What would I like my work to say?

What is missing?

What more could I know? What might be helpful to learn? From where/or whom could I get more information?

What is my plan of action?

Where to next? How will I get there? What do I need to do?
What is the next step?

Visual Art

Creative Habits of Mind

Imaginative

Persistent

Inquisitive

Disciplined

Collaborative

A.D.A.P.T. your thinking...

Attempt

What could I attempt?

Develop

What part(s) could I develop more?

Ask

What can I learn from other students?

Practice

What could I try again?

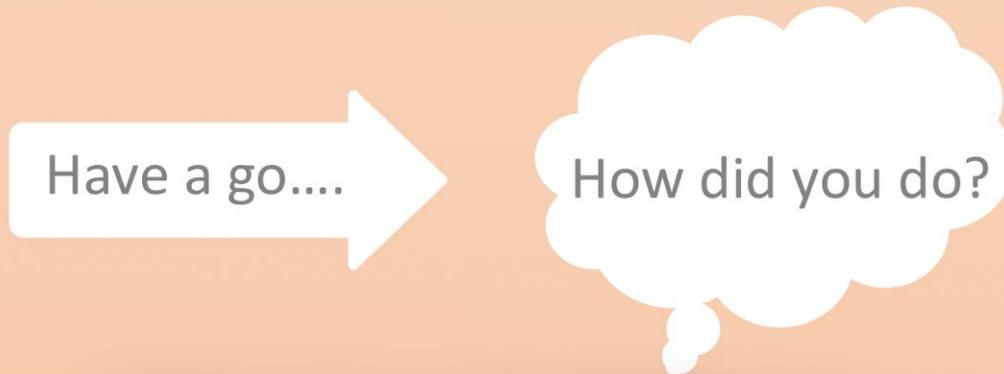
Think

Where to next?



Practice with Purpose

Identify something, a task or skill that you are finding challenging and think about your learning progress as you improve with practice over time.



Think about the following.....

- Something I did really well ...
- Something I could have done better...
- Something which surprised me ...

Give it another go, perhaps focusing on the parts that you think you could have done better.

2021/2022 was the academic year that marked a turning point in the provision of Junior Cycle Whole-school CPD supports.

Up until the Covid-19 pandemic reached Irish shores in March 2020, JCT provided schools around Ireland with full-day, face-to-face CPD presentations which were facilitated from a menu of support options selected carefully by schools through advance consultation with JCT personnel.

This model of CPD was highly effective in the initial stages of Junior Cycle reform. It ensured a consistency and clarity of message which was precisely aligned with the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015). As always, each individual CPD option provided was subject to a rigorous internal and external 'Quality Assurance' process.

As we emerge from the pandemic and reflect upon the question of 'Where we are now?', JCT has moved to adopt a new model of Whole-school CPD which aims to best meet the needs of all schools across Ireland at this particular stage of the reform process.

Junior Cycle Implementation Support (JCIS) aims to provide a more tailored, bespoke CPD experience for schools. The JCIS team operates across seven regions nationally, including one national region specifically meeting the needs of Gaelcholáistí agus Scoileanna Gaeltachta.

In 2021/2022, schools were permitted to close for one day for Junior Cycle whole-school planning and school-self-evaluation. (Circular 0059/2021 - Arrangements for the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) with particular reference to the school year 2021/22). The regional JCIS teams engaged initially with schools through a very thorough consultative process to identify together where they are at on their Junior Cycle implementation journey. JCIS then entered a CPD co-design process with schools in advance of the school closure day. The process ensured a customised experience of CPD, one which aimed to target areas needing most support and to further promote the Junior Cycle reform process on a 'Whole-school' level in each unique school context. JCT did not facilitate the entire school closure day but assisted schools in planning the remainder of the day.



While a significant proportion of the work in JCIS was online this year, the team were delighted to be able to return to face-to-face facilitation in Spring 2022. This was a very welcome milestone as we emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic and allowed the team to connect in a very meaningful way with staff in schools right across the various regions.

Dedicated supports for 'Management Resource Hour' personnel in the form of online, live 'Community of Practice' events also took place. A series of JCT MRH Teachers' Newsletters were produced. Posters detailing sample 'Action Plans' and links for planning were designed and identified as very useful resources. The SLAR Facilitator and Participant live CPD seminar events were successfully held twice during the 2021/2022 academic year.

The JCIS team will continue to review and reflect on this new model of CPD. We aim to adapt and evolve, are always eager to gain the insight of school teachers and leaders across Ireland so that together, we provide CPD of the highest standard as we work to implement the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015).



JCIS - Junior Cycle Implementation Support

The Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) and Circular 0059/2021 recognise that teachers require professional time to engage in a range of professional activities, involving both individual activities and collaboration with teaching colleagues to support teaching, learning, assessment, and reporting.

The Junior Cycle Implementation Support team are providing support with regard to the use of teacher professional time during the 2021/22 school year.

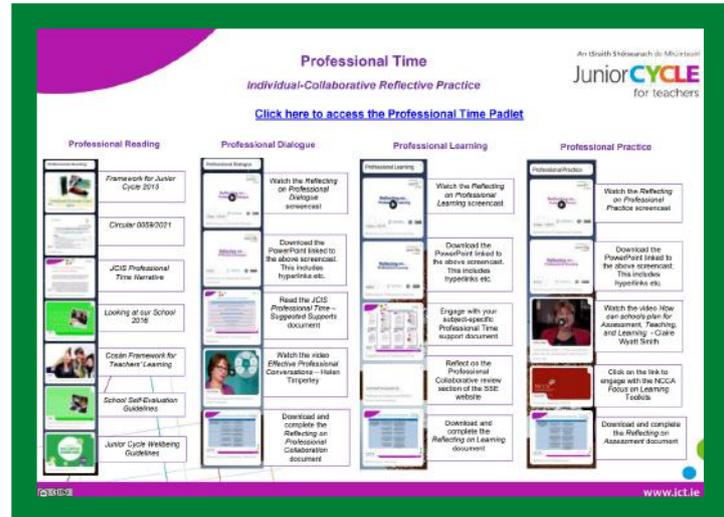
The Cosán Framework for Teachers' Learning (2016) is grounded in research in relation to assessment, learning and leadership which includes the encouragement of individual and collaborative reflective practice. The Teaching Council also considers a dedicated time and space for individual and collaborative learning and consideration of this to be crucial.

The JCIS Individual-Collaborative Reflective Practice Professional Time resource includes a Padlet and a one-page document with an explanation of each section of the Padlet. These sections are entitled:

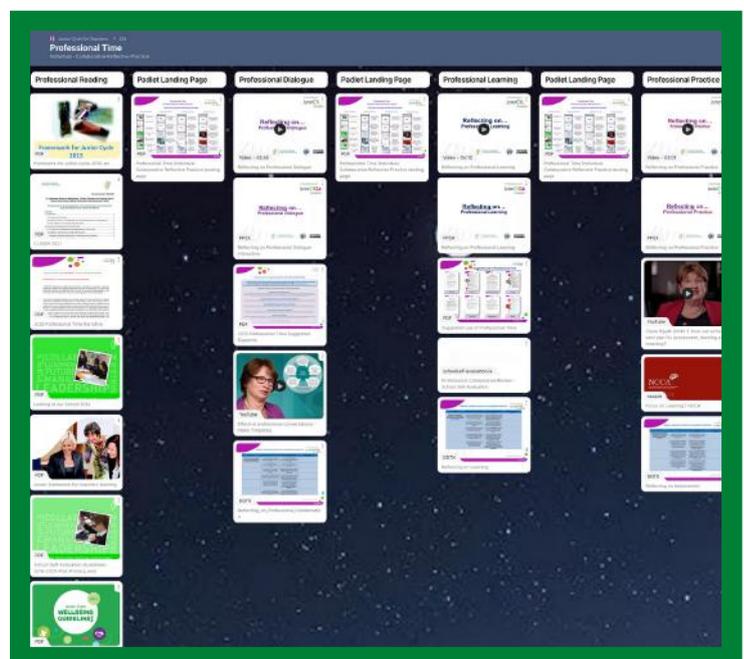
- Professional Reading
- Professional Dialogue
- Professional Learning
- Professional Practice

It consists of relevant readings, screencasts, PowerPoints, videos, support documents and reflective templates.

Click to open 



The most recent professional time resource created by the JCIS team offers ideas for teachers' individual and collaborative reflective practice.



Coiste Forbartha na Gaeilge SSM

Bunaíodh Coiste Forbartha na Gaeilge SSM chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn trasna na heagraíochta ar mhaithe le freastal níos leithne agus níos fearr a dhéanamh ar riachtanais earnáil an ghaeloideachais. Glacann baill an choiste go leor cúraimí orthu féin agus aontaítear ar spriocanna gearrthéarmacha agus fadtéarmacha teanga ag cruinnithe rialta an choiste. Is é ceann de na mór-spriocanna atá acu ná a chinntiú go bhfuil raon leathan d'acmhainní cabhracha curtha ar fáil do scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge. Cuireann an coiste oiliúint ar fáil do phrofléitheoirí agus aistritheoirí ina dtaobh. Tugtar traenáil agus tacaíocht leanúnach do chomhairleoirí agus do chomhaltaí SSM a gcuireann na ceardlanna FGL trí mheán na Gaeilge i láthair. Is féidir nuacht SSM a léamh chomh maith go dátheangach ar shuíomh SSM, sa rannán Fógraí ar an Leathanach Baile agus an leagan Gaeilge den suíomh a roghnú. Rinne an Coiste cinneadh i mbliana go mbeadh síniú eagraíochtúil dhátheangach SSM á úsáid ag gach ball foirne d'aon chomhfhreagras.

Cuireann Coiste Forbartha na Gaeilge roimhe tacaíocht a thabhairt do chur chun cinn na Gaeilge taobh istigh den eagraíocht agus comhairle ar áiseanna, acmhainní, oiliúint agus dea-chleachtas a chur ar fáil do phobal na heagraíochta. Tuigeann an Coiste freisin a thábhachtaí is atá sé áiseanna a chur ar fáil do bhaill foirne na heagraíochta chun an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim agus chun a gcumas sa teanga a fheabhsú. Mar chuid d'obair inmheánach an Choiste, eagraíonn an Coiste Forbartha imeachtaí spráíúla éagsúla a thugann deis do bhaill foirne SSM teacht le chéile trí Ghaeilge. D'éirigh thar cionn leis an dá mhaidin chaifé a reachtáladh i mbliana agus le cabhair ó Ghaelchultúr, tá 20 ball foirne de chuid SSM ag teacht le chéile go fíorúil gach seachtain an téarma seo chun cur lena gcumas cumarsáide trí Ghaeilge. Leanfaidh an Coiste Forbartha ar aghaidh lena chuid iarrachtaí an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn i measc pobal uile SSM. Is fíor don seanfhocal a deir gur báúil iad lucht aoncheirde!



Supports for students from Ukraine



In light of the current situation in Ukraine, the Department of Education has information for schools regarding educational supports for children from Ukraine entering the Irish education system on **Scoilnet**.

Scoilnet has collated Cultural and Linguistic supports for these students which can be found by clicking the image below.



Information for Schools

Official information hub from Gov.ie relating to supports for Ukrainian children entering Irish education. Presented in English, Irish, Ukrainian and Russian.

[CLICK HERE](#)



CULTURAL & LINGUISTIC SUPPORTS

scoilnet

[CLICK HERE](#)

The Education Support Centres in Ireland (ESCI) **website** also has a useful list of teaching, healthcare and support resources.

Language Mats have been developed by *Post Primary Languages Ireland* and are available here. The mats now include Ukrainian and Russian in both English and Gaeilge.

Cé mhéad ama atá fá

Treoracha sa rang: / Слова на уроці

Réidh..... Готовий. / **hotoviy**

Scríobh/Scríobhaigí go néata. Пиши акуратно. / **pishi akuratno**

Léigh/Léigí liom..... Читай зі мною. / **chitai зі mnoyu**

Féach/Féachaigí ar an gclár bán. Дивися на дошку / **dívisya na doshku**

Éist/Éistigí go cúramach..... Слухай уважно / **sluhai uvajno**

Coinnigh/Coinnigí súil amach do.....? Шукай ... / **shukai**

[CLICK HERE](#)



STE(A)M in Junior Cycle



On 28th April, students and teachers from schools across the country gathered in Ballinasloe to reflect on, share and celebrate learning which happened through their participation in our STE(A)M in Action in Schools initiative. This initiative saw teachers from different subject areas collaborate to support their students to connect learning across subjects and to use this learning to empower them to take action on a real-world issue which concerned them.

Issues explored through student engagement with Junior Cycle Level 3 subject specifications and through the Level 2 Learning Programmes included biodiversity, energy production, energy usage, food supply, climate action, fast fashion and water. These issues provided a context for teachers and students to engage with learning outcomes in a wide range of Junior Cycle subjects including: Science, Mathematics, Home Economics, Geography, Visual Art, Applied Technology, Engineering, Technical Graphics, Business Studies, English, Physical Education and Media Studies as well as supporting engagement with PLUs in the L2LPs.



STE(A)M in Junior Cycle



Students from Coláiste Chiaráin, Croom, St. Mary's secondary School HFC Glasnevin, Borrisokane CC, Roscommon CC, Coláiste Dun Iascaigh, Coláiste Íosagáin, Portarlinton and Edmund Rice College joined us in The Shearwater Hotel for a day of reflection, conversation, workshops and STE(A)M thinking, while other schools joined us online to reflect on what they had learned and to share their learning with us and with each other. We also were fortunate to be joined by some of our STE(A)M partners who provided student workshops and participated in a panel discussion.

Congratulations to over 1,500 students and 60 teachers who participated in this initiative this year. We saw evidence of the potential of Junior Cycle specifications to engage students with real world issues which concern them as part of the curriculum, the potential of cross curricular collaboration to deepen understanding for students and the opportunity for students following the L2LPs and students engaging with Level 3 specifications to work together to take action to support a sustainable future.



Arts in Junior Cycle



Enhancing reflective practice is a key element of our work in the Arts in Junior Cycle team. Together with our arts partners, we design elective teacher professional learning experiences (TPLs) that aim to nurture wellbeing, encourage creativity and enhance teacher reflective practice. Our arts elective TPLs give teachers time and space to reflect on their learning experience as well as on their own professional practice. We explicitly build reflection into many of our longer-term arts electives. In others, reflection is implicit and threaded throughout the learning process.

The following online workshop series includes both an introductory workshop, during which participants meet the artist or writer or designer in their assigned groups and begin the process of collaboration, as well as a reflective event at the end of the series.

- **Architecture Connects** with the Irish Architecture Foundation
- **DesignCIRCLE 2021** with Institute of Designers Ireland (IDI) and Design and Craft Council of Ireland (DCCI)
- **Play, Create, Perform** with Youth Theatre Ireland
- **Style & Purpose** with Poetry Ireland



The reflective events provide opportunities for participants to share and celebrate the learning. They include contributions from the artist, as well as feedback from participants on what they learned from the experience. Participants also identify possible next steps in their creative journey and explore ways in which they intend to bring their learning back into the classroom.

Podcasts and Short Films

Reflection is also integral to our conversations with artists in our podcasts and short film series. In the podcasts, we hear artists talk about and reflect on the creative processes needed to realise their work. In our short films, we see the artists in their workspaces and hear them talk about their career pathways, their inspiration, the materials they use, how they research and develop ideas to finished product. We also include teacher reflection questions and guides to support engagement with our podcasts and short films.



Arts in Junior Cycle



Team Reflection

As we approach the end of this school year, the Arts in Junior Cycle team are in a reflective mood. We have gathered participant and artist feedback to see what has worked, what has not worked and what we may need to change for our Autumn 2022 programme. We aim to continue to provide arts elective TPLs that are designed to inspire, support and empower teachers to engage in the arts and learning, nurture wellbeing, encourage creativity and enhance teacher reflective practice.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish our teacher colleagues well, and to thank all who have engaged with us throughout the year.

Reflection Examples – two participants from **DesignCIRCLE 2021**

- *I found working with a designer very interesting as it showed me a different way to think. It made me think about the design and consider it more. I really enjoyed the theme of Sustainability as it has pushed my own art practice in a different direction. Any developments in my own practice will always be of benefit to my students.*
- *I suppose it brings me back to thinking about what process means for students. Also, when I develop my own work, I feel I am no longer pouring from an empty cup. I loved listening to the other teachers' experiences.*



Junior Cycle Talks



Our podcast channel 'Junior Cycle Talks' continues to go from strength to strength. You will find a whole host of episodes across different subjects and interests by searching for Junior Cycle Talks.

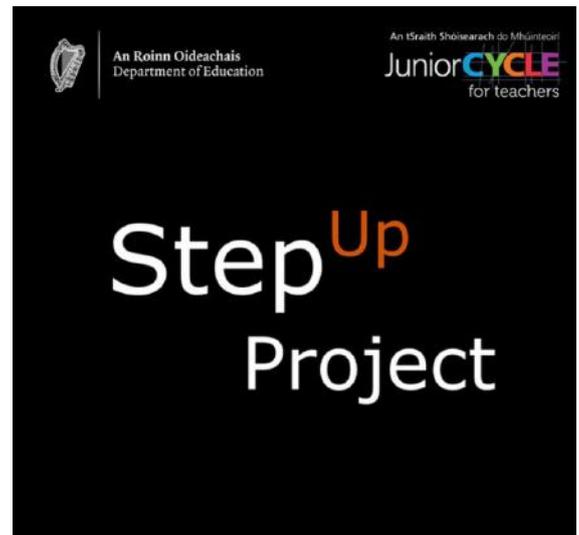
SUBSCRIBE



Recent episodes include:



JCT English - Joe Rolston Part 1 & 2



Step Up Project



The STE(A)M Podcast

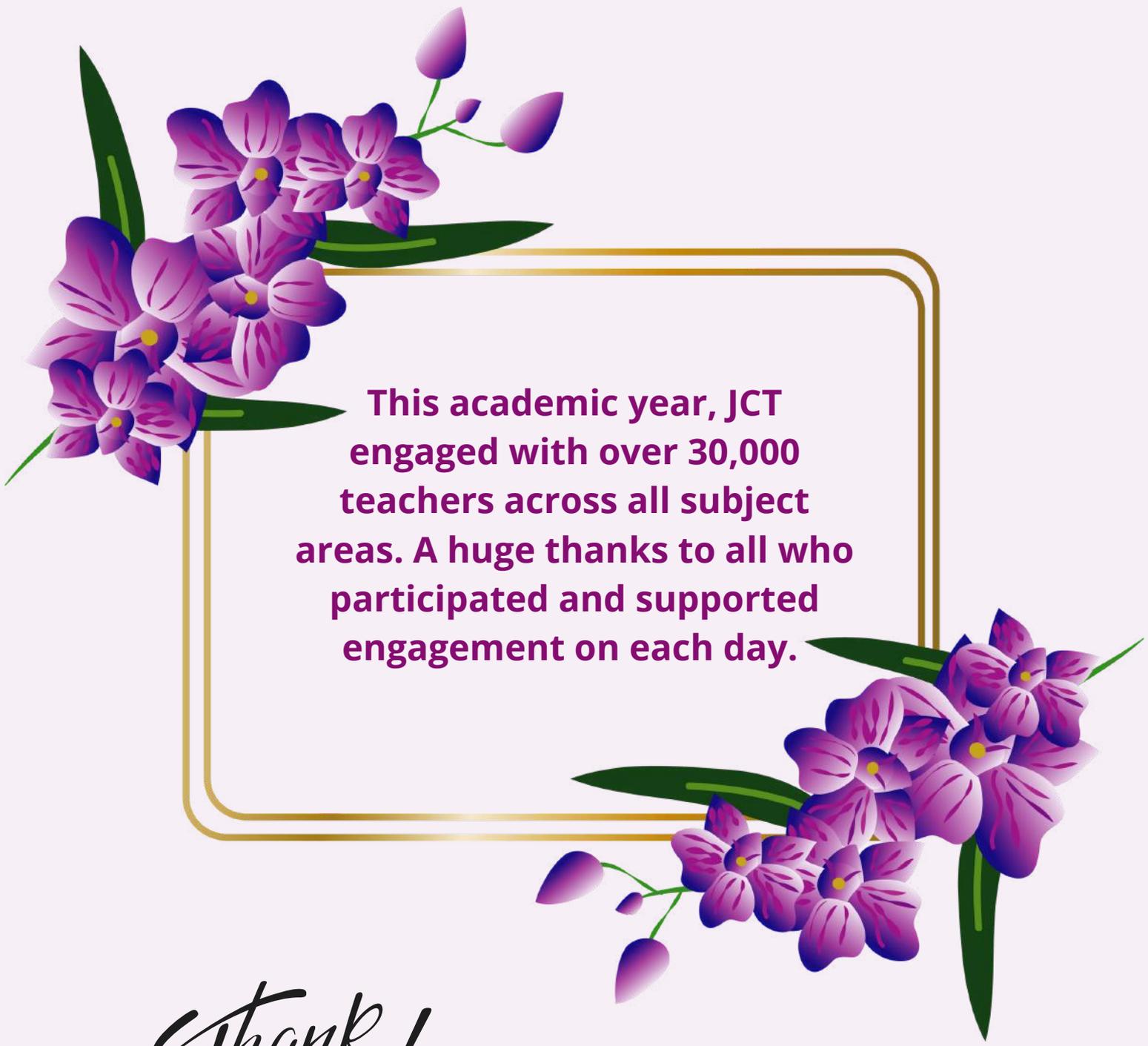


Singer - Sharon Carty

Every podcast explores the skills of being creative, collaboration and reflection. Artists, teachers and experts draw on their experiences across different settings

Search Junior Cycle Talks wherever you get your podcasts!





This academic year, JCT engaged with over 30,000 teachers across all subject areas. A huge thanks to all who participated and supported engagement on each day.

*Thank!
You.*

Further Supports

Colmisteán na Scrúdaíthe Stáit
 State Examinations Commission

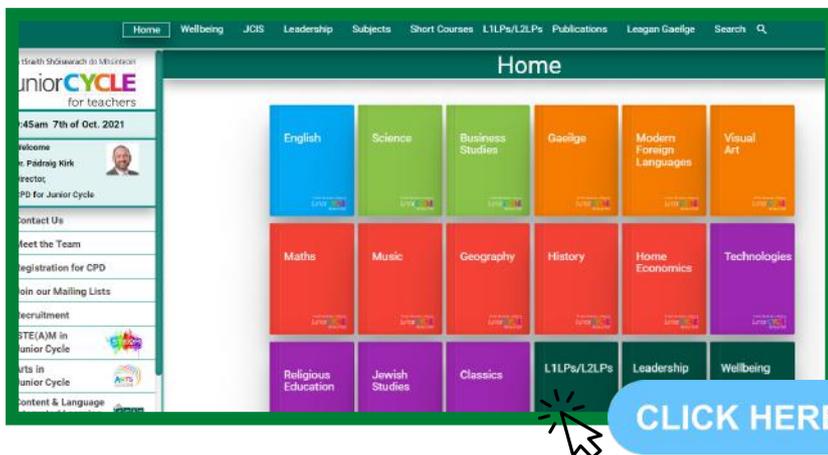
**JUNIOR CYCLE EXAMINATION
 TIMETABLE 2022**

Each candidate should read carefully the dates and times, as fixed on this official timetable, for the examinations in the subjects in which he/she intends to present himself/herself. The Commission will not be responsible for any errors which may occur in the reproduction of this timetable by outside agencies. Candidates are required to be in attendance at least half an hour before the examination begins in the subject in which they first present themselves. There are significant changes in the scheduling of the Junior Cycle examinations this year. The start time for all Junior Cycle afternoon examinations is 1.30pm.

| JUNE | SUBJECT | TIME |
|-----------------|---|--|
| WEDNESDAY 8 | English - H & O Religious Education - Common Level | 9.30 - 11.30 1.30 - 3.30 |
| THURSDAY 9 | Irish T1 - H & O (incl aurals) Irish T2 - H & O (incl aurals) History - Common Level | 9.30 - 11.30 9.30 - 11.30 1.30 - 3.30 |
| FRIDAY 10 | Geography - Common Level Mathematics - H & O | 9.30 - 11.30 1.30 - 3.30 |
| MONDAY 13 | Science - Common Level Business Studies - Common Level | 9.30 - 11.30 1.30 - 3.30 |
| TUESDAY 14 | Applied Technology - Common Level Sáraithe (incl aurals) - Common Level French (incl aurals) - Common Level | 9.30 - 11.00 9.30 - 11.30 1.30 - 3.30 |
| WEDNESDAY 15 | Home Economics - Common Level Spanish (incl aurals) - Common Level | 9.30 - 11.00 1.30 - 3.30 |
| THURSDAY 16 | German (incl aurals) - Common Level Wood Technology - Common Level | 9.30 - 11.30 1.00 - 3.00 |
| FRIDAY 17 | Jewish Studies - Common Level Music - Common Level Engineering - Common Level Classics - Common Level | 9.30 - 11.30 9.30 - 11.00 1.30 - 3.00 1.30 - 3.30 |
| MONDAY 20 | Graphics - Common Level | 9.30 - 11.30 |

Click to access the 2022 Junior Cycle examination timetable on the SEC website

Click here to access



Check out our website for all the latest updates to support your Junior Cycle classroom



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The Last School Bell



With the last school bell I can feel the sand
crunch under my feet and ricochet across
my skin
carried by the hot wind that pulls a cool
tide
closer to my toes.

Jennifer Gunner



Editor: Liam Bannon

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí

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