

ACTIVATE

No. 55 Sept 2013

The Newsletter of the Association of CSPE Teachers (ACT)

Supporting Citizenship Education in Ireland

act@esatclear.ie

www.cspeteachers.ie



ACT Committee members working on a response to the CSPE exam paper June 2013

Conference 2013 ... Update

Brochures and booking forms for this year's Conference and AGM have been sent to schools. Copies are also included with this newsletter. Deadline for applications is Tuesday Oct 1st. The venue is the Radisson Hotel Galway on Friday 11th and Saturday 12th October. In a new development the AGM of the Association will be on the Friday night and we would urge a strong attendance as the future of CSPE is under threat. With that in mind on Saturday we will have an Open Forum on the place of CSPE in Junior Cycle reform. By that stage we hope the new CSPE short course will be out for consultation. Workshop topics will include Water as a Resource (for the UN Year of Water Cooperation), The Death Penalty, the Houses of the Oireachtas and the EU Year of the Citizen, Women for Election along with our usual workshops on Action Projects, Inspection, and using IT in CSPE. Our guest speaker on the Saturday morning will be Marian Harkin MEP.

ACT in the Media

In the summer the Association received more than the usual attention in the media. As usual our response to the exam paper in June was covered by all the national dailies. We pointed out the error in the paper in relation to the Referendum Commission, which was widely publicised. At different times our vice-chair Philip Irwin and PRO Brendan O'Regan spoke on the Right Hook programme on Newstalk speaking of the exam paper and of the future of CSPE in Junior Cert reform. Later our Chairperson Jeanne Barrett had a letter published in the Irish Times drawing attention to the threat to the future of CSPE (see text of this letter in our last newsletter).

Inservice

A full schedule of PDST inservice has been announced. The booklet, covering all subjects and programmes has been released on the PDST website. Details pertaining to CSPE are available on the back page, and on the calendar page of our website. See <http://www.cspeteachers.ie/calendar.html> and <http://www.pdst.ie/postprimary>

Membership Matters

Memberships for 2013/2014 are now due. The subscription is still 20 Euro. Please send to Brendan O'Regan, Ticknock Lane, Arklow, Co. Wicklow.

News

Proudly Made in Africa (2013)

Proudly Made in Africa: A Business Studies and Development Education Transition Unit - While the Proudly Made in Africa resource has been produced with Business Studies teachers/students in mind, it has explicit links to a number of other curricular areas, including CSPE and Geography (at Junior and LC level). As a development education resource it focuses on the development of key skills including critical and creative thinking, collaborative research and taking action. Student-centred learning methodologies are central to this unit and the Student Portfolio includes different approaches including reflective self-assessment. The material can be used by any teacher. It does not require specialised knowledge of Africa, trade or global development issues.

The pack and additional related resources and information at <http://www.proudlymadeinafrica.org/> (follow the link to education/2nd level to download the pack).

Eco-Unesco

The 2013/14 academic year marks the 15th year of ECO-UNESCO's youth eco-action programme, the Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA). With secondary school students now returning after their summer holidays, ECO-UNESCO is calling on schools to register to the programme and undertake a positive action project in their school or local community. Participation in the programme is a great way to engage students to learn about environmental issues which link into the school curriculum, as well as developing key personal skills through their action-project. The YEA is designed to work with secondary school curricula and links with Geography, Science, SPHE, CSPE, Mathematics and Art syllabi. Participation in the YEA can be utilised as a recognised CSPE action project connecting to several CSPE concepts including; Stewardship, Interdependence and Rights and Responsibility. Participants choose their own topics under a range of themes including, biodiversity, climate change, energy, waste and water to name a few. In this way, projects can be tailored to link in strongly with students' formal studies. Successful projects from 2013 explored issues such as water conservation; how home grown fruit and veg can help mitigate climate change; the importance of bees to biodiversity, re-using 'waste' material to create jewellery and art sculptures and educating peers on composting, waste and recycling and a lot more besides! Free training to get groups up and running is being offered by ECO-UNESCO throughout September and October and can be delivered in the classroom upon request. To book and for full details on the programme visit www.ecounesco.ie or look out for the YEA information pack sent to schools.

CSPE Volunteering Opportunity

Citywise Education a not-for-profit organisation are looking for Newly Qualified, Practising or Retired CSPE Teachers to join our Volunteer Teacher team for the 2013-14 academic year. Their Midschool is a Junior Certificate programme that is directed at boys aged between 12-15 years old who are out of school and we give them an opportunity to study and sit their exams. We are in an ideal position to provide support to these students and to help them fulfil their academic potential while nurturing character development. Citywise are tackling the problem at its source with very limited available resources, supported by a strong team of volunteers. The initiative is based in Citywise Education, Durkan Centre, Fortunestown Way, Jobstown, Tallaght, Dublin 24. You can see what the Citywise Education Midschool programme is all about on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbbwSxLxZRw>). The Midschool programme runs Monday-Friday, 9.00am-2.00pm. The amount of time volunteers commit varies from one to five days.

Application: By CV and Cover Letter to centre manager John Keogh on john@citywise.ie or 01 4049736 / 0868903990. For more information visit www.Citywise.ie

We're on Facebook!

We have bowed to the inevitable and set up a Facebook group for the Association, called 'CSPE Teachers'. Hopefully this will help communication and get news to everybody even faster. However the email updates will continue as well. To join the group, please send an email request to act@esatclear.ie.

Response to CSPE Paper of June 2013 ...

Section 1: Question 1 – identifying famous political faces. We note that all the individuals to be recognized were men – an ironic commentary on the nature of political leadership in the world? *Question 2* – Cloze test. Many of the questions required a good knowledge of political terminology – e.g. Returning Officer, Attorney General. Some questions were very topical e.g. the Irish Presidency of the EU and a difficult question on the European Year of the Citizen (which we had flagged in our March Newsletter).

Question 3 – another welcome visual question.

Section 2: Question 1: Question on the Paralympics, focusing on disability rights. Question (e) in this section was challenging – discussing a metaphor on disability by TV critic A.A. Gill. A well designed webpage accompanied this question.

Question 2: A question on rights of young people to education, and therefore very relevant to our young students. Question (d) allowed students to name other children's rights, though there was no mention of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. *Question 3:*– Question on a cross border bridge – we welcome the inclusion of a Northern Ireland dimension on the paper. *Question 4:* – on the Irish Prison service. A welcome topic, but we did have issues with Question (d) – refers to our justice system 'that tries to rehabilitate prisoners' (begs a few questions) in contrast with a system that 'executes ... tortures ... or uses physical punishment on prisoners'. We thought the contrast was too extreme. More useful and topical would have been questions on prison overcrowding and sentencing issues.

Section 3: A good spread here. The question on 'The Gathering' brought in the community dimensions of the course, the Eco-Unesco question dealt with the environment/stewardship, the Bothar question focused on development, but there was a problem with the Referendum Commission question. The question opened with a statement about the Commission's role that was inaccurate. The question states that the Commission 'has the job of presenting both sides of a proposed change to the Constitution'. In fact it used to have this role, but since 2001 its role has been as follows: 'to explain the subject matter of referendum proposals, to promote public awareness of the referendum and to encourage the electorate to vote at the poll' (see www.refcom.ie). However, an understanding of the true nature of the Commission's work was not required in the question as a whole. The focus was on democracy in school, which was welcome, but the use of the Referendum Commission approach wasn't necessary and made the question more awkward than it needed to be. Check out the exam paper at www.examinations.ie

Activate is published once per school term by the Association of CSPE Teachers—supporting citizenship education in Ireland. Articles and letters for publication should be sent to the editor, Brendan O'Regan, Ticknock Lane, Arklow, Co. Wicklow, or emailed to act@esatclear.ie

Referendum 2013 – Seanad and Appeal Court

The **Seanad Referendum** coming up on Fri Oct 4th offers many opportunities for CSPE classes - with 3rd years especially it could be an Action Project - with students following the campaign over the next few weeks, then observing the count and results. As a preliminary step students could look at the main references to the Seanad in the Constitution (http://www.constitution.org/cons/ireland/constitution_ireland-en.htm) Article 18 in particular.

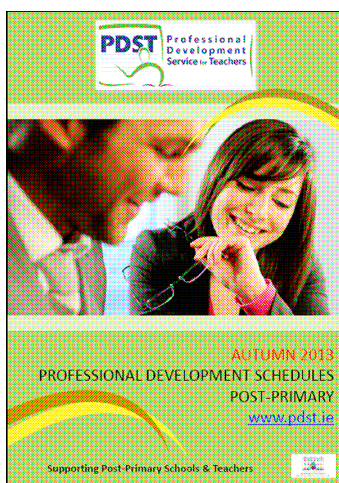
Some students could be invited to present the details of this article to the class group, e.g. using Powerpoint or equivalent.

Class groups could be set up along these lines:

1. Following and reporting on the 'yes' arguments
2. Following and reporting on the 'no' arguments
3. Following and reporting on the count and results.
4. Organising a mock referendum on the issue in the school or just in the class.

This could also be sorted by the end of October, followed by the write up! For our article on the Referendum as Action Project see here: <http://www.cspeteachers.ie/referendum.html> The Referendum Commission has a special website for the occasion: <http://referendum2013.ie/> which features lots of resources including an explanatory video. Note that on the same day there will be a second referendum - on setting up a new appeal court between the High Court and the Supreme Court. We'd love to hear from anyone taking that on!

Inservice Autumn 2013



CSPE Induction
 03/10/2013 9.00am-3.45pm Dublin West Education Centre
 09/10/2013 9.00am-3.45pm Cork Education Support Centre
 09/10/2013 9.00am-3.45pm Athlone Education Centre

Methodologies in CSPE
 24/10/2013 7.00pm-

9.30pm Drumcondra Education Centre
 02/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Monaghan Education Centre
 03/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Blackrock Education Centre
 10/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Dublin West Education Centre
 16/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Kilkenny Education Centre
 23/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Waterford Teachers' Centre
 10/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Cork Education Support

Centre

09/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm The Education Centre, Tralee
 09/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Athlone Education Centre
 09/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Galway Education Centre
 16/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Donegal Education Centre
 17/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Mayo Education Centre

Organising Action Projects

17/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Monaghan Education Centre
 15/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Navan Education Centre
 08/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Blackrock Education Centre
 08/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Kildare Education Centre
 24/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Kilkenny Education Centre
 24/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Co. Wexford Education Centre
 15/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Limerick Education Centre
 22/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm West Cork Education Centre
 17/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Athlone Education Centre
 10/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Laois Education Centre
 16/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Carrick-on-Shannon Education Centre
 24/10/2013 7.00pm-9.30pm Mayo Education Centre

Book early so that courses won't either be cancelled or oversubscribed! Booking for courses to Angie Grogan at Dublin West Education Centre angiegrogan@pdst.ie 01-4528018