

Exploring issues of identity in a Community

'Building new citizenship' - learning from change in Derry by Tide, DEC, Birmingham, 2001, 0-94883-874-4, pp 14-17

Aims:

- To investigate issues that influence our sense of identity as a community.
- To explore how people express their views in different communities.
- To enable pupils to explore how visual messages are constructed.

Extension links:

Investigate other murals on the Cain web-site eg Derry specific ...those produced by the Bogside artists. What messages are they trying to convey?

Web links

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/murals/inaex.html>

Site contains a collection of images and background information about murals in Northern Ireland.

Investigating murals

[Photographs numbered 17 to 26 will be needed to support this activity]

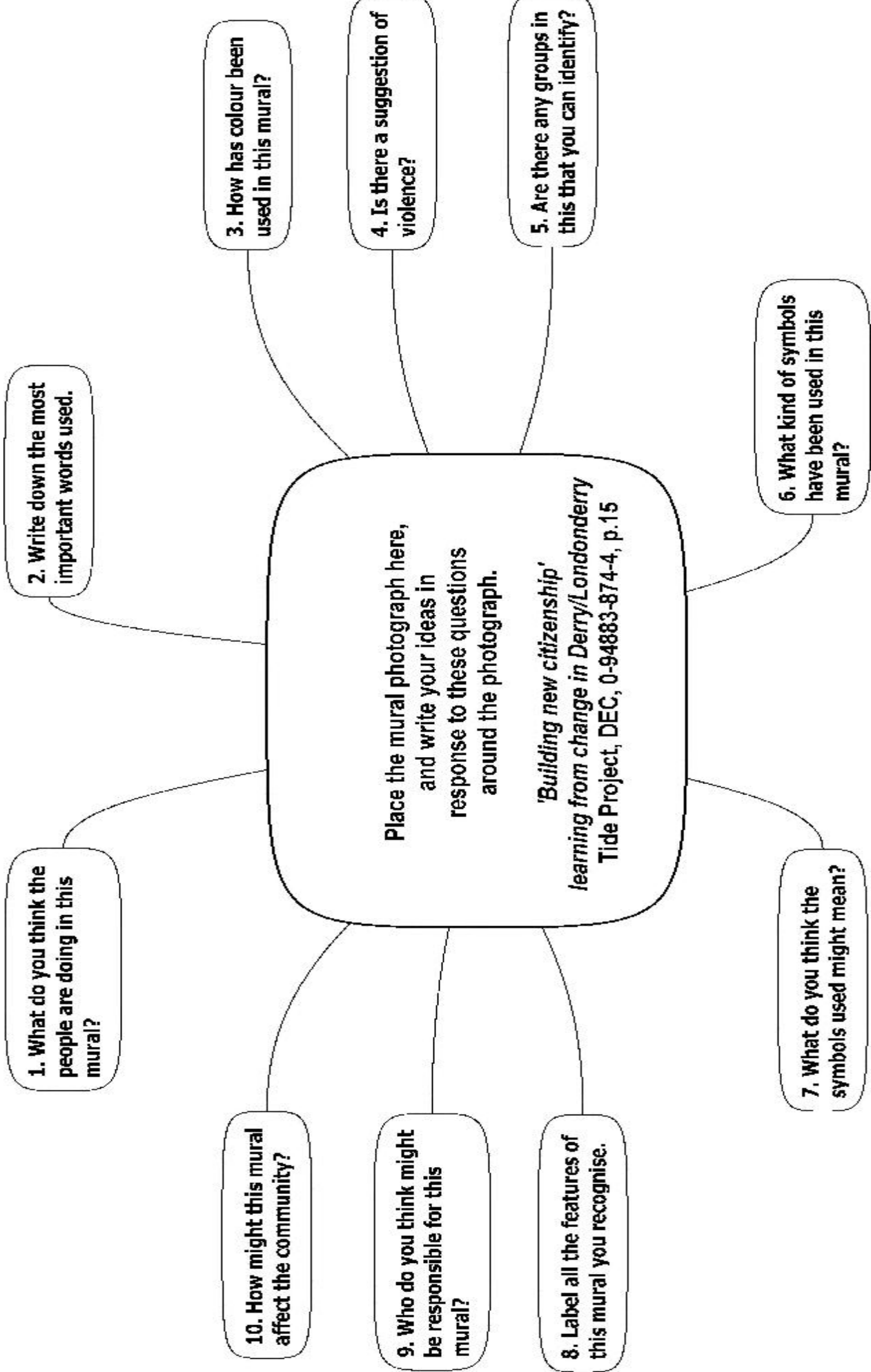
- As an introduction students could be asked to brainstorm the variety of methods which we use to communicate our ideas cc feelings e.g. through music, film, painting, cartoon and language.

Using the set of 10 photographs of murals:

- A variety of sorting activities can be used to introduce students to the images. These could be sorted according to; those pictures that are threatening non- threatening, or loyalist/republican etc. with students comparing and explaining their decisions.
- Students working in groups could next focus on one mural for more detailed investigation [this might be one of their own choosing]. See the notes on the following pages for information relating to each mural.
- Provide each group with a photocopy of the questioning framework on page 15 [this might work best enlarged onto A3 paper].
- Groups deconstruct their mural, writing their ideas [using the questioning framework] around the photograph.
- Each group to report back their findings to the whole class.
- Students could display their findings on a wall chart so that each mural could be viewed by other groups.
- Students could assess or comment upon each others work. They would need to decide upon a criteria for any comments I assessment,
- Finally, students could focus on the five murals that are located in Derry. What issues do these murals highlight as being important for 'building new citizenship' in Derry? Do students feel that such murals contribute to or hinder the building of citizenship?

Teacher Note

The photographs included have been selected because they are divisive and explosive. These murals are not necessarily representative of the views of the majority in any of the communities mentioned, they are however particular views expressed in the context of events as they unfold in Northern Ireland.



Mural photographs

All the photographs shown were taken by the writers except:

17 & 23 Rolston at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/murals> and 26 Martin Melaugh at <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/photographs>



17. 'Time to Go' Mural Belfast, painted in 1994

Many murals displayed the message that it was 'time for peace' and therefore 'time to go' for the British Army. Often the message was conveyed light-heartedly, as in this mural. From 1994 on, militaristic images in republican murals became practically non-existent. In their place were demands for the release of prisoners, the disbandment of the police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary [RUC], and the deportment of British soldiers.

18. Teenage Rioter Derry 2000

The badge with the map of the Republic of Ireland crossed out is voicing a call for unity. The Tricolour of the Republic IRA is flying on the roof of the flats.





19. Ulster's Defence Belfast 2000

Top left: The Ulster Defence Association [UDA]. The crown, inferring the loyalty of Britain. The Red Hand of resistance.

Top Right: The Ulster Workers Strike in 1974 paralysed Northern Ireland and led to the collapse of the Stormont power-sharing government.

Bottom Left: The Ulster Freedom Fighters [UFF] with alleged links to the Ulster Democratic Party.

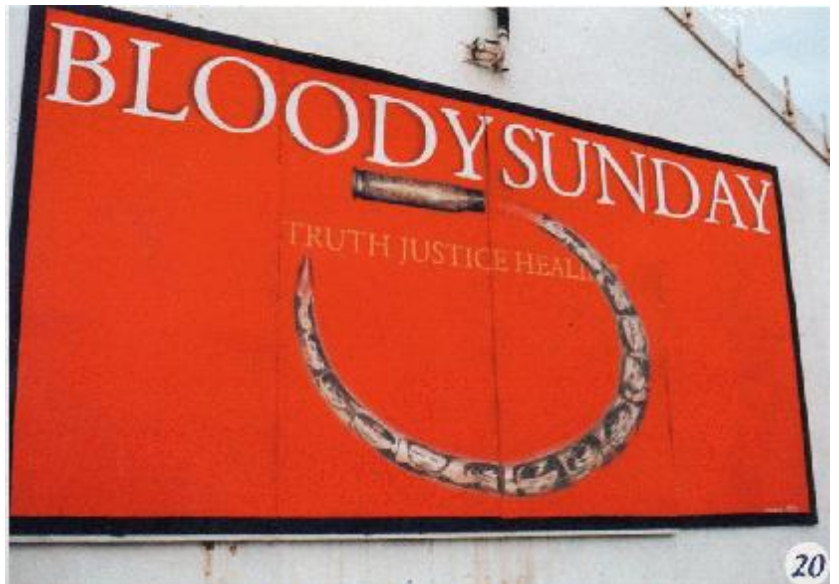
Bottom Right: The Loyalist Prisoners Association [LPA] which is symbolised by the banner featuring a prison and the Red Hand in the barbed wire.

Centre: The parliament building of N. Ireland, Stormont seen as a fortress of Unionism.

20. Bloody Sunday, January 1972

Derry, 2000

Trailing from a bullet are images of the 14 civilians shot dead by the British army. In 2001 an enquiry was set up to reinvestigate the circumstances surrounding these deaths.





21. Civil Rights

Derry, 2000

Foreground Father Daly [Roman Catholic Priest] leading a group carrying an injured marcher during the Bloody Sunday march in January 1972.

22. Nothing has changed

Derry, 2000

Refers back to 1968 when attacks by the RUC on mainly Nationalist Civil Rights marchers took place.





**23. Tom and Jerry
Belfast, 1991**

Cartoon characters from 'Tom and Jerry' as a metaphor for loyalist/republican confrontation. Spike the cartoon dog is in the uniform of a loyalist band. Tom the cartoon cat is in the colours of a supporter of [Scottish] Glasgow Celtic football team, which has many Catholic supporters.

**24. Ulster Volunteer Force
Shankill Rd, Belfast, 2000**

Contains the flags of Scotland and Northern Ireland with two paramilitary figures kneeling armed, seen to be protecting Ulster. The kerb stones are painted in the colours of the Union Jack and the writing on the wall is invoking a link to World War One poetry.





25. Compromise or Conflict? Shankill Rd, Belfast 2000

Posing the question, the UVF is shown in the act of possible attack or defence depending on interpretation.

26. We determine the guilt Derry, 2000

The war-like scene with the Free Derry monument on the right is a likely reference to Bloody Sunday. The inscription above points to the continuing debate about who was responsible and the process of justice, from a Loyalist perspective. The style is derived from heavy metal album covers.

