

Erasmus plus

WORKING ON IRISH HISTORY through the film MICHAEL COLLINS

Plot

The plot is a straight-forward chronological depiction of important events and the story of Michael Collins in this period of Irish history. One special event depicted in the film occurred on November 21, 1920, Collins' squad killed 18 British intelligence agents (known as the "Cairo Gang"). In response, Auxiliaries (soldiers from the British side) drove to Croke Park (Dublin's GAA football and hurling ground) where a match was being played and shot into the crowd. Fourteen unarmed spectators were killed and 65 wounded. This day was called Bloody Sunday (the first Bloody Sunday; our snapshot on page 48 tells you about another Bloody Sunday in Irish history).

After Ireland has gained a restrictive independence from the United Kingdom, there is a split between Irish politicians, with Michael Collins on one side supporting the agreement as the best possible start towards independence, and the De Valera side, which feels the agreement does not go far enough. One thing is left open to discussion near the end of the film.

GROUP WORK

A) *Irish history*

The Irish and the British have been in conflict for centuries. What are the roots of this conflict?

- 16th and 17th century plantations
- Great Irish Famine
- Oliver Cromwell
- 1660s Navigation Acts

B) *1916–1921*

The events in the film cover the period 1916–1921 in Irish history. Search the net to learn more about history and politics at this time in Ireland.

- 6 December 1922
- Irish Free State
- Rebellion of 1916
- Irish War of Independence
- Republic of Ireland Act

C) *Specific historical events and people the film is about*

- The Easter Rising
- Irish Civil War
- Eamon de Valera
- Michael Collins
- Irish Republic
- General Post Office Dublin