



Module 3: Northern Ireland – a diverse society



Unit 3.1: *What are my identities?*

Schedule for the Unit

Learning Outcomes

This module complies with the following specifications of the **Local and Global Citizenship Module** in the **Key Stage 3** subject **Learning for Life and Work**:

Students should have the opportunity to:

- “Research expressions of cultural identity in local and global context;
- Investigate factors that create and influence cultural identity;
- Explore how conflicts of identity arise;
- Demonstrate an awareness of the causes and consequences of prejudice, stereotyping, sectarianism and racism in Northern Ireland and beyond;
- Develop strategies to promote inclusion.”

(Source of specifications: CCEA 2003)

Introduction

This unit focuses on issues of *diversity and inclusion* that schools are expected to cover in the *Local and Global Citizenship* module in the *Learning for Life and Work* curriculum. The number of activities is set out for a possible **two sessions**.

This unit is based on issues relevant to Northern Ireland. The activities have been tested and used before. They are suitable for both students that have discussed issues of the Northern Ireland conflict before and those who are new to this. However, it may be advisable to set up with students ground rules for discussions and debates. Prior to the first units in this module, students could be encouraged to research for material on cultural identity and background information on the Northern Ireland conflict on the following websites:

Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN): www.ark.ac.uk/cain

BBC: www.bbc.co.uk/history/timelines/ni/

BBC eyewitness: www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/eyewitness/



Activity 1: What is my identity?

This activity is designed to show students that people have a multitude of different identities and that some aspects of identity are more important than others in different situations. Awareness should be raised that we are all more than just ‘one thing’. Ask students to complete the specified exercises.

Activity 2: Web research on national and religious identity

This is a web-based activity. Students visit the website of the Young Life and Times (YLT) survey (www.ark.ac.uk/ylt) - an attitude survey of 16-year olds in Northern Ireland. What did participants say about their national and religious identity? Do all Protestants feel British and all Catholics Irish? Is there a Northern Irish identity? The results of the Young Life and Times survey are then being compared with those of the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) survey – the adult equivalent to YLT. Are young people more likely to identify with Northern Ireland? What could be the reasons for this?

Activity 3: Personal Circle

Organise participants into pairs and give them copies of the Personal Circle exercise worksheet (**Worksheet 3**). Young people are asked to indicate on their maps which people, events and organisations have influenced their cultural identity, placing those strongest closest to the middle and those weakest at the edge of the circle. A feedback is given to all other participants establishing factors that have a strong impact on identity.

Activity 4: ‘Walk your mind’

This is an exercise, which involves the whole class and requires moving in the classroom.

For this activity, each end of the room represents polar opposites of a continuum ranging from “agree” to “disagree”. A middle point in this imaginary continuum represents “not sure”. **Ten** statements are being read aloud (**Worksheet 4**) and students are asked to walk to the point in the room, which represents best their feeling about the statement – i.e. whether they agree, disagree, or are not sure about the statements. After each statement encourage students in each group to discuss the reasons why they agree, disagree or are not sure.

NB: If there is not enough room available, the exercise can be easily amended to be completed with paper and pen, in which case students tick the respective box on the list of statements.



Activity 5: Murals

Murals – Should they be scrapped or are they a legitimate expression of identity?

In this activity students first look at two different wall murals from Northern Ireland. They discuss their feelings about these, the historic events behind the murals and to what extent they are a way of expressing identity.

Following this discussion, students have the opportunity to access the results of the Northern Ireland Young Life and Times survey to find out how many 16-year olds feel intimidated by murals.

As a comparison, students learn about the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program. They visit the organisation's website and look at selected murals there. Discuss with the students to what extent the murals in Northern Ireland and in Philadelphia represent expressions of identities in of local communities



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Unit 3.1: *What are my identities?*

Factsheet 1

The role of identity

Identities are important aspects of people's personality. It is individual identities that create unique human beings in social interactions. It is natural to have both, the desire to 'be the same as everyone else' in order to confirm one's belonging to a group (sense of security), and 'to be different from everyone else' in order to stand out of a group as an individual. Identity is constructed based on one's gender, ethnicity, local community background, nationality, religious belief, class belonging, leisure time activities, taste, sport activities, ownership of property and certain consumer goods and much more. People belong to different groups at the same time and have a number of different identities. The importance of certain aspects of identity varies according to the situations in which people interact and socialise with others.

National and religious identity in Northern Ireland

Due to the colonial history that connects Britain and Ireland, national identity (Irish or British, Republican or Loyalist/Unionist) and religious identity Catholic or Protestant, are important aspects of identity for many people in Northern Ireland. Historical events and mythology contribute to the formation of these identities. However, in every day life, these aspects often have little relevance. When asked by the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) survey in 2001, to pick just one aspect from a list of things that described themselves, the three most important criteria of identity were:

- Family structure (28% said they were mother or father or husband or wife);
- Class (22% said they were either working class or middle class); and
- Gender (19% said they were a man or a women).

Respondents' national (10%) and religious identities (9%) were only in fourth and fifth place.

Since 1998, in each year of the annual NILT survey 20-25% of respondents said they were Northern Irish rather than Irish or British/Ulster, which would indicate that there is some room for a common national identity in Northern Ireland.

More background information and discussions on national, religious and cultural identity in Northern Ireland are available at the Conflict Archive on the Internet: www.ark.ac.uk/cain

More information about Northern Ireland's history can be found at: www.bbc.co.uk/history/timelines/ni/



Background information and discussions can be found on the BBC NI Eyewitness site:

www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/eyewitness/

More information about equality legislation in Northern Ireland can be found at:

www.equalityni.org/



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How to?



This sheet provides hands-on guidance on how the information for the *What are my identities?* module can be found:

Activity 1: What is my identity?

This ice-breaking activity requires paper and pens. **Worksheet 1** provides the questionnaire for this activity. The aim of this exercise is to discuss with the students multiple identities.

Activity 2: Web research on national and religious identity

In this activity (**Worksheet 2**) students are requested to find some results of the Young Life and Times Survey, a survey of 16-year olds. Follow the following steps:

1. Open your web browser and type in the URL for the Young Life and Times site at ARK: www.ark.ac.uk/ylt
2. Click on the Results button and then choose *Results for 2004* as your option. A list of modules opens up. From this list choose *Identity*.
3. View the results of the following three question:

[NINATID](#): National identity

[NATIDIMP](#): How important is your national identity to you?

[RELIDIMP](#): How important is your religious identity to you?

4. To compare the results of 16-year olds with those of the adult population, now visit open the website of the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT): www.ark.ac.uk/nilt
5. Click on the *Results* button on the menu bar. Then click on *List of modules* and chose *Community relations* from the list. From the list of topics choose *Identity*.
6. View the results from the 2004 survey of the following question:



NINATID: *Do you think of yourself as British/Irish/Ulster/Northern Irish?* [1998](#)
[1999](#) [2000](#) [2001](#) [2002](#) [2003](#) [2004](#)

NB: If no internet access is available, use **Handout 1** to distribute the relevant result tables.

Activity 3: Personal Circle

For this activity only paper and pen are required. Instructions on how to complete the exercise are given on **Worksheet 3**.

Activity 4: 'Walk your mind'

Apart from the list of ten statements, which are provided on **Worksheet 4**, this activity does not require any material.

Three points in the classroom are identified to represent the three points on the continuum: 'Agree' – 'Not sure' – 'Disagree'. Three signs can be printed off and placed either on the tables or blue-tacked to the wall to label the points.

NB: Prior to the exercise inform students that all statements are 'real' and stem from 16-year olds who took part in the 2003 Northern Ireland Young Life and Times Survey

Read out one statement at a time, ask students to walk to the point in the room which represents their answer and then ask students in each 'camp' to give reasons as to why they agree, disagree or are not sure about the statement. Discuss with students to what extent their decisions depended on their community background and the way they were raised. Would their answers be any different had they grown up elsewhere?

Activity 5: Political Wall Murals

For online completion of this activity, ask the students to visit the CAIN website.

Open your web browser and type in the URL: www.ark.ac.uk/cain. In the menu of the site that opens click on 'Sitemap'. Scroll down the page and look for 'Murals', click on this item. The Mural Directory opens up. Under the headline: Books with Examples of Murals, mouse-click on:

Rolston, Bill. (1998), [A Collection of Contemporary Murals](#) [extracts from a forthcoming book].

A list of murals (Figures 1-15) opens. Students view the following two murals:

Figure 1: [King Billy Mural](#), Kilcooley, Bangor, County Down, 1997

Figure 13: ['Time to Go' Mural](#), Whiterock Road, Belfast, 1994



Students then discuss questions on **Worksheet 5**.

Following this discussion, students find out from the Northern Ireland Young Life and Times survey's website what proportion of 16-year olds said that they felt intimidated by political wall murals.

Type the address of YLT in the web browser: www.ark.ac.uk/ylt
Go to *Results* on the menu. In the window that opens, click on *Results for 2004*. Then choose the *Community relations* module. In the list, view the results tables of the following two questions:

REPMURAL: Have you felt intimidated or threatened by republican murals, kerb painting or flags?

LOYMURAL: Have you felt intimidated or threatened by loyalist murals, kerb painting or flags?

The results tables are also available in **Handout 3**.

Finally, students should also be encouraged to view the Website of Mural Arts Program in Philadelphia (USA), which promotes murals outside Northern Ireland.

Open the web browser and type in the following address: www.muralarts.org.
On the left hand side menu students first click on 'About us' to learn more about the Mural Arts program in Philadelphia. They then view a number of murals by mouse-clicking on the **Mural Gallery**. Encourage student to view a number of murals in each category (e.g. Murals of community, Murals of heroes, Murals of hope).

Three selected murals are also available on **Handout 4**. Students then discuss the questions on **Worksheet 5**.



**Module 3: Northern Ireland – a diverse society****Unit 3.1: What are my identities?****Worksheet 1**Activity 1: What is my identity?

Imagine you talk to different people about yourself, but you can only tell the other person three things. What would you tell them?

Complete the table below and mark the three most important aspects in order (1, 2, 3) for

The person you meet Your characteristics	Someone you would like to go out with	Someone you meet at a cross-community event with your school	The interviewer for a part-time job you apply to	An Australian holiday maker who visits your home town	Someone you meet at a concert
Your gender					
Your hair colour					
Your religious belief					
The name of your hometown					
Your favourite colour					
Your favourite food					
What you like to do most in your spare time					
What sport you play					
Your favourite band					
Your favourite football team					
The name of the school you attend					
Or anything else?					





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Worksheet 2



Activity 2: Web research on national and religious identity.

This is a web-based activity. You are requested to find out how 16-year olds in Northern Ireland feel about their national and religious identities and how they compare to the adult population. You will need to visit two web sites during this activity. (Alternatively your teacher will give you a handout with the tables of results of the relevant surveys.)

1. The Northern Ireland Young Life and Times survey is an annual attitude survey of 16-year olds in Northern Ireland. The results of the survey can be found at www.ark.ac.uk/ylt. Visit this site and look for the results of the 2004 survey. View the tables of results of the following three questions:
 - [NINATID](#): National identity
 - [NATIDIMP](#): How important is your national identity to you?
 - [RELIDIMP](#): How important is your religious identity to you?

Discuss the following questions:

- How important did respondents feel their national and religious identity was to them?
 - How did females and males differ?
 - Was national and religious identity more or less important for Protestants or Catholics? What could be the reasons?
 - Do all Protestants feel British and all Catholics Irish? Is there a Northern Irish identity?
2. Now compare the feelings of 16-year olds on national identity with those of the adult population in Northern Ireland. In order to do this visit the website of the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) survey – the adult equivalent to YLT. NILT has recorded attitudes of people in Northern Ireland since 1998.

Open your browser and type in the address of the NILT website: www.ark.ac.uk/NILT. The results on national identity (**question code: NINATID**) can be found in the *Community Relations module* of the survey. Look at the most recent results from the 2004 survey and answer the following questions:



- How do adults in general compare with 16-year olds in their feelings about national identity?
- Are young people more likely to identify with Northern Ireland? What could be the reasons for this and what could this mean for the conflict in Northern Ireland?

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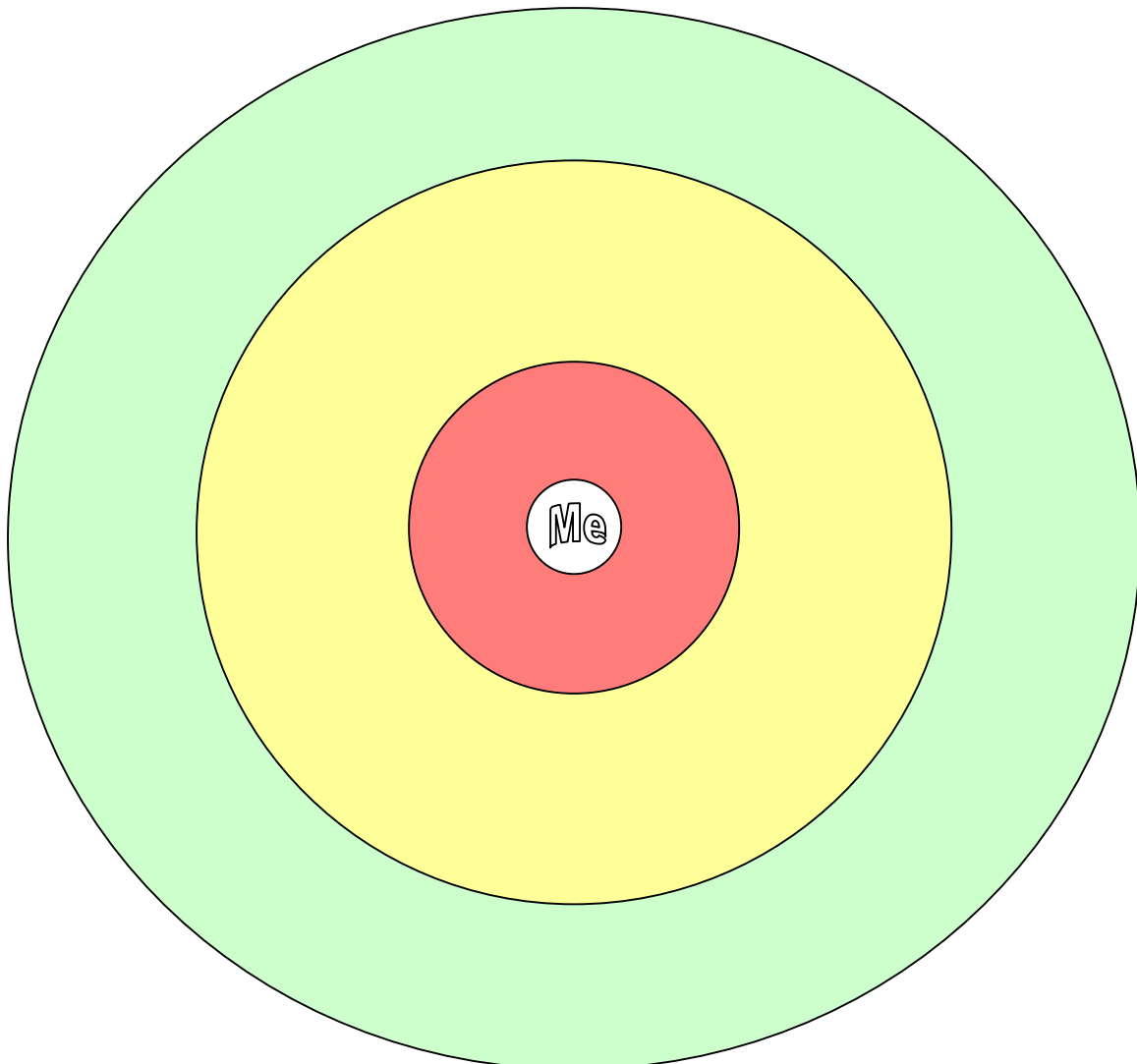
Worksheet 3



Activity 3: Personal Circle

Now, think about your own national, religious and cultural identity. Use the personal circle to illustrate what factors have been strong and what factors have been weaker in shaping your identity.

In pairs, think of people (e.g. parents, friends, certain politicians), organisations (e.g. school, church, political parties, sports clubs) and events (e.g. cease fire, attacks on yourself, your family and friends, participation in an cross-community event, etc.) that have influenced your identity. Allocate each of these events, organisations and people to a coloured circle, the closer you draw them to you in the centre the stronger they have been (i.e. red: strongest influence, yellow: medium, green: weakest influence).







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Worksheet 4

Activity 4: Walk your mind

The statements below are read out. According to whether you agree, are unsure or disagree with each statement, walk to the point in the classroom that was established as representing your answer. Explain your decision in the brief discussion after each statement.

‘Walk your mind’ - Statements

1. **‘Even if the two sides were somehow magically reunited, people would find something else to stir up trouble about.’**
2. **‘The only difference between Catholics and Protestants is their beliefs in God.’**
3. **‘People only learn to be prejudiced and bigoted through their parents.’**
4. **‘Knowing your own identity is very important.’**
5. **‘Community relations and attitudes towards other cultures and beliefs are linked to the level of education.’**
6. **‘Within the countryside there are no barriers or tensions between Catholics and Protestants, that only exists in towns and cities.’**
7. **‘People from all religions live and work together much better in areas which are not decorated with public murals, flags and kerb paintings.’**
8. **‘The Union Jack should be up all year round but the Tricolour should stay in the South.’**
9. **‘In a united Ireland it would be a lot easier for all religions to mix.’**
10. **The differences between religions is only skin deep and the media place too much emphasis on the differences. On the whole there's a lot of contact taking place between different groups and they get on quite well.**

A	U	D

A= Agree, U=Undecided, D=Disagree



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Worksheet 5



Activity 5: Political Wall Murals

Should murals be scrapped or are they a legitimate expression of identity?

Political wall murals are one of the most unique features of the urban countryside in Northern Ireland. After the ceasefires in 1994, they have become more of a tourist attraction with bus or taxi tours now available to visit famous murals in Belfast or Derry/Londonderry. But how do they affect the people who live in Northern Ireland?

In this exercise you look at two examples of these wall murals from Northern Ireland and then compare them with wall murals from outside Northern Ireland.

1. Open your web browser and visit the following website: www.ark.ac.uk/cain. Open up the *sitemap* from the menu and look for *Murals* in the diagram. Open the page by clicking on [Murals](#) site. Go to: **Bill Rolston (1998): A Collection of Contemporary Murals**. View the murals Nr. 1 and 13. Read the information about the murals and then answer the following questions:
 - What historic events do the murals depict?
 - To what extent have these historic events impacted on the identity of people in Northern Ireland?
 - Are some people in Northern Ireland likely to be offended by these murals and why?
 - Are these murals likely to be offensive to anyone from outside Northern Ireland?
2. Now look at the results of a survey that was conducted among 16-year olds in Northern Ireland. In the 2004 Young Life and Times survey, respondents were asked if they felt intimidated by Republican and Loyalist wall murals. To view the results, visit the following website: www.ark.ac.uk/ylt. Go to the *Results* page and open the results of the 2004 survey. In the *Index of results* open the *Community Relations* module and look for the two questions related to murals. View the results.
 - Who was most likely to have felt intimidated?
 - Have you ever felt intimidated yourself by political wall murals? How do they make you feel?
 - Is there a link between the level of intimidation and the message that wall murals depict?



3. In small groups, collect arguments for both following points of view:

A: Political wall murals are an important part of Northern Ireland history and should be protected and maintained.

B: Political wall murals intimidate people who do not live in the areas where they are displayed or don't associate with this culture. They should all be wiped.

4. Finally view a website that promotes wall murals outside Northern Ireland. Philadelphia in the United States of America proudly presents itself as 'Mural City'. Over 2,300 murals exist in Philadelphia. Some can be seen on the website of the Mural Arts program.

Open the following website: www.muralarts.org/. Read the *About us* section. Afterwards, in the menu bar on the left hand side, open the *Mural gallery*. View a selection of murals (e.g. Murals of hope, Murals of the community, Murals of heroes) and discuss the following questions:

- How do these murals differ from political wall murals in Northern Ireland?
- To what extent depict these murals the identity of local communities in Philadelphia?
- To whom may these murals appear threatening?

**ARK School Resource****Unit 3.1. Northern Ireland – a diverse society****Handout 1****Young Life and Times Survey 2004****Which of these describe best the way you think of yourself?**

	%
British	22
Irish	40
Ulster	7
Northern Irish	24
Other (please specify)	4
Don't know	1
Not answered	2

Results for young people of different religions:

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
British	2	43	29
Irish	77	2	25
Ulster	0	17	6
Northern Irish	16	31	31
Other	3	3	6
Don't know	0	1	3
Not answered	1	3	1



Young Life and Times Survey 2004

How important is your national identity to you?

	%
Very important	33
Quite important	31
Neither important nor unimportant	17
Not very important	9
Not at all important	10
Don't know	1
Not answered	1

Results for young men and women:

	%	
	Male	Female
Very important	40	28
Quite important	27	34
Neither important nor unimportant	16	18
Not very important	8	9
Not at all important	9	11
Don't know	1	0
Not answered	0	1

Results for young people of different religions:

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
Very important	44	29	11
Quite important	32	34	21
Neither important nor unimportant	13	18	21
Not very important	6	10	14
Not at all important	5	8	32
Don't know	0	0	2
Not answered	0	1	0

**Young Life and Times Survey 2004****How important is your religious identity to you?**

	%
Very important	24
Quite important	30
Neither important nor unimportant	18
Not very important	14
Not at all important	10
I don't have a religious identity	5
Not answered	1

Results for young men and women:

	%	
	Male	Female
Very important	29	21
Quite important	26	32
Neither important nor unimportant	17	18
Not very important	13	14
Not at all important	8	11
I don't have a religious identity	6	4
Not answered	2	0



Results for young people of different religions:

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
Very important	28	28	3
Quite important	36	31	8
Neither important nor unimportant	19	16	18
Not very important	11	15	18
Not at all important	5	10	25
I don't have a religious identity	1	1	26
Not answered	1	0	2



Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (1998-2004)

Which of these best describes the way you think of yourself?

Results for 2004 survey:

	%
British	47
Irish	27
Ulster	3
Northern Irish	21
Other (specify)	3
(Don't know)	0

Results for men and women

	%	
	Male	Female
British	47	48
Irish	28	25
Ulster	3	3
Northern Irish	18	22
Other (specify)	4	2
(Don't know)	0	0



Results for people of different ages

	%					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
British	34	43	42	47	56	58
Irish	33	23	28	26	25	23
Ulster	3	4	1	4	2	5
Northern Irish	27	27	25	19	16	12
Other (specify)	3	3	3	3	1	2
(Don't know)	0	0	0	1	0	1

Results for people of different religions

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
British	12	74	44
Irish	61	3	20
Ulster	0	5	3
Northern Irish	25	17	24
Other (specify)	2	2	9
(Don't know)	0	0	1

ARK School Resource**Unit 3.1. What are my identities****Handout 2**

Location and Date of Mural : Whiterock Road, Belfast, 1994

Background

With the ceasefire in August 1994, many murals in Catholic/Republican areas 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 one mural painted on the Whiterock Road, West Belfast, in the early summer of 1994.

Web link: <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/bibdb/murals/slide13.htm#13>

© **Photographer:** Bill Rolston (Professor of Sociology, University of Ulster)



Location and Date of Mural: Kilcooley, Bangor, County Down, 1997

Background

The first loyalist mural was painted on the Beersbridge Road in Belfast in 1908. For most of the rest of the twentieth century loyalist murals were painted each July as part of the annual ritual celebrations of the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, when King William III ('King Billy') defeated King James I in a struggle over the English crown. Consequently, the main image in the murals was of King Billy on his white horse crossing the River Boyne. By the 1970s and 1980s this image became much less frequent.

Web link: <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/bibdb/murals/slide1.htm#1>

© **Photographer: Bill Rolston (Professor of Sociology, University of Ulster)**



**ARK School Resource****Unit 3.1. What are my identities****Handout 3****Questions asked in Young Life and Times Survey 2004**

Has there been any time in the last year when you felt intimidated or threatened by REPUBLICAN murals, kerb painting or flags?

	%
Yes	26
No	73
Not answered	1

Results for young men and women:

	%	
	Male	Female
Yes	28	24
No	72	75
Not answered	1	1

Results for young people of different religions:

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
Yes	15	36	29
No	84	63	71
Not answered	1	1	0



Has there been any time in the last year when you felt intimidated or threatened by LOYALIST murals, kerb painting or flags?

	%
Yes	35
No	65
Not answered	1

Results for young men and women:

	%	
	Male	Female
Yes	31	37
No	68	63
Not answered	0	0

Results for young people of different religions:

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
Yes	55	14	26
No	45	86	74
Not answered	0	0	

ARK School Resource

Unit 3.1. Northern Ireland – a diverse society?

Handout 4



Mural Arts Program Philadelphia, (USA)

About the Program

Since its inception in 1984, the Mural Arts Program has completed more murals than any other public art program in the nation - more than 2,300 indoor and outdoor murals throughout Philadelphia. This effort has brought art to the cityscape, turning graffiti-scarred walls into scenic views, portraits of community heroes, and abstract creations.

The benefits of public art are far reaching. Touching both residents and visitors alike, murals help beautify the City. In addition, murals help create a sense of community, as artists and community members develop relationships to turn their artistic visions into reality.

The Mural Arts Program also works to involve the City's residents in the creative process, offering art education programs at recreation centre, homeless shelters, and other sites throughout Philadelphia.



Welcome to Mummerland

Front and Washington, 1999. Artist: Robert Bullock



Tribute to Jackie Robinson

2804 N. Broad Street, 1997. Artist: David McShane. Sponsors: Philadelphia Coca-Cola Bottling Company and the Philadelphia Phillies.



Children of Philadelphia

16th and Fitzwater Streets, 2000. Artist: Burt Dodge. Sponsor: SmithKline Beecham and Independence Foundation