Lesson 3: The Origins of a Settlement

This lesson explores some of the factors which influence the location and growth of settlements.

Support material: Worksheets B3 and B4, Information Sheet 17 "Maynooth". It will be helpful if students are given additional copies of Maynooth maps 1 - 5 enlarged to A3. Provide one or two class copies of OS Discovery Series, No. 50.

Spotlight
The origins and development of Maynooth

Key Concepts
Selecting a site for settlement

Review of work
Discuss the results of the study which students did of their routes to school.
• How many different routes are there to this school?
• Which place names or street names did you record?
• Where do you think these names originated?
• What open spaces, parks and/or squares did you find on your route?
• Did you observe any order or plan in the way in which the buildings are laid out?
• Which buildings attracted your attention most? Why?

Activity 1 — The Settlement Game
1. Divide the class into groups. Distribute Worksheet B3.
2. Choose one of the following scenarios and present it to the class.
3. Discuss the worksheet with the class. Then tell them to discuss the situation and solve the problem with their groups. When they have made a decision, the group places an X on the site where it would build its settlement.

The background. . .
The year is 3000 AD. Because of global warming and the damage to the ozone layer, climatic changes have brought about a dramatic rise in the level of the world's seas and oceans. Much of the planet is now flooded.

Scenario 1
You, your group and your families have escaped the planet on board a huge starship. Like Noah's Ark, the starship is equipped with many of the things you will need to start a new life — tools, seeds, plants, domestic animals. After travelling around the galaxy, you land on a small planet and discover an island. . ..

Scenario 2

You, your group and your families have survived the flooding and have escaped an overcrowded land mass. You have equipped a sailing ship with many of the things you will need for a new life — tools, seeds, plants and domestic animals. Sailing across a wide ocean, you are looking for a place to make a fresh start. Suddenly, you discover an island. . ..

Review of work

• What site was chosen by each group? Did each group choose the same place? Ask a representative from each group to explain their choice.

• What factors/geographical features might have influenced early settlers to choose your locality?

Activity 2 — Maynooth: Case Study 1

Distribute copies of the following.

Worksheet B4

Information Sheet 17 "Maynooth"

Maynooth maps (1 to 5) — enlarged to A3

    Map 1 — Maynooth and its Surroundings, 1860

    Map 2 — Maynooth, 1757, John Rocque

    Map 3 — Maynooth, 1821

    Map 4 — Maynooth + Carton House, 1939

    Map 5 — Maynooth, 1977

For class consultation, one or two copies of OS Discovery Series, No. 50: Dublin City and District, 1995, should be available. This covers parts of counties Dublin, Kildare, Meath and Wicklow at the scale 1:50,000.

Discuss the maps in association with the text of Information Sheet 17. As students complete Worksheet B4, encourage them to draw on what they learned about their own community in previous lessons.

Homework

1. Students complete Worksheet B4, if they have not already done so.

2. Ask students to find Maynooth on a road map, then make a map which shows its position in relation to surrounding communities, towns and cities.

3. Students refer to their worksheet and update **Scrapbook** and **Vocabulary Files.**

Cross-Curricular Connections

1. Geography — Choose a place in Ireland with which you are familiar. It may be where you go on holidays, where relatives live. Find out how that place grew as a settlement. What attracted people to the area?
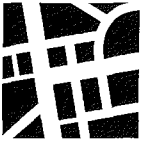
2. Geography — Find out about the local climate of your own area (temperature, wind, growing season, frost, rainfall, sunshine). Is there anything exceptional about the local climate that might have affected the way in which the buildings are built or the town is laid out? Atlases, Met Éireann and the local Agricultural Inspector are good sources of information.

3. Geography/Social Studies — In some towns, there is very little open space. The streets are narrow and the buildings tall, so that a lot of people and activities are fitted into a small area. What are the advantages? The disadvantages? (Business, meeting people, traffic, things to do, jobs, pollution . . .) Make a study of densely built-up areas, using examples in Irish towns or cities with which you are familiar, or cities in other countries that you know from film, TV, magazines, books or travel.

4. Biology/Environmental Studies — Investigate the local and global consequences of planting trees in cities and towns. Consider noise, pollution, water and ground conditions, health and aesthetics. Report on your findings.

5. Geography/Design — Compare Dublin city with another European city - Paris, Berlin or Amsterdam, for example. Which city is more compact? How do the cities compare in population size, shape, history? Do people live in different kinds of houses than they do in Dublin? What is the next biggest city in the country?

6. Geography/Design — Select a town of your choice and try to identify parts of the town which developed at different periods. For example, draw a map of the town in 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990. Discuss good and bad points in the changes. Describe the edge of the town. How do you think it will change in the next ten years?