

SOURCES TASK SHEET

Document 1 – Dirty Dublin

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Name Class

Click on the Sources tab. Find the document about Dirty Dublin.
Read the information and complete the tasks below.

DOCUMENT QUESTIONS

1. What evidence is there that the streets of Dublin were filthy?

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2. What caused the filth?

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3. Who was appointed to remove pigs, beggars and homeless people from the streets?

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4. Who was too fearful to come to the city?

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5. There is a clue in the document that suggests how the city may have smelled. Describe the smell.

.....

CLASS DISCUSSION – Evidence

Discuss as a class for 5 minutes how this source may be used to find out more about medieval Dubliners. Use the discussion points below.

- Why do you think people were afraid of fever and pestilence (sickness)?
- The king ordered beggars and the homeless to leave the city. Do you think this was fair?
- Do you think the mayors and bailiffs of the city were happy to throw out the beggars and homeless people?
- Was medieval Dublin a tolerant society?

DRAMA & DEBATE TASK

1. Drama

Re-enact the scene described in the document. One character reads out the script in front of the suggested characters below. Improvise the script for other characters using the acting directions.

CAST

Beggar – one student

Homeless person – one student

Lord – one student

A Mayor – one student to read the script below

Dublin citizens – classroom of students

MAYOR'S SCRIPT

'It is hereby ordered, by the King that the citizens of Dublin improve conditions and clean up the streets of the city. It has been noted, swine and pigs run rampant through the streets. Dung and pestilence follow. Filth and dirt cause sickness and ill-health. Good Lords and Ladies no longer come to the city. This order, therefore, demands all swine, beggars and mendicants (homeless people) leave the city and stay beyond the city walls. By order of the King.'

ACTING DIRECTION

Citizens

Consider how the citizens might respond? Are they sick of the smelly streets? Do some of the pigs belong to them?

Mayor

Is the bailiff worried how the citizens will react? Is the Mayor compassionate? Does he/she really want to expel the beggars? Is he/she afraid of getting sick and dying? Is he/she afraid of the king and must obey his orders?

Beggar

The beggar may be old and unable to work. How does he/she react to the news?

Homeless person

Their house went on fire and they have nowhere to live. Outside the city walls is danger. How would this person feel?

2. Debate

After the re-enactment have a short debate by dividing into two groups. One half of the students should support the king's order, the others should be against.

REFLECTION FOR DEBATE

Today we have people to take away our rubbish. Pigs are fenced in on farms. We have medicine to cure illnesses. However there is still begging on our streets and homeless people. Do we treat people better or worse than they did in medieval times?