

# ESS



Environmental and Social Studies (ESS) is one of the subjects that can help you find out about the world you live in. You will learn about things that happened in the past and how they affect your life today. You will find out how the area you live in has changed and what you can do to protect the environment in which you live.

### What will I learn in ESS?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- about the history and geography of your area, including local resources and modern settlements
- about people and their environment
- about how people deal with change and conflict in the modern world
- how to read maps and how to find out things by looking at photographs.

### How can I learn more about ESS outside of school?

Some of things you may do include:

- speak to older people in your community to find out about your local area
- look at buildings and how the land is used in your area
- watch films to do with events in history
- read books about times gone by
- examine old pieces of furniture, clothing and other items
- use and read maps
- keep up-to-date with the news.



### How will I learn ESS in school?

Some of the things you may do with your teacher and your classmates are:

- work on your own, in pairs and in groups
- learn about topics by doing projects and activities
- use the internet to research and learn about various topics
- get information from your family, friends and from other students in the class.

Some other things that will help you learn in class are:

- asking questions
- taking your own notes
- keeping a file for your notes and handouts.



## How will I know how I am getting on?

Your teacher will let you know:

- what you have done well
- how you can improve your work.

Other things you may do are:

- ask a friend to look at your work
- look back over the projects which you and your classmates do at the end of each section, to see how you have improved.



## Will ESS have anything to do with other subjects I will be studying?

Many times in ESS you will be using what you have learned in other subjects such as English, Maths, Irish and Science to help out with ESS, especially when you are doing project work. You may ask the teachers of these subjects for guidance in your ESS project also.

## What is the ESS Junior Certificate exam like?

In Junior Certificate ESS you will be examined in two ways:

- you will do two projects: an individual historical research project and a geographical field study which you will do with the whole class. The marks from both of these projects go towards your final grade
- there will also be a written exam with questions about graphs, maps, old photographs, cartoons, stories from the past and other documents.

You can take the exam at Higher or at Ordinary level. When the time comes to decide, your teacher will help you choose the level that suits you best.



## Is learning ESS anything like what I did in primary school?

You have already explored the history and geography of your local area in SESE. You may be used to doing projects and have learned the importance of good presentation. You have also learned how to get information from lots of different places and how some things that you have learned apply to more than one subject. All of this knowledge and these skills will be really useful to you when you study ESS.



## How will ESS be useful to me?

You learn more about your locality and the world in which you live. You will learn how to work on your own as well as how you can work with other people. You will learn about the importance of presenting your work well in ESS and this will be of help to you in doing other projects in school and later at third level.

## Will ESS be very different after Junior Certificate?

ESS does not progress directly into a Leaving Certificate subject after the Junior Certificate. You may choose, however, to study Leaving Certificate History or Geography, as there are some topics which are similar to ESS.



For more information about the ESS course

[www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie)

For more information about the Junior Certificate exam

[www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie)

For more information about topics covered in ESS

[www.earth.google.com](http://www.earth.google.com)

[www.bbc.co.uk/history](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history)

This fact sheet and other fact sheets are available to download from [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie)

**NCCA**  National Council for Curriculum and Assessment  
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