One Cavan, One Writer
Siobhan Dowd
2011-2012

Resource Pack for Second Level Schools and Adult Groups
One Cavan, One Writer Steering Committee

Who are we?
One Cavan, One Writer Steering Committee is an umbrella body established in Autumn 2010. It is made up of representatives of a range of Public Agencies in County Cavan including Primary and Post Primary Schools across the County; Home School Liaison and School Completion Programme; Cavan County Library Service; Breffni Integrated; Rapid; Cavan Co. Council's Community & Enterprise Section and County Cavan V.E.C.

Our Aim
To bring people together for a community wide reading experience which will get our community talking, foster community spirit, promote tolerance and understanding and develop appreciation for reading as the gateway that makes all other learning possible.

This Resource Pack is available in electronic format on
www.cavanlibrary.ie
www.siobhandowdtrust.com

The Siobhan Dowd Trust
The Siobhan Dowd Trust was set up in 2007 to support disadvantaged young readers. The Trust exists to fund any persons or organisations that:
• take stories to our children and young people without stories;
• bring the joy of reading and books to children and young people deprived of access to books and of the opportunity to read;
• fund and support disadvantaged young readers where there is no funding or support.

Siobhan Dowd founded the Trust shortly before her death, bequeathing the royalties from her four books in support of its aims. These aims reflect Siobhan’s belief in the freedom of the individual and the vital role books and reading play in enabling that freedom. This Resource Pack has been funded through the Trust. For further information, see: www.siobhandowdtrust.com

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Introduction
Siobhan Dowd’s critically acclaimed novels

**Bog Child**
Finished three months before her death from cancer, “Bog Child” won the Carnegie medal, the most prestigious prize in children’s literature. It is a truly outstanding novel that can be enjoyed by adults as well as young adults, 13 and over. It has a particular resonance for readers living in the Border region and conveys both an extraordinary sense of place and a vivid picture of adolescence in early 1980s Ireland. It deals sensitively but also realistically with a pivotal period in recent Irish history. The power of this story to inform as well as to entertain makes it is no surprise that it was shortlisted for the Irish Book of the Decade 2010.

**Solace of the Road**
Published in January 2009, “Solace of the Road” was shortlisted for both the Guardian’s Children’s Fiction Prize and Costa Book Award in 2009. It won the Children’s Books Ireland Bisto honour Award in 2010. Solace of the Road has a lot to offer readers. Its picture of social workers is broadly sympathetic, and Holly’s acid tongue provides moments of grim humour. The compassionate, perceptive and realistic portrayal of a damaged child in real danger from both herself and her environment is unexpectedly life affirming.

**A Swift Pure Cry**
Set in a remote corner of Co Cork in 1984, this superb novel was inspired by two real-life Irish tragedies, the Ann Lovett story and the Kerry Babies case. Siobhan’s novel melds both stories into one, starting off with the memorably down-beat sentence, “The place brought to mind a sinking ship.” The main character struggles to survive in a world of poverty, alcoholism, teenage pregnancy and moral hypocrisy. Heart-breaking, but never dismal, her story is beautifully written and keenly observed. A Swift Pure Cry, Dowd’s first novel, was published in 2006 and is suitable for readers 15 years to adults, but can also be enjoyed by 12 to 14 year olds, subject to parental guidance. It met with immediate critical acclaim; was short-listed for a number of awards and was awarded the Eilis Dillon and Branford Boase Awards.

**The London Eye Mystery**
A story for 9 to 12-year-olds, planned as the first in a series, this is a novel that works on a number of levels and is a compulsively readable, spine-tingling thriller with subtle characterization. It provides rich veins for exploration by reading groups and also by teachers in the classroom setting. It can be appreciated not least for Siobhan’s exploration of disability as a gift. “London Eye” won the NASEN/ TES Special Educational Needs Children’s Book Award, was longlisted for the 2008 Carnegie Medal, and shortlisted for a range of other awards. In May 2008, it was posthumously awarded the Bisto Book of the Year prize.
About the writer: Siobhan Dowd 1960 - 2007

Siobhan was born in London and was the youngest of the four daughters of an Irish nurse and her doctor husband, who was one of the last men to be evacuated from Dunkirk during World War II. Her Irishness deepened as she grew up, over long holidays spent with her extended family in both Waterford and Wicklow. She studied classics in Oxford and received an MA in Gender and Ethnic Studies. For her MA she focused on the Roma community, which is not surprising given her great empathy with the marginalised.

In 1984, she joined the writer’s organisation International PEN, initially as a researcher and later as Program Director of the Freedom-to-Write Committee. Her work there included leading the Rushdie Defense Committee (USA) and travelling to Indonesia and Guatemala to investigate local human rights conditions for writers. During her seven-years in New York, Dowd was named one of the “top 100 Irish-Americans” for her global anti-censorship work.

On her return to the UK, Dowd co-founded English PEN’s readers and writers programme. The programme takes authors into schools in socially deprived areas, as well as prisons, young offenders’ institutions and community projects. During 2004, Dowd served as Deputy Commissioner for Children’s Rights in Oxfordshire, working with local government.

Writing was an integral part of her life from her early childhood. As an activist and campaigner, she was a prolific writer of reports and articles and was an experienced editor. Like many Irish writers, she found a creative outlet in short story writing. An invitation in 2003 to write a story about an Irish traveller for a collection of short stories about racism, propelled her into a full-time writing career for children and teens.
In 2004, Siobhan was diagnosed with advanced breast cancer, just as her writing career was taking off. Her first novel to appear in print, “A Swift Pure Cry” (2006) met with immediate critical acclaim. Her second novel “The London Eye Mystery” published in 2007 also became a multi-award winner. At this point, Waterstone’s identified Siobhan as one of the top “25 authors of the future.” She died in August 2007, aged 47. At the time of her death, she had completed two further novels, which were posthumously published to outstanding reviews.

Typically, while dying of breast cancer, Siobhan thought about the marginalised and vulnerable. She set up the Siobhan Dowd Trust to ensure that the proceeds from her literary work are used to assist disadvantaged children with their reading skills.

We are proud that, for our first ever “One Cavan, One Writer” project the chosen writer is Siobhan Dowd, a writer who should be read by everybody.
Introduction

About this Resource Pack for Second Level Schools and Adult Groups

We want young adults and adults alike to enjoy Siobhan Dowd’s wonderful novels.

This resource package can be used by teachers at Second Level and by adult reading groups, to lead to a deeper exploration of all four novels. It has been designed to enhance the reading experience and enrich the learning experience of adults and young adults alike.

Eight themes have been identified from Siobhan’s work and have shaped this Resource Pack:

A Troubled Place: The history and legacy of the conflict in the border region.

Irish Writers: Shaped by migration: Migration and Irish writing.

Reeling in the years: Historical context: Ireland in the 1980s.

Hearing the voice of others / Being different: Exploring issues facing people with disabilities, travellers, ex prisoners and people from other nationalities.

Coming of age: teenage pregnancy; children in care; personal responsibility for teens.

Exploring the Landscape of Siobhan Dowd’s fictional world:

Language and meaning: Understanding each other. How language is used differently by different generations. Interpreting language and the difficulties it causes.


A Resource Pack for “The London Eye Mystery” for Primary Schools has also been prepared by Cavan teachers and funded by The Siobhan Dowd Trust.
Section 1

Bog Child

Betray your brother, or sacrifice yourself?

Bog Child

Siobhan Dowd

Winner of the CLIP Carnegie Medal
Section 1
Bog Child

Theme 1 - A Troubled Place: The History and Legacy of Conflict

A: Suggested Explorations

• What is conflict?

• The history of conflict.

• How does it affect generations?

• How people are sucked into conflict.

• Growing up in the midst of conflict.

• Internal and external conflict.

• Are there positive as well as negative aspects to conflict?

• The necessity for conflict in creative works.

• Conflict resolution.

• The use of Hunger Strikes in other conflicts and at other times.

• Looking at conflict from different viewpoints: Northern Ireland / Palestinian Arab and Israeli.

• The importance of the written word in the Northern Ireland conflict.
B: Recommended Reading and Film

Young Adult Fiction

Gébler, Carlo

Gibbons, Alan
**The Defender** (2004). Thriller set against the background of Northern Ireland’s legacy of violence.

Lingard, Joan

MacLachlan, Kate

MacLaverty, Bernard
**Cal** (1983). Springing out of the fear and violence of Ulster, this is a love story in a land where tenderness and innocence can only flicker briefly in the dark.

Sefton, Catherine
**Starry Night** (1986) Part of an award winning series for teenagers demonstrating how violence and misery goes hand in hand with prejudice and bigotry.

Young Adults write about Conflict

Boudalika, Litsa
**If You Could Be My Friend: Letters of Mervet Akram Sha’Ban and Galit Fink.** (1998) The letters of a Palestinian and an Israeli teen living through the first intifada: Details how positive action by young adults towards inter cultural understanding can bring about change.
Section 1
Bog Child

Carmi, Daniella
**Samir and Yonatan** (2000) A Palestinian boy comes to terms with the death of his younger brother, killed by an Israeli soldier. Sure to spark classroom discussions.

Filipovic, Zlata
**Zlata's Diary** (1994). Zlata’s personal account of life in war-torn Sarajevo.

Frank, Anne
**Diary of Anne Frank** (1954). Brings to life the story of a young girl who, for a time survived the horrors of the concentration camps.

Gruwell, Erin
**The Freedom Writers Diary: How a teacher and 150 Teens used writing to change themselves and the world around them** (1999).

Marston, Elsa
**Figs and Fate** (2005) Five short stories about growing up in the Arab world today. Told from the perspective of teens living in Syria, Lebanon, a Palestinian refugee camp, Egypt and Iraq.

Wiesel, Elie
**Night** (1955) A 100 page memoir of the author’s experience as a teen with his father in the Nazi Concentration Camps.

Factual Material

Cavan Community Forum
**Stories of Love and Conflict** (2011).

Cleary, Anne

Conlon, Evelyn

Edwards, Aaron
Juergensmeyer, M  

Kristof, Nicholas  

Murphy, Dervla  
*A Place Apart* (1978) Researched in 1976 in Dervla’s inimitable style, it is a must read for anyone seeking a real understanding of what brought The Troubles about.

Smyth, Marie  

Wilson, Robin  

**Adult Fiction**

Kennedy-Andrews, E  
*Fiction and the Northern Ireland Troubles since 1969* (2003) Biographical notes, a chronology of events, and a critical analysis, Explores fiction from or about Northern Ireland from the outbreak of the Troubles onwards.

Costello, Mary  
*Titanic Town* (1992). Based loosely on a true story, this novel is set in 1970s Belfast and follows a group of young women and their attempts to start a peace movement.

Deane, Seamus  
*Reading in the Dark* (1996). Describes growing up in Northern Ireland.

Healy, Dermot  
*A Goat’s Song* (1994). A love affair, set in Donegal, between a Catholic and a Protestant. Bitter family jealousies and differences add to the difficulties of the relationship.
Section 1

Bog Child

McCabe, Eugene


McGahern, John

*Amongst Women* (1990). Moran, an old Republican, whose old age is dominated by his three daughters. It is through their lives that we gradually discover the story of Moran’s life.

McNamee, Eoin


Moore, Brian

*Lies of Silence* (1990). When the IRA orders Dillon to park his car at a Belfast hotel, he knows he’s planting a bomb that will kill and maim dozens. He also knows his wife will be killed if he disobeys.

Neville, Stuart


**Plays**

Dowd, Siobhan

*Bog Child: (Oxford Modern Playscripts)* adapted by Adrian Flynn.

Keane, John B.


McDonagh, Martin

*The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (1996). First of a trilogy, a story of a daughter who faces her last chance of love and her mother’s opposition to the relationship.

Monahan, Noel

*Where Borders Begin.*

Shakespeare, W.

*The Merchant of Venice* A tragic comedy written between 1596 and 1598

*Romeo and Juliet.*
Section 1
Bog Child

Film

Murphy, Vinny
**Accelerator** (1999) A joyrider driven out of Belfast by the paramilitaries ends up with six couples and six stolen cars blazing a trail that will change their young lives forever.

Sheridan, Jim
**The Boxer** (1997) A former IRA prisoner takes up boxing and opens a gym for young people.

**In the Name of the Father** (1993).

Levinson, Barry

Hirschbiegel, O

Loach, Ken

Loane, Terry
**Mickybo and Me** (2004) Set in 1970 Belfast, this comedy, based on Owen McCafferty’s play tells the story of two boys whose friendship breaks down barriers.

O’Sullivan, Thaddeus
**Nothing Personal** (1995) Set during 1975 the story unfolds over a 24 hour period during a tense truce between Protestant and catholic militias in Belfast.

Evans, Marc
Section 1
Bog Child

Theme 2 - Irish at Heart: Emigration and Irish Writing

A: Suggested Explorations

• What is migration?

• What forces lead to migration?

• Irish emigrant writers: Find out who emigrated and when.

• Where did our artistic exiles migrate to? Map the locations to which our great Irish writers emigrated.

• How was the emigrant experience reflected in their writing? Pick from our Recommended Reading list.

• Explore the deep roots of exile in Irish culture: From St. Colmcille and the Gaelic Language tradition to the present day.

• Find out why certain modern Irish writers left Ireland: Examples to choose from include: James Joyce; James Stephens; Edna O’Brien; Joseph O’Connor; Brian Moore; Liam O’Flaherty; Bernard MacLaverty; G.B. Shaw; Samuel Beckett; Colum MacCann; Emma Donoghue.

• The returning exile: Did any Irish emigrant writers return? Who returned, why and when?

• Explore the music and songs of Irish emigration: From Thomas Moore and Percy French to Van Morrison and The Pogues.

• Explore the life and work of Cootehill’s Mary Anne Sadlier, one of the leading and most influential 19th century Irish writers and publishers for Irish immigrants in Canada and the United States.

• Cavan’s diaspora: Find out about famous Cavan emigrants: Mary Anne Sadlier (writer); The James family from Bailieborough (writers); Marcus Daly (the Copper King); General Phil Sheridan and Thomas Fitzpatrick (Broken Hand).

• Hear the voices of ordinary emigrants to learn about their personal experience of migration, using the recommended reading list.
• Explore the impact of the Irish Censorship of Publications Act on Irish writers.

• The case of the internal exile in literature, condemned to exclusion and marginalisation.

• Did gender affect the Irish emigrant writer’s experience?

• Explore the impact of immigration on Irish culture.
Section 1
Bog Child

B: Recommended Reading and Film

Young Adult Fiction

Feeney, Josephine
My Family and Other Natural Disasters (1994) Set in Dagenham and the West of Ireland, featuring an Anglo-Irish Catholic family in crisis.

Macken, Walter

Margorian, Michelle

Morpurgo, Michael

Zephaniah, Benjamin

Adult Fiction, Short Stories and Anthologies

Barry, Sebastian
On Canaan’s Side (2011) Lilly Bere is forced to flee Dublin at the end of the First World War. The story follows her life through into the new world of America, a world filled with both hope and danger.

Bolger, Dermot (ed)
Ireland in Exile: Irish Writers Abroad (1993) Irish writers living outside of Ireland focus on issues of Irish identity, in short fiction and excerpts from longer prose works.

Bruen, Ken
Doyle, Roddy
**Oh! Play that Thing** (2004) Henry Smart, on the run from Dublin, arrives in New York in 1924 where he catches the attention of the mobsters who run the district and soon there are eyes on his back and men in the shadows.

**The Barrytown Trilogy** Deals with internal exile and exclusion. Includes *The Commitments*, *The Snapper* and *The Van*.

Joyce, James
**Ulysses** (1922). The ultimate novel of exile - the recreation by Joyce of his home city of Dublin over many years in exile.

**Eveline** in *Dubliners* (1914). Story of a character who finds it impossible to emigrate.

MacCann, Colm
**This Side of Brightness** (1998) Set in the subways of New York, and centers around the lives of the men, mostly Irish or black, who spent years underground building this city within a city.

Macken, Walter
**I am Alone** (1949) Based on Macken’s emigrant experiences in London.

Moore, George
**The Untilled Field** (1903) Collection of short stories, some of which deal with emigration.

O’Flaherty, Liam
**The Informer** (1925). Set in 1920s Dublin, the novel centers on Gypo Nolan who, having informed on a friend, finds himself hunted by his comrades for this betrayal.

Toibin, Colm
**Brooklyn** (2009). Set in the 1950s, a story of young girl forced to emigrate to America in search of work.


Trevor, William
**The Story of Lucy Gault** (2002) Recounts the story of a young girl whose Protestant family are compelled to leave their home in Ireland due to the political turmoil of 1921.
Section 1
Bog Child

Plays and Poetry

Binchy, Maeve
Deeply regretted by... (1979) Reflects the realities of Irish men starting families both at home and abroad, after they were forced to emigrate for work.

Boland, Eavan

Bardwell, Leland
Borderlines: Poems by South Ulster Youth (1989) includes three poems by 13 to 16 year olds on the subject of emigration.

Friel, Brian
Dancing at Lughnasa (1990). Set in 1936 in rural Ireland, depicts two days in the life of the five Mundy sisters, their brother Jack, who is a missionary priest, and the illegitimate son of the youngest sister.

The Loves of Cass Maguire (1966). Deals with the return of emigrant Cassie Maguire and her struggle to re-discover the home she’s dreamt of all her life.

Philadelphia Here I Come (1964). Disillusioned with the absence of prospects in Ireland, Gareth O’Donnell has accepted his aunt’s invitation to come to Philadelphia.

Hewitt, John
Collected Poems of John Hewitt (1991). Hewitt was preoccupied with bleak landscapes of bog and rock; with exile and with the nature of belonging.

Monahan, Noel
Poem American Wake from his Collection entitled Opposite Walls.

Raftery, Anthony
Cill Aodáin Poem. Written in Irish by one of the last of the wandering bards. Published in Poems from the Irish translated by Gabriel Fitzmaurice (2004).
Memoirs and first hand accounts of exile

Cowley, Ultan

Donnelly, Philip
The Eyes that Shone: From Ireland to Canada in the 1950s (2010) A Bailieborough born emigrant tells his story.

Hannan, Damian
Rural Exodus: A Study of the Forces influencing the large-scale Migration of Irish Rural Youth (1970) Includes interviews with 550 young County Cavan people on the subject of migration.

Healy, John
Nineteen Acres (1978) Although Healy himself was never an emigrant, this story is a classic tale of the Irish emigrant experience.

MacAmhlaigh, Dónall

McCourt, Frank
Angela's Ashes The classic emigration story.

'Tis: A Memoir Sequel to Angela's Ashes, telling of Frank's experiences as a young emigrant in New York (1999).

Mac Gabhann, Mici
Rothe Mór an tSaol Classic emigrant tale in the Irish language.

O'Connor, Joseph
The Irish Male: At Home and Abroad (1996).
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Bog Child

Factual Material

Bielenberg, Andy
The Irish Diaspora (2000).

Cochrane, Fergal Dr

Coogan, Tim Pat

Cowley, Ultan

Crawford, E. Margaret

Gray, Breda

Heaney, Seamus

Kearney, Richard
Migrations: The Irish at Home and Abroad.

Miller, Kerby
Out of Ireland: The story of Irish emigration to America (1994).

Neville, Grace

Kennedy, Patricia
Motherhood in Ireland: Creation and Context.

O’Brien, Peggy
The Irish American literary connection in America and Ireland, 1776-1976 (1980).
O’Carroll, Ide
**Models for Movers: Irish women’s emigration to America** (1990).

O’Malley, Mary
**Emigration and Irish Travellers** (1991) in Galway Labour History Group’s
**The Emigrant Experience**.

Sullivan, Mary

Sullivan, Tom
**Wherever you go you find a Catholic Congregation: Aspects of the Catholic Missionary movement from the Diocese of Kilmore** (2007).

Ward, Patrick Dr
**Exile, Emigration and Irish Writing** (2002).

**Film**

Aimette, M
**Turning Green** (2005) Set in late 1970s Ireland, a 16 year old American boy is forced to live in Ireland with his three Irish aunts.

Ford, John
**The Informer** (1935) Set in 1920s Ireland and based on a Liam O’Flaherty story.

Ford, John
**The Quiet Man** (1952) Classic returned emigrant tale.

Jordan, Neil

O’Connor, Pat
**Dancing at Lughnasa** (1998) Based on Brian Friel’s play.
Section 1
Bog Child

Parker, Alan
**Angela’s Ashes** (1999) Based on Frank McCourt’s classic memoir.

Quested, John
**Philadelphia, Here I Come!** (1975) Based on Brian Friel’s play.

Quinn, Bob


Sheridan, Jim
**The Field** (1990) Based on John B. Keane’s play.
**In America** (2003) An aspiring Irish actor and his family emigrate to the United States.

Sheridan, Peter
Section 1
Bog Child

Theme 3 - Reeling in the years: Historical context: Ireland in the 1980s

A: Suggested Explorations

- Days to remember: Momentous world events of the 1980s.

- Polish Solidarity; John Lennon’s death; Falklands War; Berlin wall tumbles; End of the Cold war; U.K. miner’s Strike; Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior; The first Intifada; Use of chemical weapons against the Kurds; Lockerbie; Massacre; Tiananmen Square.

- Newsflash: Stories that grabbed the Irish headlines: Examples: Stardust Fire; G.U.B.U.; Ballinspittle; Anglo-Irish agreement; Self Aid.

- Identify and develop profiles of the key figures of the decade.

- The dawn of the Personal Computer: Science and Technology in 1980s.

- Global Disasters that changed the world: Chernobyl; The emergence of the Aids epidemic, Bhopal; Exxon Valdez Oil disaster.

- Shoulder pads and trainers: Fashion of the 1980s.

- The era of Live Aid, U2, Madonna and hip-hop: explore the soundtrack of the 1980s.

- 1980s: The decade when Sport and Politics collide.

- Popular Culture: Explore the movies, plays, T.V. and ads of the 1980s.

- Moments that changed us: Examples: Hunger strikes; Ann Lovett RIP; Kerry Babies’ Case.
Section 1
Bog Child

B: Recommended Reading and Other Resources

Moore, Brian

Kavanagh, Patrick
*God In Woman* This poem can be found in his collected works.

Monahan, Noel:
His poems *Aunt Gretta* and *American Wake* from the collection entitled *Opposite Walls*.

Newspapers at the time - Library archives.

Photographs from the time.

Music

John Lennon, Imagine.

Alice Cooper, Only Women Bleed.

Abba.

Bon Jovi, Living on a Prayer.

Radetzky’s March.

Films

Stand By Me 1986.

The Breakfast Club (1985).


Indiana Jones and The Temple of Doom (1984).


Theme 4 - Hearing the Voice of Others / Being Different
Exploring issues facing people with disabilities, travellers, ex-prisoners and people from other nationalities.

A: Suggested Explorations

• “Difference?” - What is that? Ethnic groups / Races / Different viewpoints.

• Misplacement.

• Discrimination / Segregation.

• What does inclusive mean?

• Exploring issues facing people with disabilities.

• The more people on the margin the weaker the centre.

• Explore how society deals with differences.
Section 1

Bog Child

B: Recommended Reading and Other Resources

Young Adult Fiction

Ahmed, Rehana (ed)

Bell, Julia
Massive (2002) Deals with 3 generations of women with eating disorders. The main character is a 14 year old girl.

Bennett, Veronica
Monkey (2003) Harry is bullied at school, bored at home, and hardly delighted when his mother volunteers him to visit a severely disabled patient of hers. Deals sensitively with the themes of bullying and disability.

Blackman, M

Bradman, Tony (ed)
Skin Deep (2004) An anthology of original short stories which tackle the issue of racism in its many forms - bullying, exclusion, class, skin colour, hatred and war. Written by some of today’s very best writers for teenagers. Includes a story about an Irish Traveller by Siobhan Dowd.

Breslin, Theresa
Whispers in the Graveyard (1994) Deals with severe dyslexia and bullying.

Haakena, Anna Lilisa
My One-legged Friend and Me (1980) With themes of homelessness, loneliness, disability and death, a demanding but rewarding read about a 15 year old boy’s inner conflicts.

Kranendonk, Anke
Cén Chaoi a bhfuil tú? Go Maith (1999) Sensitivey told story of Don, who struggles to be like other teenagers despite having AIDS. Translated into Irish from the Dutch.
Wulf, Linda Press
**Night of the Burning** (2007) The very moving story of a young girl paralysed by anger and grief who must learn what to hold on to, but also what to let go. A (true) happy ending makes it an inspirational read for teens.

**Factual Material**

Brown, Christy

Castor, Harriet
**Helen Keller: Biographies of Famous People to support the Curriculum** (1998).

Nolan, Christopher
**Under the Eye of the Clock** Biography of an Irish poet with a disability.

**Film**

**My Left Foot** (D.V.D.) (1989)
Directed by Jim Sheridan.

**Inside I’m Dancing** (D.V.D.) (2005)
Directed by Damien O’Donnell.
Section 1
Bog Child

Poetry

Patrick Kavanagh
Tinker’s Wife

Thomas McDonagh
John - John

Anna Akhmatova - Russian Poet
Song of the last meeting

Paul Celan - Romanian Jewish
A Poem is a Message in a Bottle

Tadeusz Rozewicz - Polish Poet
In the Midst of Life

Czeslaw Milosz - Polish Poet
Encounter, The Porch, Dedication

Levi, Primo
The Girl - Child of Pompeii and Annunciation

Poetry from writers abroad / related to other nationalities living in Cavan.
Theme 5 - Coming of age in the fictional world of Siobhan Dowd: teenage pregnancy; children in care; personal responsibility for teens

A: Suggested Explorations

- Meaning of coming of age.
- Responsibility.
- Pressures.
- Transitional period - differences.
- Peer groups.
- Expectations - parents, teachers.
- Fitting in and opting out!
- 1943 Orphanage in Cavan.
- Child Sacrifice in Carthage (Tunisia).
Section 1
Bog Child

B: Recommended Reading and Other Resources

Young Adult Fiction

Doherty, Berlie

Green, Julia
Baby Blue (2004) and Blue Moon (2003) In Baby Blue we meet a 15 year old living in a small rural community dealing with an unplanned pregnancy. In Baby Blue Mia is now a mother at sixteen. Bit by bit, Mia is piecing her life back together.

Holm, Anne
I am David The classic tale of a young adult's journey out of oppression and on a quest for freedom.

Lee, Harper
To Kill a Mockingbird Classic tale.

Ó Laighleis, Ré
Gafa English Language Version is Hooked (1999) Highly acclaimed novel that tells the horrific tale of a teenager’s slide into the world of drug addiction and his involvement with its murky and danger-filled underworld. The parents’ story is also told.

Salinger, J.D.
Catcher in the Rye (1951) An unparalleled window into adolescent angst.

Sheldon, Dyan
And Baby Makes Two (2010) Lana is fed up with everyone telling her what to do. What Lana wants is to be grown-up. She wants her own flat, her own husband and her own children - and then no one will be able to boss her around any more. When she gets pregnant, she knows it's her ticket to freedom - but is it?
Poetry

MacMonagle, Niall
Real Cool: Poems to Grow up With (1994)

Monahan, Noel
Scar on a Country Town

Heaney, Seamus
Limbo from Wintering Out

Heaney, Seamus
Bye-Child from Wintering Out

Clarke, Austin
Poem about Children

Adcock, Fleur
For Heidi with Blue Hair

Anonymous
Alice Anonymous
Section 1
Bog Child

Theme 6 - Exploring the landscape of Siobhan Dowd’s fictional world:
Bogs of Ireland and Cavan / Bog Bodies / Possible lectures and field trips.

A: Suggested Explorations

• Bogs (photographs, fieldtrips).

• Bog bodies - how are they formed?

• Importance of the bog back in the 1980s.

• How have times changed?

• History of bogs in Ireland.

• History of Bord na Móna and the Irish peat industry.

• How bogs are formed.

• Life in the Iron Age.

• What is Archaeology.

• Radio Carbon Dating.

• Reading OS Maps.

• Pompeii.

• A Dictionary of Ulster Place - Names.

• Compare and contrast AD 80 and AD 1981.
B: Recommended Reading and Other Resources

Adult Fiction

McGahern, John
That They May Face the Rising Sun.

Poetry

Heaney, Seamus
Poems: The Tollund Man, Bogland, Bog Queen, Bog Oak, The Grauballe Man, Punishment, Strange Fruit.

Monahan, Noel
Corlea Road in Curse of the Birds.

Factual Material

Areas of Scientific Interest in Co. Cavan (1972)
See Section Marshes and Bog.

Aalen, F.H.A. (ed)

Bellamy, David

Bermingham, Nóra

Cabot, David

Clarke, Donal
Glob, P.V.

Goodhue, Derek
Irish Bogs and Fens.


O’Connell, Catherine

Quinn, John
Goodnight Ballivor, I'll Sleep in Trim (2008)
Wonderful description of a day spent on the bog.

Students are encouraged to explore The Schools Folklore Collection at Johnston Central Library to find local folklore about Cavan bogs. This Collection represents one of the greatest drives ever undertaken in the field of folklore collecting, during which almost 100,000 children, aged 11-14, in 5,000 primary schools nationwide, in 1937/1938, were involved in seeking out and setting down for posterity material dealing with a wide range of Irish folk tradition. Tales and anecdotes, ghost and fairy stories, songs, ballads, rhymes and customs; beliefs and superstitions, charms and cures; are just some of the themes which are collected in this amazing resource.
Theme 7 - Language and Meaning:
Understanding each other. How language is used differently by different generations. Interpreting language and the difficulties it causes. Literal versus real meaning.

A: Suggested Explorations

- Slang used nowadays.
- Words that have been passed down through generations.
- Scots Gaelic - link with North.
- Why is language changing.
- Modern technology - its effect on language.
- Misinterpretation.
- Literal versus Real Meaning.
- Cavanisms: Cavan’s take on English!
Section 1
Bog Child

B: Recommended Reading and Other Resources

Crystal, David

Deary, Terry

Cassidy, Daniel

Share, Bernard

Dolan, Terence

Bryson, Bill

BBC Radio 4 series - romps through the history of the English language. One Section deals with a million and one ways to have fun with the English language.

Reader’s Digest

Bryson, Bill
Troublesome Words (2001).

Cochrane, James

Humphrys, John
Lost for Words: The Mangling and Manipulation of the English Language (2004).

Kirkpatrick, E.M.
The Usual Suspects and Other Clichés: Names and Shames more than 1,500 Words and Phrases (2005).
McWhorter, John

Manser, Martin (Ed)


B.B.C.
Words: Reflections on the Use of Language (1975).

O’Donnell, Jim
Section 1
Bog Child

Theme 8 - Defending Freedom of Human Expression: Human Rights and Writers: How writers play a crucial role in changing their societies.

A: Suggested Explorations

- Human Rights - What are they?

- Investigate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- Find out about world organisations that seek to recognise and support writers who resist repression of the basic human right to freedom of expression: Amnesty International and International Pen.

- Explore the role of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights by looking at Mary Robinson’s time in this post.

- Investigate and map the countries which have a bad record for persecution and imprisonment of writers.

- Discuss: Is the job of a writer to question the Status Quo?

- Explore the case of five writers in five countries imprisoned for different reasons directly as a result of their writing.

- Find one example of a Journalist, a Novelist, a Poet, a Songwriter, a Playwright who have suffered as a result of their work.

- Explore the impact of imprisonment and censorship on writers and their work.

- Look at the particular issues faced by women writers persecuted for their writing.

- There are some countries in which a book by a women writer has never been published - find out where.

- Investigate the power of the internet in the global context to impact on writers persecuted for their work.

- Look at the impact of Human Rights abuses on the Troubles in Northern Ireland.
• Examine human rights in Northern Ireland after the Troubles.

• Do children have rights? Look at the impact of the UN Convention on the rights of the child on aspects of children’s lives around the world.

• Explore the role of UNICEF.

• Look at key children’s rights: Right to an education, self-expression, healthcare, a safe place to live.
Section 1
Bog Child

B: Recommended Reading and Other Resources

Children and Young Adult Books

O’Loughlin, Larry
Is Anybody Listening? (1999). A powerful teen novel which makes a heartfelt plea for global justice. The main character, Laura, hears the voices of two children - Sanjid, an Indian carpet slave, and Rosa, a brazilian slum teenager. Both are helpless and in danger and need Laura’s help.

Castle, Caroline

Kramer, Ann

Peace Child Intern.
Stand up for your Rights (1998).

MacDonald, Fiona

UNICEF

Thirty One Ways to Change the World: We are what we do and you by 4,386 Children (2010).

We are all Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures (2008)

Armstrong, Louise
Living as a Refugee: Mohamed’s Story: From Afghanistan to a New Life in America (2005).

Dalton, Dave
Refugee Camp: Carbino’s story: Surviving the war in Sudan (2005).
Factual Books for Adults and Teachers

O’Connell, D (ed)
**Sixty years, thirty perspectives: Ireland and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (2009).

O’Loughlin, V (Ed)
**The Big Book of Hope: an inspirational blend of fiction and non fiction from over 40 of Ireland’s best known writers and personalities** (2010). Hope Foundation helps restore basic human rights to the street children of Calcutta.

Robinson, Mary
**Human Rights at the Dawn of the New Millennium** in *When Hope and History Rhyme* (2002).

O’Brien, Carl

Agosin, Marjorie

International Service Ireland
**Putting the World to Rights** (2008).

Reilly, Niamh

Dickson, Brice

Root, Neil
**Who killed Rosemary Nelson?: At last, the full story of the conspiracy behind the assassination of Northern Ireland’s top human rights lawyer** (2011).
Section 1
Bog Child

Bacik, Ivana

Smith, Clive Stafford

Robertson, G

Ignatieff, M

Caldwell, C

Film


Bloody Sunday.

Hunger.

Some Mother’s Son.

Dead Poets Society.

Billy Elliot.

Inside I’m Dancing.

The Truman Show.

Maria Full of Grace.

Il Postino.
Curricular / Cross - Curricular / Extra Curricular

“Literature is the most underestimated subject of study in schools. It plays a critical role in our lives by helping us to reflect on ourselves and the world, but coming to understand it, also involves the mind in making sense - it involves a set of cognitive strategies that are useful for the sharp and literate mind” (Learning Point Associates).

“Contemporary Young Adult Literature aimed at students between the ages of 12 and 20 explores a wide range of societal issues that cut across content areas, including conflict, violence, ethical decisions, ecological issues, and family life. The appeal of fiction, often narrated in first-person voice, rests on teen characters that are usually quite strong, in contrast to common stereotypes that abound about adolescents.” (Herz and Gallo, 1996).

Curricular

Link with Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate syllabus.

Reading Aloud (10 minutes at the end of a class period recommended). As a prelude to reading aloud to students, identify good prediction points in “Bog Child” where students can speculate on the events described and future scenes they will encounter.

Sustained Silent Reading: recommended.

Use a simple taxonomic or category system to guide Bog Child class-room discussions.

3 levels of comprehension, as follows:

Right on the Page: Text-explicit comprehension, in which the answer to a question can be found in the novel.

Think and Search: Text-implicit comprehension, in which the reader must infer the answer to a question based on hints in the novel.

On your Own: Experience-based comprehension, in which there is no right answer, and many possible solutions to a problem or character’s dilemma.

Students to keep a Response Journal, where they are encouraged to jot down their own character impressions, and questions for class discussion.
Anticipation-Reaction Guides: Consist of a series of statements at the three levels of comprehension. Create statements for a chapter using the following steps:

- Identify the concepts to be emphasised.
- Consider students’ experiences and beliefs that may be challenged by the reading selection.
- Create 3 / 4 statements for pre-reading post-reading discussion.
- Engage students in pre-reading discussion.

Request: Reciprocal Questioning: Goal - move students beyond low level literal questions to higher-order thinking. Ideal for struggling readers.

- Identify key sections of the novel.
- Silent reading of this section in classroom.
- Follow by closing the book and allowing students to ask all the questions they can think of.
- Develop inter-textual connections between the concepts dealt with in “Bog Child” section under discussion and curricular content area concepts.

Body Biographies: Involves the creation of a multimedia interpretation of a character from the novel. Body biographies are post reading wall displays in the shape of a human body. Students must carefully think through their choices of what key quotes, events, and visual devices to include in their creation. Useful in focusing students’ attention on the novel.

- Have students cut a 7 foot long sheet from a roll of paper. Place on floor and get a student to lie down on it. Another student draws an outline of the first student’s body. Students in small groups fill in the body with artistic representations of the character’s traits, relationships, motivations, and experiences.

Remember:

- Placement of the artwork is important.
- Students to focus on helping their audience visualise the character’s virtues and vices.
- Use colour to help symbolise a character’s traits.
- Use symbols to help capture the character’s essence.
- Use poetry to portray the hidden dimensions of the character.
- Consider contrasting the character’s self-view with the views of others.
- Use artwork to represent the transformations that take place in a character over the complete story.
Dinner Party: Assume you could invite characters from “Bog Child” to a dinner party. Use “Dinner Party” approach to discuss crucial events in the novel and to provide a role-playing atmosphere, as follows:

- Decide which characters will attend your dinner party (5 / 6 is recommended, to include some characters whose voices were silenced in the novel).
- Create large nametags to identify the characters.
- Assign one student to act as moderator.
- Provide an initial prompt question to get the discussion going.
- Use an excerpt from “Bog child” for the dinner party’s focus.
- Debrief at the end of the role playing to illuminate any key issues revealed.

Predicting: Make and revise predictions before and during reading. Predict from title, cover, illustrations, table of contents, child’s previous experience, and information from other subject areas.

Comparing: How is this character / situation different to / like or unlike?

Develop Dialogue: Create a dialogue between two characters from the novel.

Narrative framework: Identify the parts of the story which make up the narrative framework:

- Setting.
- Characters.
- Problems / Issues.
- Complications.
- Resolution.
- Conclusion.
Plan and write the sequel, using the narrative framework above:

- Letter writing.
- Diary entries.
- Essays.
- Continue the story.
- Dialogue.
- Vox Pop.
- Articles for a newspaper.
- Debating.
- Poetry writing competition.
- Media Studies - Posters / Advertising at the time.
- Comparative Course - Film (My Left Foot, Edward Scissorhands, Inside I’m Dancing.)
  - Plays (Dancing at Lughnasa, Sive).
  - Novel (Lies of Silence, How Many Miles to Babylon?)
Cross - Curricular

**Geography**
- Fieldtrips.
- Maps.
- Photographs.
- Town Plans.
- Rural Ireland.
- Rural decline.
- Drumlins.
- Link with other countries.

**History**
- Troubles.
- Irish history.
- Post-colonial problems in other countries e.g. Africa.
- Rearing turf - heat supply.

**Science**
- Bogs and how they are formed.
- Bogbodies - forensics.

**Art**
- Maps.
- Bogs.
- Pottery.

**Irish**
- Language.
- Scoileanna.
Section 1
Bog Child

Extra - Curricular

Workshop.
Educational trips - Museum / gallery.
Competitions... literary / art / music.
Fieldtrips.
Guest speakers.
Methodologies - Before / During / After Reading

Before Reading

- Prediction activities based on the cover / title / theme.
- Use pictures as stimulus for discussion. Use them to discuss key ideas or themes e.g. pictures of bogs of Cavan or bogbodies.
- Theme cards - put the class in a certain scenario e.g. What would you do if?

During Reading

- Mind Mapping - could be simple or complex. Simple ones of characters or themes or settings. Complex ones would connect all this together.
- Role on the wall for characters - we can add to this as we progress in the novel.
- Flowchart on the wall of the plot.
- Tension graph - this involves plotting key events of the novel against a scale (students will determine the scale) that measures tension / fear / self-esteem.
- Hot seating of characters at important stages in novel.
- Family tree.
- Role play / freeze frames of a key event.
- Rewriting an extract in a different form or from a different viewpoint.
- Reading journal.
- Sequencing - cut up a section of the text which pupils have to arrange in the correct order, focusing on the layout / structure of the text.
- Close textual analysis - involves shared reading using an overhead projector and teacher annotation.
Section 1
Bog Child

After Reading

- Ripple chart of a key character.
- “You’re the witness” style role play.
- Quote search.
- Create titles for each chapter.
- Summarise the plot / storyboard.
- Casting the film of the novel.
- Class debating - provide statements about characters / themes / events.
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Theme 1 - Communications between family, friends and the community

A: Suggested Explorations

• The lack of communication in a variety of situations - families / schools / society.

• Communication within the community - support offered / turning a blind eye.

• Communication with friends - teenage friendship and support systems.

• Communication in schools - support systems in place for young teens / or lack of.

B: Suggested Reading Resources

O’Brien, Flan
The Third Policeman

Barry, Kevin
Ideal Homes

Barry, Sebastian
Our Lady of Sligo

Platalis, Kornelijus
Christmas In The Forest

Platalis, Kornelijus
Milk and Tomatoes

Yevtushenko
Procession With The Madonna from Stolen Apples

Monahan, Noel
Granada Ballroom

Durcan, Paul
Tullynoe: Tete-a-Tete In the Parish Priest’s Parlour

Chekhov
The Kiss
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Barry, Kevin
*Last Days of the Buffalo*
The Stinging Fly Press, Dublin

Daldry, Stephen
*Billy Elliot*

Keane, John B.
*Sive*

McDonagh, Martin
*Lonesome West*

Luhrmann, Baz
*Strictly Ballroom*

Collins, Suzanne
*Hunger Games*

Deane, Seamus
*Reading in the Dark*

Haddon, Mark
*The curious incident of the dog in the night-time*

Miller, Arthur
*Death of a Salesman*

McGahern, John
*Memoir*

McGahern, John
*Amongst Women*

Friel, Brian
*The Loves of Cass McGuire*

Friel, Brian
*Philadelphia Here I Come!*

Friel, Brian
*Translations*
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Film

Peer Pressure

• Thirteen.
• Heathers.
• Bully.
• Mean Girls.
• A walk to remember.

Bullying

• Bully.
• Pleasantville.
• Back to the Future.
• About A Boy.
• Dazed and Confused.

Grief

• Romeo and Juliet.
• The Green Mile.
• Leaving Las Vegas.
• In America.
• The Curious Case of Benjamin Button.
• Reservation Road.

Family

• American Beauty.
• Are we done yet?
• The Ice Storm.
• Junebug.
• Little Miss Sunshine.
• Mary Poppins.
• Matilda.
• Nutty Professor II: The Klumps.
• Precious.
• RV.
• The Simpsons.
Theme 2 - The Cycle of Life - Death / Birth

A: Suggested Explorations

- How society deals with the major life events and rites of passage.
- Transitional periods.
- Major life changes.
- What is the norm? How does society deal with major life changes?
- Rituals associated with these cycles; taboos and where do children come into it?
- When problems arise, Who / what helps?
- Supports, or the lack of, at these crucial times.
- Taboos associated with these life events.
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

B: Suggested Reading Resources

Monahan, Noel
The Children of Lir (Adapted for Livin’ Dred)

Martinaitis, Mercelijus
Family Album Found in a Dustbin

McGahern, John
Memoir

Browne, Noel
Against the Tide

Healy, Dermot
The Bend for Home

Boran, Pat
The Invisible Prison

Plath, Sylvia
Morning Song

Auden, W.H.
Funeral Blues

Bishop, Elizabeth
Sestina, First Death in Novia Scotia

Johnston, Jennifer
Shadows on our Skin

Heaney, Seamus
Mid-term Break

Hardie, Kerry
Daniel’s Duck
Theme 3 - Belief Structures and Spiritual Needs

A: Suggested Explorations

• Belief Structures - what do they mean in today’s world.

• Different belief systems - non-denominational, humanist.

• The lack of understanding in religion - traditions associated with certain religions and how they have evolved in society.

• Different ways of dealing with spiritual needs.
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

B: Suggested Reading Resources

Carr, Marina
By the Bog of Cats

Wyley, Enda
Eating Baby Jesus

Monahan, Noel
Missionary Hitch

O’Reilly, Catriona
Amour Propre Scealta, Short Stories by Irish Women

Harding, Michael
Priest (The Blackstaff Press)

Hopkins, Gerard Manley
I Wake and I Feel the Fell of the Dark

Hopkins, Gerard Manley
Thou Art Indeed Just Lord

Hopkins, Gerard Manley
No Worse Than This

McLaverty, Bernard
Lamb

Mathew, Rath
Our Father
Theme 4 - Coming of Age
In the fictional world of Siobhan Dowd: teenage pregnancy / children in care / personal responsibility for teens.

A: Suggested Explorations

• Difficulties encountered in teenage pregnancy and peer pressure - supports or lack of.

• Sense of identity and individuality.

• Meaning.

• Responsibility.

• Pressures.

• Transitional period - differences.

• Peer groups.

• Expectations - parents, teachers.

• Fitting-in.

• 36 die in Orphanage in Cavan 1943.

• Child Sacrifice in Carthage (Tunisia).
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

B: Suggested Reading Resources

Monahan, Noel
Scar on a Country Town

Heaney, Seamus
Limbo from Wintering Out

Heaney, Seamus
Bye-Child from Wintering Out

Clarke, Austin
Poem about children

Doherty, Philip
A Monologue on the same topic

Adcock, Fleur
For Heidi with Blue Hair

Anonymous
Alice

Film

Inside I’m Dancing

Angelou, Maya
I Know Why Caged Birds Sing

Flynn, Adrian
Burning Everest
Theme 5 - Modern Family Structures

A: Suggested Explorations

- What makes a family.
- Diversity of family structures - single parents.
- Responsibilities placed on some teenagers.
- Community attitudes to different types of families.
- Problems in family life.
- Family rituals and routines.
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

B: Suggested Reading Resources

Williams, Tennessee
The Glass Menagerie

Durcan, Paul
Minister Opens New Home for Battered Husbands

Brett, Heather
My Daughter's Dungarees

Chekhov
Difficult People

Chekhov
Neighbours

Clare Keegan
Men and Women

MacIntyre, Tom
Story of a Girl (Lilliput Press)

Theodore Roethke
My Papas Waltz

Patrick Kavanagh
In Memory of My Mother

Gunn, Thomas
Baby Song

Adcock, Fleur
For Heidi with Blue Hair

Hughes, Langston
Mother to Son
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Bishop, Elizabeth
*Sestina, First Death in Nova Scotia*

Plath, Sylvia
*Child*

Heaney, Seamus
*Sunlight*

McGahern, John
*Memoir*

Flynn, Adrian
*Burning Everest*

McDonagh, Martin
*Lonesome West*

Dudok de Wit, Michael (youtube)
*Father and Daughter*

Milligan, Spike
*Granny*

Yeats, W.B.
*When You Are Old*
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Theme 6 - Reeling in the Years

Historical context: Ireland in the 1980s: Social / Cultural / Religious / Women’s position / Music of the 1980s - a very different place. Contrast with Ireland now.

A: Suggested Explorations

- Historical context 1980s.
- Music of this era.
- Women’s position in society during this era.
- The Kerry Babies.
- Patriarchal Society - politics / religion / sport.
B: Suggested Reading’ Resources

- Newspapers at the time - Library archives.
- Photographs from the time - troubles.
- RTE documentaries on Industrial Schools.

Music

John Lennon, Imagine.

Alice Cooper, Only Women Bleed.

Abba.

Bon Jovi, Living on a Prayer.

Radetzky’s March.

Films

The Magdalene Sisters

Song for a Raggy Boy
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Factual Material

De Beauvoir, Simone
The Second Sex

Greeer, Germaine
The Female Eunuch

Gilbert and Gubar
The Madwoman in the Attic

McCafferty, Nell
A Woman to Blame: The Kerry Babies Case

Wikipedia Sources and reports on Kerry Babies including Garda investigation.
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Theme 7 - Language and Meaning

Understanding each other - literal versus real meaning. How language is used by different generations / Interpreting language and the difficulties it causes - cultural differences.

A: Suggested Explorations

• Slang used nowadays.

• Words that have been passed down through generations.

• Scots Gaelic usage in Cavan.

• Why is language changing?

• Modern technology - its effect on language.

• Misinterpretation.

• Literal versus Real Meanings.
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

B: Suggested Reading Resources

- Yatter page 72 Terence Dolan’s Hiberno English Dictionary.

Film

The Sixth Sense.

Sliding Doors (What if scenario).

Il Paradiso.
Poetry

Nonsense Poems: Ladies and Jellyspoons from 'Safari'.

Patten, Brian
Gust Becos I Cud Not Spel

Carroll, Lewis
Jabber Nocky

Lear, Edward
The Jumblies

Sambrooke, Henry
The Twins

Millum, Trevor
The Dark Avenger

Wrigth, Kit
Hugger Mugger

Lear, Edward
The Owl and the Pussycat

Anonymous
As I was Going Out One Day

Lear, Edward
The Quangle Wangles Hat

Dylan, Bob
Blowing in the Wind

London Slang
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Theme 8 - A sense of Place / Local Studies and the complex relationships between people and places

A: Suggested Explorations

• Social context - institutions / traditions / customs.

• Social context - physical surroundings and how these shape experiences.

• The Natural World - interactions with nature - pleasure / work / custom / weather.

• Differences between rural and urban.

• A sense of displacement - migration.

• Interplay between place and culture.

• Immigration / Emigration / Migration.
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

B: Suggested Reading Resources

Murphy, Orla and McCabe, Dermot
Atlas of Cavan

Packham, Chris
Chris Packham’s Nature Handbook

Angelou, Maya
I Know why the Caged Birds Sing

Hosseini, Khalid
The Kite Runner

Torntore, Giuseppe
Cinema Paradiso

Healy, Dermot
The Bend for Home

McGahern, John
That They May Face the Rising Sun

Yeats, W.B.
Wild Swans at Coole
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Film

Inside I’m Dancing directed Damien O’Donnell.
Of Mice and Men directed Gary Sinise.
The Field directed by Jim Sheridan.
Witness directed by Peter Weir.
The Diary of Anne Frank directed by George Stevens.
The Truman Show directed by Peter Weir.
The Grapes of Wrath directed by John Ford.
Macbeth directed by Philip Casson.
The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas.
Death of a Salesman directed by Volker Schlondorff.
Rabbit Proof Fence directed by Philip Noyce.
March of the Penguins.
Angela’s Ashes directed by Frank McCourt.

Music

Streets of London by Ralph McTell.
Imagine by John Lennon.

Poetry

The Daffodils by W. Wordsworth.
Not Waving but Drowning by Stevie Smith.
Danny Boy by Fred E. Weatherly.
The Lake Isle of Innisfree by W.B Yeats.
Curricular / Cross - Curricular / Extra Curricular

Curricular

- Letter writing.
- Diary entries.
- Essays.
- Continue the story.
- Dialogue.
- Vox Pop.
- Articles for a newspaper.
- Debating.
- Poetry writing competition.
- Media Studies - Posters / Advertising at the time.
- Comparative Course - Compare with LC text where suitable.
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

Cross - Curricular

Geography

Fieldtrips
Maps
Photographs
Town Plans
Rural Ireland.
Rural decline.
Drumlins.
Natural Phenomena.
Link with other countries.

History

Investigate Patriarchal society.
Renaissance - women in art.
Sheehy Skeffington / Suffragettes 1918.
Countess Markievicz.
Global attitudes to women.
Womens right to vote.
Science: Bogs and how they are formed.
Bogbodies - forensics.

Art

Maps.

Irish

Language.
Scoileanna.
Methodologies - Before / During / After Reading

Before Reading

• Prediction activities based on the cover / title / theme.

• Use pictures as stimulus for discussion. Use them to discuss key ideas or themes.

• Theme cards - put the class in a certain scenario e.g What would you do if?

During Reading

• Mind Mapping - could be simple or complex. Simple ones of characters or themes or settings. Complex ones would connect all this together.

• Role on the wall for characters - we can add to this as we progress in the novel.

• Flowchart on the wall of the plot.

• Tension graph - this involves plotting key events of the novel against a scale (students will determine the scale) that measures tension / fear / self-esteem.

• Hot seating of characters at important stages in novel.

• Family tree.

• Role play / freeze frames of a key event.

• Rewriting an extract in a different form or from a different viewpoint.

• Reading journal.

• Sequencing - cut up a section of the text which pupils have to arrange in the correct order, focusing on the layout / structure of the text.

• Close textual analysis-involves shared reading using an overhead projector and teacher annotation.
Section 2
A Swift Pure Cry

After Reading

• Ripple chart of a key character.

• “You’re the witness” style role play.

• Quote search.

• Create titles for each chapter.

• Summarise the plot / storyboard.

• Casting the film of the novel.

• Class debating-provide statements about characters / themes / events.
Section 3
Solace of the Road
Section 3
Solace of the Road

Theme 1 - A Troubled Place
Troubled house, troubled head, troubled past.

A: Suggested Explorations

• Violence against women: the effects on children and teenagers.

• Conflict in the home: the effects on children and teenagers.

• Care Babes: A childhood in care.

• Family separation and new relationships: Foster families and families of origin - conflicts of loyalty.

• Abandonment and its effect on children.

• Repression and splitting up as a means of dealing with trauma.
Section 3
Solace of the Road

B: Suggested Reading / Resources

Tracy Beaker: BBC 1 TV Series about life in care. See resources at www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/tracybeaker/

Doyle, Roddy

Salinger, J.D.

McCabe, Pat
Butcher Boy - Book and Film.

MacLaverty, Bernard

Barker, Pat
Border Crossing; Penguin (2002).

Sebeysten, Quida

Freud, Sigmund

Holmes, Jeremy

Grimms Fairy Tales
Hansel and Gretel and The Babes in The Wood

Knopf

Palahniuk, Chuck
Fight Club
Section 3
Solace of the Road

Frost, Robert
Classic 1999

Daniels, Scott
*Troubled Mind*, Poem

Loach, Ken
*Cathy Come Home* (BBC 1966).
Theme 2 - Irish at Heart


A: Suggested Explorations

- The phenomenon of the “plastic paddy”.
- Conflict of identities.
- The search for the mythical home place - Thule, Hy Brasil, Ireland?
- Looking for our roots: searching for our origins.
- What does it mean to be Irish?
- Writing by foreign born Irish writers.
Section 3
Solace of the Road

B: Suggested Reading / Resources

Eagleton, Terry  

Arrowsmith, Aidan  

Teenager Under Fire: An account of the abuse faced by James McCarthy as a “plastic paddy” when he opted to play for Ireland. (November 26, 2006) Times (UK)

Gallagher, Paul  
Brothers: From Childhood to Oasis - The Real Story, Virgin.

O’Conaire, Padraic  


Bogie, Eric  
Plastic Paddy  

McDonagh, Martin  
The Lonesome West

Kinsella, Thomas and O’Tuama, Sean  

Who do you think you are? (BBC Programme).

Long Lost Family (ITV Programme).


Theme 3 - Reeling in the Years

Historical and socio-cultural context: Britain and Ireland during and after the Thatcher era.

A: Suggested Explorations

• Urban alienation: fearing our neighbour “axe murderers”.

• Marginalisation: the precarious economic position of the unskilled in a post-industrial society: dancing, gambling, pushing, prostitution?

• Music of this era.

• Changing Technology - Mobile Phone and iPod; changing how we communicate.

• Market models of social provision: Applying the “barter concept of a coincidence of wants” to the provision of foster care for abandoned children i.e. wealthy; childless woman; poor / abandoned child.

• Women’s lives and roles: mother / daughter; saint / sinner; fertile / infertile; sexually exploited: dependent / independent?
Section 3
Solace of the Road

B: Suggested Reading / Resources

Trevor, William

Higgins, Rita Ann
Some People

Gilligan, Carol

The Kelly Fitzgerald Report

Newspaper articles and photographs from the time.

Music

Eurythymics: lyrics, song and video
Sweet Dreams are Made of This

Coughlan, Mary
Waiting for the Ice Cream Man

The Pogues
Fairy Tale of New York and Rainy Night in Soho

Film

Cameron, James
Titanic (20th Century Fox 1997).

Newell, Mike
Into the West (Film 4, 1992).

Egoyan, Atom
Felicia’s Journey (1999).
Theme 4 - Hearing the Voice of Others / Being Different

- Exploring issues facing people who are economically disadvantaged or marginalised: unemployed, immigrants / emigrants, homeless, alcoholics, addicts, prostitutes.

- Effects of ‘being different’ on a child.

- Personality problems: Solace / Holly, one person, two personalities. How is this dealt with in the fictional worlds created by Siobhan Dowd.

A: Suggested Explorations

- Inequality: Holly hitches to Oxford. Other girls of her age go to college there. Trim cannot read.

- Homelessness: How do the homeless live - what obstacles do they face in finding work or a place to live.

- Prostitution.

- Addiction.

- Exploring issues facing people with mental health problems.
Section 3
Solace of the Road

B: Suggested Reading / Resources

Anonymous
*Go Ask Alice* (Simon and Schuster 1971).

**Educational Inequalities Among School Leavers in Ireland**

**Social-Class Inequalities in Education in England and Scotland**
David Raffe, Linda Croxford, Cristina Lannelli, Marina Shapira and Cathy Howieson, Centre for Educational Sociology, University of Edinburgh 2006.

**Home and Away**
A multimedia report on the UK’s annually estimated 100,000 teenage runaways by photojournalist Hazel Thompson, commissioned by the Observer Newspaper. Available at [www.hazelthompson.com/away/](http://www.hazelthompson.com/away/)

**Child Prostitution Reports 2001 and 2007**
for BBC News, available respectively at
[news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/1462628.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/1462628.stm) [news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6960232.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6960232.stm)

**Young People’s Homeless Pathways**

Loach, Ken
*Cathy Come Home* (BBC 1966).

Mangold, James
*Girl Interrupted* (Columbia 1999).
Section 3
Solace of the Road

Theme 5 - Coming of Age

In the fictional world of Siobhan Dowd: teenage pregnancy / children in care / personal responsibility for teens / risky behaviour / eating disorders.

A: Suggested Explorations

Holly versus Solace: child versus emerging young woman; innocence versus the lessons of the road.

- Integrating and differentiating.
- Attachment and separation.
- Journey as a metaphor for coming of age.
- Responsibility.
- Transitional period - differences.
- Peer groups.
- Body Image.
Section 3
Solace of the Road

B: Suggested Reading / Resources

Muuss, Rolf E

Bronte, Charlotte

Trevor, William

Sebold, Alice
*The Lovely Bones*

Campion, Marie

Higgins, Rita Ann
*The Immortals* from an unpublished manuscript.

Gina Moxley

Films

The Wizard of Oz.

The Road.

Stand by Me.

Music

Janis Ian
*At 17* (1976).
Theme 6 · Exploring the Landscape of Siobhan Dowd’s Fictional World

South London, tower blocks and leafy suburbs, the world of the A66 as seen from a moving vehicle. Oxford, Wales and Fishguard.

A: Suggested Explorations

• London Oxford Fishguard A66.

• Tower Blocks.

B: Suggested Reading / Resources

• Google Earth.

• UK Motorway Maps.

• Shameless: 1st Series Channel 4.
Section 3
Solace of the Road

Theme 7 - Language and Meaning

Understanding each other - literal versus real meaning. How language is used by different generations / Interpreting language and the difficulties it causes - cultural differences.

A: Suggested Explorations

• Teen and sub-culture slang: mogits, pit miseries, care babes.

• Modern technology - it's effect on language.

• Literal versus real meanings.

• Language and the abuse of meaning: spin and propaganda.

• Symbolism: - The amber ring with the trapped insect at its core, leaving behind the toy dog because she does not fit in the lizard bag, solace / comfort.
Section 3
Solace of the Road

B: Suggested Reading / Resources

Widdicombe, Sue
*The Language of Youth Subcultures*, Prentice Hall 1995

Dictionary of Teenage Slang available at:
http://parentingteens.about.com/od/talktoyourteen/a/teen-slang.htm

Share, Bernard
*Slanguage: A Dictionary of Slang and Colloquial English in Ireland*,

Orwell, George

Tolkien, JR

*Wordfarming DVD* from The Awakened Life.
Section 3
Solace of the Road

Theme 8 - Defending Freedom of Human Expression: Human Rights and Writers

Investigate how writers play a crucial role in changing their societies.

A: Suggested Explorations

- Human Rights - What are they? Who adheres to them?
- Where did they come from?
- Children’s Rights: Why are we lagging behind in Ireland?
- Family Rights? Are there conflicts between the rights of the child and the rights of the family?
- Writers who have questioned the status quo.
- Writers imprisoned for their beliefs - when is it not ok to say anything?
- Writers banned - work becomes more famous.
B: Suggested Reading / Resources

O’Connor, Frank

**One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest**
Directed by Miloz Forman, Warner Brothers.

**Persepolis**

Amnesty International
[www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

Children’s Rights Alliance
[www.childrensrights.ie](http://www.childrensrights.ie)

The Dreyfus Affair: “J’Accuse” and Other Writings, Emile Zola, Yale (1997).
Section 3
Solace of the Road

Curricular / Cross - Curricular / Extra Curricular

As well as being a fast paced, thrilling and highly enjoyable narrative, Solace of the Road is a brilliant psychological novel which could be used to introduce students to many of the psychological themes which underlie not only the modern novel but also Shakespearean and modern drama e.g. splitting up, repression, the power of the unconscious.

It also highlights issues of identity, gender, inequality and the increasingly important issue that we have yet to deal with in Ireland; the balance between the rights of the child, the rights of the family and the responsibilities of the state.

Consequently, it is a particularly suitable novel for study as part of a Transition Year programme where the exploration of such issues and topics can be given the time and resources needed to enhance the teenage students learning and emotional and intellectual development.

Curricular

- Letter writing, diary entries, essays.
- Continue the story.
- Dialogue.
- Vox Pop.
- Articles for a newspaper.
- Debating.
- Poetry writing competition.
- Media Studies - Posters / Radio Ads / Announcements.
- Comparative Course Film (Children of Men, I'm not Afraid, My Left Foot).
- Plays (Translations, The Lonesome West).
- Novel (Never Let Me Go, The Story of Lucy Gault)
Section 3
Solace of the Road

Cross - Curricular

Geography
Maps.
Photographs.
Town Plans.
Transport systems.

Home Economics

Social
Family formation and child development.
Section 3
Solace of the Road

Extra-Curricular

Talks on
- Fostering and Adoption.
- Eating Disorders.
- Cancer.

Visits from
- Alateen / AA.
- Gamblers Anonymous.
- An Addiction Counsellor.
Methodologies - Before / During / After Reading

Before Reading

- Prediction activities based on the cover / title / theme.
- Theme cards - put the class in a certain scenario e.g. What would you do if?

During Reading

- Mind Mapping - could be simple or complex. Simple ones of characters or themes or settings. Complex ones would connect all this together.
- Role on the wall for characters - we can add to this as we progress in the novel.
- Flowchart on the wall of the plot.
- Tension graph - this involves plotting key events of the novel against a scale (students will determine the scale) that measures tension / fear / self-esteem.
- Hot seating of characters at important stages in novel.
- Family tree.
- Role play / freeze frames of a key event.
- Rewriting an extract in a different form or from a different viewpoint.
- Reading journal.
- Sequencing - cut up a section of the text which pupils have to arrange in the correct order, focusing on the layout / structure of the text.
- Close textual analysis - involves shared reading using an overhead projector and teacher annotation.
Section 3
Solace of the Road

After Reading

- Ripple chart of a key character.
- “You’re the witness” style role play.
- Quote search.
- Create alternative titles for each chapter.
- Summarise the plot / storyboard.
- Casting the film of the novel.
- Class debating-provide statements about characters / themes / events.

Other Ideas

- Make your own “Reeling in the years”.
- Link with poetry and song-pick songs or poems that link with the novel. The lyrics of poems / songs could be used for the voice over in the video we make.
- Write accounts of how other characters viewed their encounter with Holly / Solace.
- Letter writing or diary entries - to the key characters or as the key characters.
- Magazine revolving around the novel.
- Short story competition - continuing the novel or writing alternative endings.
- Poetry competition based around the themes of the novel.
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

Theme 1 - Family

A: Suggested Explorations

• What is family?

• Extended family and the family tree.

• Distant family - in other towns or countries.

• The different generations in family.

• Family events and celebrations.

• Happy / Sad times.

• Family pets.
B: Suggested Reading Resources

Heaney, Seamus
Mid-Term Break

Boland, Eavan
Night Feed

Thrilling, Isobel
Advice to a Teenage Daughter

Macral, Lindsey
Whose Baby

Wright, Ken
Grandad

Merrick, Brian
Brother

Kavanagh, Patrick
In Memory of my Mother

Dagg, Stephanie J.
A Cardboard Box

Boran, Pat
The Woodlands on Holiday

Henderson, Stewart
I’m Sorry

Croake, Vona
Dorothy’s Dotty Press

O’Neill, Seamus
Sweet Jam
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

Saki
The Open Window

Steinbeck
The Pearl

Milligan, Spike
Granny

Milligan, Spike
The Dog Lovers

Eliot, T.S.
Macavity: The Mystery Cat

Goldsmith, Oliver
An Elegy of a Mad Dog

Nesbill, Kenn
If you give a Mouse a Motorcycle

McCann, Paul
It’s a Dog’s Life
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

Theme 2 - Independence / Adventure / Choices

A: Suggested Explorations

- Chart the gradual movement from family into larger world.
- Independence - what it means, sense of self and identity, and the difficulties it involves.
- Making choices, difficulties, changes encountered, weighing the odds.
- Adventure - sense of fun, thrill, danger, achievement, growth.
B: Suggested Reading Resources

O’Flaherty, Liam
*His First Flight*

Dahl, Roald
*The Hitch Hiker*

Frost, Robert
*The Road not Taken*

Smith, Stevie
*Not Waving but Drowning*

O’Callaghan, Julie
*Bye*

Frank, Anne
*The Diary of the Young Girl*

Dahl, Roald
*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*

I am Daniel

Keane, John B.
*The Field*

Shakespeare
*Merchant of Venice*

Hinton, Nigel
*Buddy’s Blues*

Van Der Loeff, A Rutgers
*Children of the Oregon Trail*
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

Horowitz, Anthony
Scorpia Rising: Alex Rider Series

Horowitz, Anthony
The Power of Five: Book 4 Necropolis

Muchamore, Robert
Eagle Day

Walden, Mark
Dreadnought

Lee, Y.S.
A Spy in the House

Fitzmaurice, Gabriel
Do Teachers go to the Toilet: An dtéann Múinteoirí go tigh an Asail
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

Theme 3 - Differences

A: Suggested Explorations

- Physical differences - dress / ethnic groups / colour / abilities / mental capacity / opinions / beliefs.

- Advantages in differences - separate identities/ individual personality/ choices/ beliefs/ desires / standing out from the crowd/ confidence.

- Disadvantages - seen as different/ not belonging/ isolation/ separation/ depression/ bullying.
B: Suggested Reading Resources

Pallen, Brian, Safari Book
Gust Becos I Cud Not Spel

Cope, Wendy
Tich Miller

Mitchell, Adrian
Back in the Playground Blues

Morgan, Robert
4C Boy

McGough, Roger
Sad Aunt Marge

Henderson, Stewart
I'm Sorry
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

Theme 4 - Friendship / Relationships

A: Suggested Explorations

- School friendships - how they develop/ sharing common interests/ backgrounds/ desires.

- Value of friendship, how it supports and strengthens personality, in difficult times.

- The need for friendship.

- Close knit friends’ v’s acquaintances and those in between. Different needs at different times.

- Sharing common ground/ development.

- New Family - chosen companions as opposed to blood relations.
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

B: Suggested Reading Resources

Naughton, Bill
The Goalkeepers Revenge

Loxley, Liz
The Thinness of Ice

Pritchard, Adam
First Kiss

Wright, Ken
Hugger Mugger

Jennings, Paul
Smart Ice-cream

Jennings, Paul
Little Squirt

Parkinson, Siobhan
The Stripes of the Tiger

Russell, Willie
Our Day Out

Yeats, W.B.
He wishes for the Clothes of Heaven

Horowitz, Anthony
The Power of Five: Book 4 Necropolis

Quinn, John
The Summer of Lily and Esme
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

Produced Nick Stanhope
Thirty One Ways To Change The world: We Are What We Do and You
by 4,386 children

Morgan, Melissa J.
New Girl
Curricular / Cross - Curricular / Extra Curricular

Curricular

- Letter writing.
- Diary entries.
- Essays.
- Continue the story.
- Dialogue.
- Vox Pop.
- Articles for a newspaper.
- Debating.
- Poetry writing competition.
- Media Studies - Posters/Advertising at the time.
- Comparative Course - Compare with LC text where suitable.
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

Cross - Curricular

Geography

- London studies.
- Maps.
- Photographs.
- Town Plans.
- Link with other countries.

History

- Investigate patriarchal society.
- Renaissance - women in art.
- Sheehy Skeffington / Suffragettes 1918.
- Countess Markievicz.
- Global attitudes to women.
- Women’s right to vote.

Art

- Maps.

Irish

- Language.
- Scoileanna.
Methodologies - Before / During / After Reading

Before Reading

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- Family tree.
- Role play / freeze frames of a key event.
- Rewriting an extract in a different form or from a different viewpoint.
- Reading journal.
- Sequencing - cut up a section of the text which pupils have to arrange in the correct order, focusing on the layout/structure of the text.
- Close textual analysis - involves shared reading using an overhead projector and teacher annotation.
- Idioms.
- Grammar.
Section 4
The London Eye Mystery

After Reading

• Ripple chart of a key character.

• “You’re the witness” style role play.

• Quote search.

• Create titles for each chapter.

• Summarise the plot / storyboard.

• Casting the film of the novel.

• Class debating - provide statements about characters / themes / events.
Siobhan Dowd’s Novels

Bog Child
Finished three months before her death from cancer, “Bog Child” won the Carnegie medal, the most prestigious prize in children’s literature. It is a truly outstanding novel that can be enjoyed by adults as well as young adults, 13 and over. It has a particular resonance for readers living in the Border region and conveys both an extraordinary sense of place and a vivid picture of adolescence in early 1980’s Ireland. It deals sensitively but also realistically with a pivotal period in recent Irish history. The power of this story to inform as well as to entertain makes it no surprise that it was shortlisted for the Irish Book of the Decade 2010.

A Swift Pure Cry
Set in a remote corner of Co. Cork in 1984, this superb novel was inspired by two real-life Irish tragedies, the Ann Lovett story and the Kerry Babies case. Siobhan’s novel melds both stories into one, starting off with the memorably down-beat sentence, “The place brought to mind a sinking ship.” The main character struggles to survive in a world of poverty, alcoholism, teenage pregnancy and moral hypocrisy. Heart-breaking, but never dismal, her story is beautifully written and keenly observed. A Swift Pure Cry, Dowd’s first novel, was published in 2006 and is suitable for readers 15 years to adults, but can also be enjoyed by 12 to 14 year olds, subject to parental guidance. It met with immediate critical acclaim; was short-listed for a number of awards and was awarded the Eilis Dillon and Branford Boase Awards.

Solace of the Road
Published in January 2009, “Solace of the road” was shortlisted for both the Guardian’s Children’s Fiction Prize and Costa Book Award in 2009. It won the Children’s Books Ireland Bisto Honour Award in 2010. Solace of the Road has a lot to offer readers. Its picture of social workers is broadly sympathetic, and Holly’s acid tongue provides moments of grim humour. The compassionate, perceptive and realistic portrayal of a damaged child in real danger from both herself and her environment is unexpectedly life affirming.

The London Eye Mystery
A story for 9 to 12-year-olds, planned as the first in a series, this is a novel that works on a number of levels and is a compulsively readable, spine-tingling thriller with subtle characterization. It provides rich veins for exploration by reading groups and also by teachers in the classroom setting. It can be appreciated not least for Siobhan’s exploration of disability as a gift. “London Eye” won the NASEN/TES Special Educational Needs Children’s Book Award, was longlisted for the 2008 Carnegie Medal, and shortlisted for a range of other awards. In May 2008, it was posthumously awarded the Bisto Book of the Year prize.
Siobhan Dowd is an outstanding, multi award-winning, writer with strong Irish roots. In her short life she produced four superb novels, all very different and equally original. Siobhan successfully created fictional worlds that can be enjoyed by readers of all ages and literacy levels.

The issues she explores are a springboard for community wide discussions. Her four novels touch on a multitude of themes such as human frailty, love, death, discrimination, marginalisation, the vulnerability of children, family dysfunction, personal responsibility, coming of age, teenage sexuality, emigration, political conflict and personal heroism.

Siobhan’s own story - her Irish background and the Irishness of her writing; her activism, her work for prisoners and human rights; her commitment to making a real difference for disadvantaged children; her global anti-censorship work; her zest for life despite battling cancer - is a story worthy of celebration.

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