



## The mystery of the Loughshinny skeletons

This lesson is based on the fab enquiry approach developed by Ian Dawson. The students work using a mystery approach to work out who the skeletons were and how did they die? They will be using all the skills we want from historians: asking questions, generating hypotheses, using tentative language, investigating further and adapting their first ideas. And, they will pull of this work together at the end! This enquiry really models the enquiry process for them too.

### **Starter - grabbing their attention and raising questions**

- If you wanted to get them to do a little role play and pretend your class is involved be in an archaeological dig, you could adapt this brilliant start from [www.thinkinghistory.co.uk](http://www.thinkinghistory.co.uk) . You would begin by getting some pupils to kneel on the floor and get all of them to shut their eyes and listen as you say what is written on slide 2. When you are ready for them to open their eyes, reveal the skeleton on your screen (slide 3) - hopefully to cries of 'Oooh' and 'Wow'!
- *They now need to list the questions they have about the find. Give them a few minutes to do this before listening to their questions - list them maybe.*
- *Reveal your big question - who were these people and how did they die? To work this out they need more information so share clue B with them (slide 5)*

### **Main Course**

- *Having whetted their appetites, give out clues C-F (R1) which you have cut up and placed in an envelope, one between two.*
- *Let them read the clues. You want them to come up with their first answer or hypothesis to the question: who were these people and how*

*did they die? When they have each / pairs come up with their first answer, introduce them to the line of certainty. You could set one up in your room and then get kids to stand under it wherever they think they should go - encourage them to use the tentative language shown on slide 9.*

- *Now introduce our Irish historian who thinks he knows the answer. This is based on an orthodox view of Irish history - the Romans didn't ever invade... Read the full speech bubble to them (slide 11). Do they agree or disagree? What evidence from the clues do they have to support or challenge this view?*

### **Next steps**

- To solve this mystery, they are going to need some more clues. Hand out the second set of clues, G-I. Do these clues support the Irish historian's view? What evidence do they have that agrees or disagrees? OR do the clues lead them into thinking that they need a newer / different answer to the question, who were these people and how did they die? Go through the line of certainty process again...

### **To finish**

- When you are ready introduce the last clue - clue J on slide 19. This should help.
- They then need to finish by writing an answer to the question. Model this form them and encourage them to support their answer based on evidence and get them to use tentative language