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Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

## IRA ends its armed struggle

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**29 July, 2005**

## THE ARTICLE

### **IRA ends its armed struggle**

**BNE:** The IRA has taken a huge step forward for peace in Ireland. It formally announced it will lay down its guns and stop fighting against Britain. This ends thirty-five years of bloody violence within the U.K. For over three decades, the IRA bombed the British mainland and killed British soldiers in Northern Ireland. Tony Blair welcomed the bold move as an important moment in history. Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams said it presented a historic challenge and opportunity.

A former IRA prisoner read the statement the world had been eagerly awaiting. It stated: "All IRA units have been ordered to dump arms. All volunteers have been instructed to assist the development of purely political and democratic programs through exclusively peaceful means. Volunteers must not engage in any other activities whatsoever." The statement also declared that the goal was still of a united Ireland and "to end British rule".

The full IRA statement:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern\\_ireland/4724599.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/4724599.stm)

## **WARM-UPS**

**1. HISTORY:** In pairs / groups, talk about the big events that are part of your country's history. What was the most important decision your country has taken? What recent decisions have been made? What would have happened to your country if these decisions had not been made? Who are the important decision makers (alive or dead) in your country's history?

**2. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A think terrorist groups around the world will follow the IRA's example. Students B think terror groups around the world will not follow the IRA's example. Change partners often.

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Decisions / the IRA / arms / violence / British soldiers / moments in history / challenges / Irish freedom / peace / volunteers*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. VIOLENCE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "violence". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. MY STRUGGLES:** Do you have to struggle to do things every day? Is it a struggle to get out of bed in the morning? Is it a struggle to do your homework / the housework. In pairs / groups, brainstorm the things you struggle with every day. Talk about each of these struggles. Do you also struggle with the things brainstormed?

**6. BIG DECISIONS:** Have you made many big decisions in your life? Talk about the decisions you have made regarding the following:

- a. Career
- b. Family
- c. Shopping
- d. Relationships
- e. English
- f. Studying
- g. Hairstyle
- h. Health
- i. Home
- j. Other

Change partners and compare what you talked about.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. The IRA has ended its fight against Britain.                     | T / F |
| b. The IRA fought a decade-long war against the U.K.                | T / F |
| c. Tony Blair doubted the IRA's announcement was true.              | T / F |
| d. A political leader said the announcement presented a challenge.  | T / F |
| e. Many people around the world were waiting for this announcement. | T / F |
| f. All IRA volunteers have been ordered to dump their weapons.      | T / F |
| g. The IRA ordered its volunteers not to take part in violence.     | T / F |
| h. The goal of the IRA is still to end British rule in Ireland.     | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| a. huge        | brave      |
| b. lay         | anxiously  |
| c. welcomed    | massive    |
| d. bold        | ex         |
| e. opportunity | throw away |
| f. former      | joined     |
| g. eagerly     | greeted    |
| h. dump        | only       |
| i. exclusively | chance     |
| j. united      | put        |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| a. taken a huge           | of bloody violence |
| b. it will lay            | other activities   |
| c. thirty-five years      | eagerly awaiting   |
| d. Tony Blair welcomed    | rule               |
| e. an important moment    | step forward       |
| f. A former               | arms               |
| g. the world had been     | in history         |
| h. ordered to dump        | the bold move      |
| i. must not engage in any | IRA prisoner       |
| j. end British            | down its guns      |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**WHICH WORD?** Strike through the incorrect word from the pairs in **bold**.

### IRA ends its armed struggle

**BNE:** The IRA has taken a **huge** / **tiny** step forward for peace in Ireland. It formally announced it will lay down its guns and **start** / **stop** fighting against Britain. This ends thirty-five years of **bloody** / **watery** violence within the U.K. For over three **decades** / **centuries**, the IRA bombed the British mainland and killed British soldiers in Northern Ireland. Tony Blair welcomed the **bald** / **bold** move as an important moment in **history** / **geography**. Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams said it presented a historic challenge and opportunity.

A former IRA prisoner read the **statement** / **state** the world had been eagerly awaiting. It stated: "All IRA **units** / **nuts** have been ordered to dump **legs** / **arms**. All volunteers have been instructed to assist the development of purely political and democratic programs through exclusively **peaceful** / **violent** means. Volunteers must not engage in any other activities **whatsoever** / **whoever**." The statement also declared that the goal was still of a united Ireland and "to end British **rule** / **ruler**".

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**lay**' and '**down**'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. WHICH WORD?** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "BIG DECISIONS" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about big decisions.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| • huge      | • eagerly     |
| • lay       | • dump        |
| • bombed    | • assist      |
| • soldiers  | • exclusively |
| • bold      | • whatsoever  |
| • challenge | • rule        |

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Do you keep up with news on Northern Ireland?
- d. What do you know about Northern Ireland?
- e. What do you know about the Northern Ireland peace process?
- f. What do you think of the IRA's decision?
- g. Do you think terrorist groups around the world might follow the IRA's example and lay down their weapons?
- h. Are there any lessons to be learned from the Northern Ireland peace process?
- i. Do you think there should be a united Ireland?
- j. Would you fight for your country?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. What big decisions have you made recently?
- d. Do you think there is ever any need for armed struggle?
- e. Do you think Britain should end its involvement in other areas or countries around the world?
- f. Have there been similar armed struggles in your country?
- g. Do you think people who engage in armed struggles are terrorists?
- h. What is the biggest decision your country has taken?
- i. Do you think all wars around the world will end one day?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## **SPEAKING**

**DECISIONS:** You have many big decisions do you have to make about your future. What do you have to think about before you make your decisions? Write these things in the table below. Ask your partner(s) for advice.

DECISION	THINGS TO THINK ABOUT
Career	
Family	
Shopping	
Relationships	
English	
Studying	
Hairstyle	
Health	
Home	
Other	

Change partners and explain what you discussed with your previous partner(s). Try to get more advice to help your previous partner.

Return to your original partner and give them the new advice.



## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **IRA ends its armed struggle**

**BNE:** The IRA has taken a \_\_\_\_\_ forward for peace in Ireland. It formally announced it will \_\_\_\_\_ down its guns and stop fighting against Britain. This ends thirty-five years of \_\_\_\_\_ violence within the U.K. For over three decades, the IRA bombed the British mainland and killed British \_\_\_\_\_ in Northern Ireland. Tony Blair welcomed the \_\_\_\_\_ move as an important moment in history. Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams said it presented a \_\_\_\_\_ challenge and opportunity.

A \_\_\_\_\_ IRA prisoner read the statement the world had been \_\_\_\_\_ awaiting. It stated: "All IRA units have been ordered to \_\_\_\_\_ arms. All volunteers have been instructed to assist the development of purely \_\_\_\_\_ and democratic programs through exclusively peaceful means. Volunteers must not \_\_\_\_\_ in any other activities whatsoever." The statement also declared that the goal was still of a \_\_\_\_\_ Ireland and "to end British rule".

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on Northern Ireland and the IRA. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. ARMED STRUGGLE:** Make a poster outlining another armed struggle around the world. Include information about the history, aims, armies, leaders and the future. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all describe similar struggles?

**4. LETTER TO THE IRA:** Write a letter to the head of the IRA. Tell him/her what you think of the recent announcement to end violence and lay down arms. Read your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. T      b. F      c. F      d. T      e. T      f. T      g. T      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. huge	massive
b. lay	put
c. welcomed	greeted
d. bold	brave
e. opportunity	chance
f. former	ex
g. eagerly	anxiously
h. dump	throw away
i. exclusively	only
j. united	joined

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. taken a huge	step forward
b. it will lay	down its guns
c. thirty-five years	of bloody violence
d. Tony Blair welcomed	the bold move
e. an important moment	in history
f. A former	IRA prisoner
g. the world had been	eagerly awaiting
h. ordered to dump	arms
i. must not engage in any	other activities
j. end British	rule

### WHICH WORD?

#### IRA ends its armed struggle

**BNE:** The IRA has taken a **huge** step forward for peace in Ireland. It formally announced it will lay down its guns and **stop** fighting against Britain. This ends thirty-five years of **bloody** violence within the U.K. For over three **decades**, the IRA bombed the British mainland and killed British soldiers in Northern Ireland. Tony Blair welcomed the **bold** move as an important moment in **history**. Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams said it presented a historic challenge and opportunity.

A former IRA prisoner read the **statement** the world had been eagerly awaiting. It stated: "All IRA **units** have been ordered to dump **arms**. All volunteers have been instructed to assist the development of purely political and democratic programs through exclusively **peaceful** means. Volunteers must not engage in any other activities **whatsoever**." The statement also declared that the goal was still of a united Ireland and "to end British **rule**".