

# The 1916 Easter Rising

- Walt:** - What the main events of the 1916 Rising were.
- What happened on each day of the Rising.
  - Learn about the context for the Rising.

## Why was there a rising in 1916?

- The United Kingdom of Great Britain ruled Ireland at the time, however the Irish did not like this.
- **Home Rule**- Ireland wanted to have their own Parliament in Dublin to make their own laws. (They were being ruled by the Westminster Parliament in England)
- **"England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity"** -> England were fighting against Germany in WWI at the time so Irish Nationalists believed now was their best opportunity to attack.

What is an Irish **Nationalist**?

An **Irish nationalist** is generally one who seeks independence of Ireland from Great Britain.

What is an Irish **Unionist**?

**Unionists** wished to see the Act of Union which in 1801 had joined the Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland.

## Who was involved in the 1916 Rising?

- **The Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB)**- This was a group of Irish Volunteers who believed force was the only way to get freedom from Great Britain.
- **The Irish Citizen Army** were another group of men who were set up in 1913 to protest against British Rule. Their leader was James Connolly.

## What happened on Easter Monday 1916?

### Monday 24th April

150 Irish Volunteers march from Liberty Hall to the General Post Office (GPO). Pádraig Pearse was the commander-in-chief. At the GPO, Pearse reads the Proclamation of the Irish Republic. The Irish Flag is raised over the GPO. Other groups of Volunteers occupy and take over other buildings around Dublin such as Jacob's Biscuit Factory, The Four Courts, Boland's Mill and The College of Surgeons. The GPO becomes the headquarters of the Easter Rising. Two flags are raised above the GPO – a tricolour flag and a green flag with the words 'Irish Republic' on it.

Irish Republic



- Pádraig Pearse reads the Proclamation of Ireland (declaring Irish freedom from Great Britain).



## Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> of April, 1916

Looters begin to empty shops on Sackville Street (O'Connell Street) for their goods. The British are not successful in their efforts to retake the GPO, leaving many of their army and horses dead. Inside the GPO, all is well and calm. However, Pearse announces that there is a shortage of ammunition. The Volunteers are preparing for a British invasion and have begun to surround the city.



## Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> of April

At Boland's Mill, Eamon de Valera and a cohort of Volunteers ambush a group of British soldiers and succeed. Gunfire can be heard all over the city. The British have sent their gunboat, The Helga up the Liffey, and it is firing at Liberty Hall. More than 200 British soldiers are killed.



## Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> of April

James Connolly is injured close to Sackville Street. He returns to the GPO to seek help. The fighting continues.



**28<sup>th</sup> of April** - The GPO is in flames. Many of the Volunteers are dead and others are badly injured. Despair hits across the city as defeat begins to set in. Pearse orders the evacuation of the GPO.

**29<sup>th</sup> of April** - Pearse orders the Volunteers to surrender. Elizabeth O'Farrell, a nurse, carries a white flag to signify this. Pearse writes a surrender document, ending the Rising.

1. What is meant by the term "England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity"?
2. Give 2 reasons for the 1916 Rising?
3. What is meant by the term "Home Rule"?
4. Explain the term "Nationalist"?
5. Name the 2 groups involved in the Easter Rising?
6. Why do you think Ireland were forced to surrender?

- **Activity:** Can you match the 7 signatories on the Proclamation of Ireland to the correct name? Use a computer if you have to.



Eamonn Ceannt,  
Galway

Joseph Plunkett,  
Dublin

Pádraig Pearse ,  
Dublin

Seán MacDiarmuida,  
Leitrim

Thomas Clarke, Isle  
of Wight

James Connolly,  
Scotland

Tomas McDonagh,  
Tipperary



