

Worksheet 4A: DVD-SESE

Watch the short history films and complete the tasks below.

History of the GAA.

1. When was the GAA founded?
2. Name some of the people who founded the GAA.
3. What had happened in Ireland forty years before the founding of the GAA?
4. Why was the setting up of the GAA important?

Find out more about the history of the GAA at www.cul4kidz.com

GAA in 1948.

1. What event does this film cover?
2. Which teams were taking part?
3. Name some of the methods of transport shown on the film.
4. Why was it important to arrive early for the game?
5. Who won the game?
6. List all the differences you can think of between going to a GAA game in 1948 and going now.

The Magic of Hurley Making.

1. How is the hurley made?
2. What material is used to make a hurley?
3. What tools are used to make a hurley?
4. How does the hurley maker describe a "good hurley"?
5. What might the original hurley have been similar to?
6. What was used to smooth the hurley in the "old days"?

Which was your favourite film in this section? Why?



Worksheet 4B: The Early Days of Hurling

The first mention of the game of hurling was over 3000 years ago, at the Battle of Moytura (which is in Co. Mayo). The battle took place in 1272 B.C. and involved two mythical tribes called the *Firbolg* and the *Tuatha De Dannan*. Before the battle the Firbolg, who ruled Ireland at the time, challenged the Tuatha De Danann invaders to a game of hurling. There were 27 players on each team for the match. The Firbolg won the game, but they lost the battle.

The game of hurling was an important part of life for young men preparing to be warriors. The most famous warrior was Setanta or Cúchulainn. When he was only eight years old Setanta left his home in Cooley to join his uncle King Conor MacNessa at his palace in Eamhain Macha. There was a school there for young boys to learn how to become warriors. The pupils were called the Macra. When he arrived at the palace Setanta was excited to see the other boys playing hurling. He sat watching for a while and then decided to join in. He didn't realise that strangers were not allowed to play in these games. He got the ball and ran with it on his hurley to the other end of the field as no other boy could take it off him. The young warriors attacked him by throwing their hurleys like spears. But he blocked them with his own and then charged into his attackers, knocking them to the ground. Some fled to the palace where the king saved them.



King Conor called the boys together and introduced them to his nephew. They all returned to the field and continued the game, which the King watched. Setanta was the star of the game and no other boy could match his speed or skill. His uncle was very proud as Setanta soon became the school's star pupil. No other boy could beat him at running, wrestling, hurling or spear throwing.

Tasks:

1. **Who was Conor MacNessa?**
2. **Who were the 'Macra'?**
3. **How did the other boys feel when Setanta joined the game?**
4. **Why did the king feel proud of Setanta?**
5. **Illustrate your favourite scene from the story and explain why you like it.**
6. **List the different feelings Setanta might have felt at different times in this story.**
7. **Tell the story again in your groups.**



Worksheet 4C: Cúchulainn

One day King Conor received an invitation to a feast in the house of his blacksmith who was called Culann. Setanta had never met Culann so the king decided to bring his young nephew to the feast. However, when the king was leaving Setanta was in the middle of a game of hurling, but he promised that he would follow later. When Culann had welcomed the king and his guests into his house he asked if everyone had arrived. The king forgot about Setanta and replied that all the guests were present. On hearing this, Culann released a savage hound to guard the house during the feast.



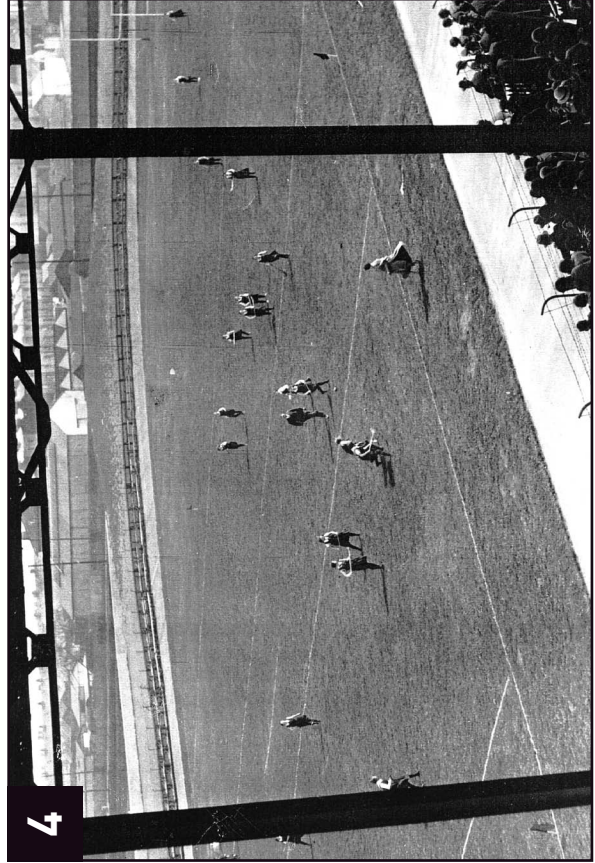
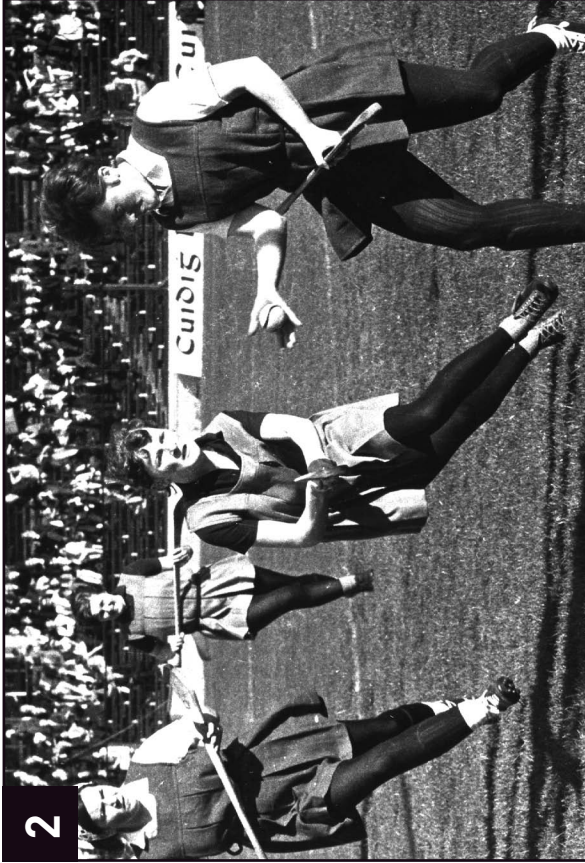
When Setanta's match ended he hurried off to join his uncle at the feast. He brought his hurley, spear and sliotar with him to shorten the journey. He would puck the sliotar into the air, then throw the spear to hit it and catch both before they hit the ground. Soon he arrived at the entrance to Culann's house. Suddenly, the hound leapt at Setanta and tried to attack him. Setanta grabbed his sliotar and hit it with all his strength. The sliotar went straight into the hound's mouth, lodged in his throat and killed him.

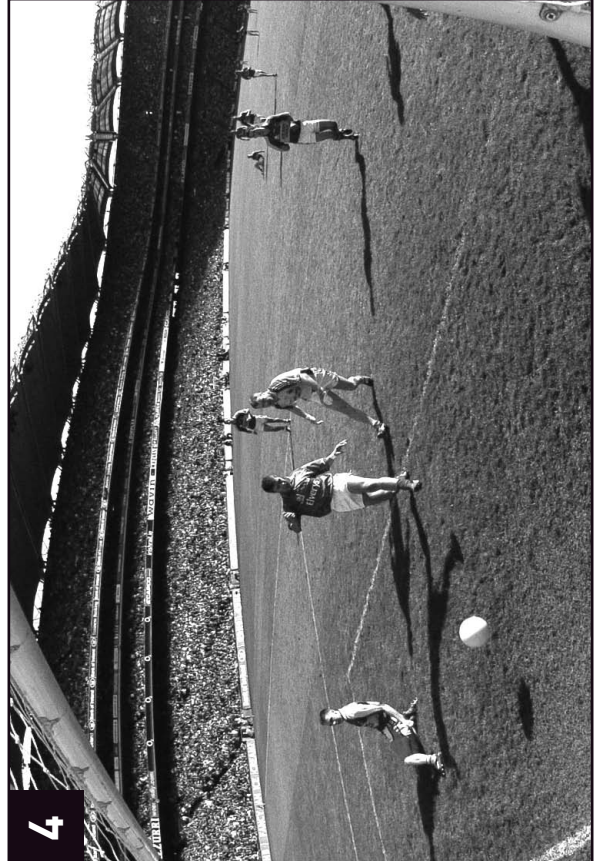
When the king heard all the noise he suddenly remembered Setanta and he was struck with fear that the hound had killed him. However, the guests were amazed to find Setanta standing over the dead hound. Conor was delighted but Culann was angry that his hound had been killed. Setanta promised that he would find a new hound to guard the house and pledged that he would guard Culann's castle until then. The Irish for a hound is cú (coo), so King Conor decided that Setanta would be known as Cúchulainn (The Hound of Culann) from that day.

Tasks:

1. ***Make a list of feelings that Setanta had at different times in the story. Write down what event in the story made him feel a particular way and why.***
2. ***Who was Culann?***
3. ***How did Setanta shorten the journey?***
4. ***What happened when Setanta arrived at the feast?***
5. ***How did the king react when he saw that Setanta was alive?***
6. ***What does the name 'Cúchulainn' mean?***
7. ***Illustrate your favourite scene from this story.***







Worksheet 4F: Players from the Past

Christy Ring from Cloyne played for Cork in the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Many people see him as the greatest player of all time. He was named in the right half-forward position on the GAA's 'Hurling Team of the Millennium'.



Christy played his first game for Cork's hurlers in the autumn of 1939, playing in a National League game. In 1941 the Cork senior hurlers won their first All-Ireland title in ten years, with Ring playing at right half-forward. In 1954 Cork played their third All-Ireland final in a row, this time against Wexford. In front of a then record attendance of nearly 85,000, Ring, as captain, won his eighth All-Ireland medal. This is a record no other hurler has beaten.

In 1956 Christy made his tenth and last appearance in an All-Ireland final. He was also chasing his ninth All-Ireland medal. In the last minute the Wexford goalkeeper, Art Foley, saved Ring's brilliant shot with his hurley and quickly played the ball up the field, where another brilliant hurler, Nicky Rackard, scored the winning goal for Wexford. Even though Cork lost, Wexford defenders Nick O'Donnell and Bobby Rackard showed great sportsmanship as they lifted Ring onto their shoulders and carried him off the field.

Christy's record of medals and trophies is amazing. During his career he won eight All-Ireland senior hurling championship medals (1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1946, 1952, 1953, 1954) and four National hurling league medals (1940, 1941, 1948 and 1953) in the red jersey of Cork. He won 18 Railway Cup medals with Munster, appearing in 22 finals between 1942 and 1963. At club level Ring won 14 county hurling championship medals with Glen Rovers and a football championship medal with St. Nicholas's.

Did you know?

There are three tiers for the All-Ireland hurling championship. Teams compete for the Liam McCarthy Cup, the Christy Ring Cup and the Nicky Rackard Cup.

Tasks:

1. How many medals did Christy Ring win?
2. How do you know that the Wexford players had great respect for Christy Ring?
3. When did Christy Ring play his first game for Cork?
4. Describe the end of the 1956 All-Ireland final?
5. Design a timeline showing Christy Ring's career.
6. Who were the most recent winners of the Christy Ring Cup and Nicky Rackard Cup?
7. Find out more about the GAA's hurling Team of the Millennium on www.gaa.ie.
8. Research a famous former player from the past from your county and write a biographical account similar to the one above.
9. On display in the GAA Museum is a collection of medals belonging to Christy Ring including one minor hurling medal, seven senior hurling medals, four hurling league medals and 17 Railway Cup medals. Why not visit and count them yourself to see how many you can get?

