



From Conflict to Peace

The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement 25 Years On

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Menu

Search our website

[Home](#) > [Education](#) > [Classroom resources](#) > Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement

Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement

From Conflict to Peace – 25 Years On

The National Archives has created a set of resources for use in secondary level school assemblies to mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement which ended the conflict in Northern Ireland.

A 7-minute video gives an overview of the conflict and the peace process that brought it to an end, plus details about what the Agreement did and the results of it. This can be used as part of an assembly presentation which should take around 15-20 minutes depending on the amount of time allowed for discussion at the beginning about what students know already about Northern Ireland and the Agreement.

There are additional resources designed to embed knowledge about the Agreement and support student discussion about how it successfully brought an end to the violence and established a new era of peace in Northern Ireland.

Watch the video on YouTube

Download the BGFA25 Resource Pack (.zip 277MB)

Or click the image below to watch the video on YouTube, then follow the activities below.

THE

A woman with short grey hair, wearing a white sweater, is holding a book titled 'AGREEMENT' in front of her. The book cover features a silhouette of a person and the text 'AGREEMENT' and '25 Years On'. In the background, a person in a uniform with a rainbow flag is visible.

A square QR code with a black and white pixelated pattern. The word 'bitly' is written in a cursive font at the bottom right of the QR code.

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Assembly and Follow-on Discussion Resources



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Curriculum & Exam Syllabus Resources



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What was the most important factor which led to the achievement of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement?

Substantiating Historical Interpretations
using Primary Sources

We asked five historians the following question...

What was the most important factor which led to the achievement of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement?

- Naturally, they all said it was too simplistic to say that any single factor brought about the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.
- However, each identified a factor, group or individual that they considered to be the most important.
- They were only allowed a maximum of 250 words for their interpretations.
- We have provided a brief biographical background to each historian before presenting their answer.

Meet the historians



Prof. Henry Patterson
Ulster University



Dr Eleanor Williams
Cardiff University



Prof. Tom Hennessey
Canterbury Christ Church
University



Dr Caoimhe Nic Dháibhéid
Sheffield University



Frank Sheridan
National Archives of Ireland

Assessing the Interpretations using the Sources

Read through each historian's biography and assess which factor they may propose is the most important.

1. Changes in the demands of the Republican movement
2. Participation of paramilitary groups in the Peace Process
3. The role of international mediators
4. The role of Unionist leaders
5. The role of Irish politicians

Content of source

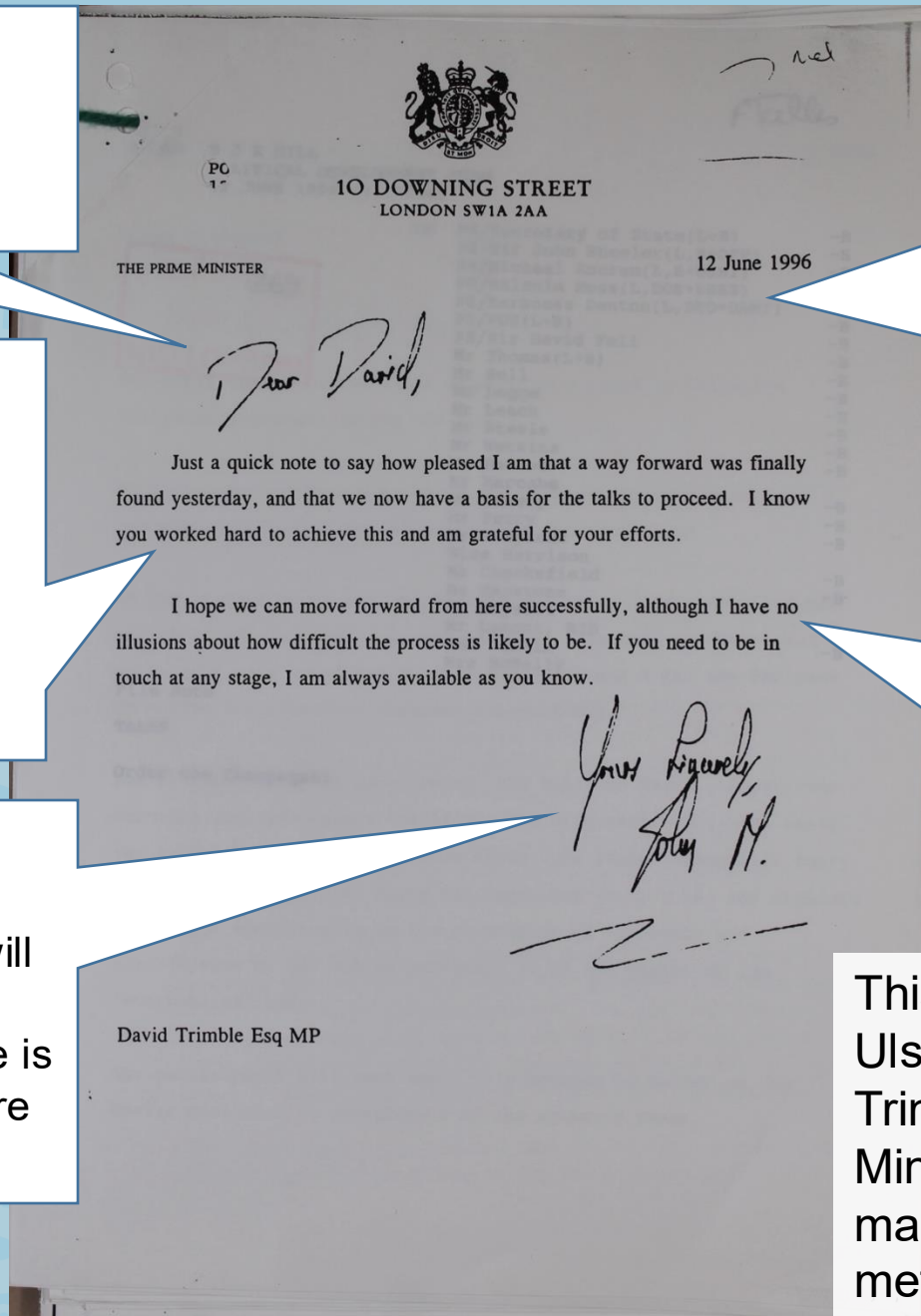
The Prime Minister was thanking Trimble for his contributions in the meeting.

How things work

We can infer that Trimble helped during the meeting. It might be reasonable to suggest that Trimble might have spoken to others behind the scenes at the meeting to help reassure or persuade them.

Attitudes

The Prime Minister seems genuinely grateful to Trimble. He also says he will always be available to talk. We can reasonably infer from this that Trimble is seen as an important and helpful figure by the UK Government.



Context of source

The meeting the PM refers to was one of many meetings which had taken place since the mid 1980s. Many of these meetings had been in secret. By 1996 there was a Peace Process, but there were still many obstacles.

Attitudes

We can reasonably infer that some groups were hostile to the plans for a new government in Northern Ireland.

This is a letter from UK PM John Major to Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) leader David Trimble on June 12th 1996. The Prime Minister is writing after he, Trimble and many other politicians and officials had met to work out plans for a new way to run Northern Ireland.