

Welcome to Summerhill College, Sligo.



*You may feel a little **nervous** or **excited** about picking your subjects when you are starting in Summerhill College.
We are here to help and guide you in making the correct choices.*



*Every student is different so it is very important that you pick the subjects that suit **Your** interests and ability.
You also need to look at what implications these decisions will have when you move into senior cycle.*

Maria Taylor - Guidance Counsellor - Summerhill College, Sligo.

How do I choose my subjects?

This may be the first time you have had the chance to choose which subjects you want to study. It's important that you choose your subjects carefully, as getting the right mix of subjects will affect your future in school, third level choices and opportunities in the workforce.

Make sure to choose your favourite optional subjects. If you are good at a subject, it will come more naturally to you, and if you enjoy it, you will excel at it. If you find an area that you are particularly good at, you could boost your ability by choosing subjects which complement each other. Don't pick a subject just because your friend is doing it!!

The core subjects are **Irish, English and Maths** which you will study from first year through to Leaving Certificate level. These are taught at a common level in first year. In second year, you can decide to do Higher Level or Ordinary Level depending on your ability in the subject. It is **ESSENTIAL** that you seek advice before choosing which level to do from your teacher or Guidance Counsellor. This can have repercussions for subject level in Senior Cycle. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible for most students to complete a Higher Level paper for Leaving certificate if you have not completed the Higher Level paper for Junior Certificate.

Please note : N.B. You **MUST** have an **OFFICIAL EXEMPTION** from the Department of Education and Skills to be exempted from Irish. If you have a Learning Difficulty or any Special Educational Need, you **MUST** inform the SEN team or SEN co-ordinator (*Ms Lorraine O'Mahoney*) here in Summerhill College. This is **ESSENTIAL** to ensure that we can provide the appropriate support for your son during his time here.

Junior Cycle students here in Summerhill College (1st to 3rd Years) must study Science, History, Geography and Religion as examination Subjects. Information Technology and Wellbeing are compulsory non-examination subjects.

Summerhill College offers a choice of the following subjects:

<i>Spanish</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Materials technology (Wood)</i>
<i>Business Studies</i>	<i>Technical Graphics</i>	<i>Engineering</i>
<i>Home Economics</i>	<i>Art, Craft and Design</i>	<i>Music</i>

Subject: English

English is an international language spoken or being learned by people in almost every part of the world. In Junior Cycle English, you will learn how to communicate more effectively with others and to express your point of view. You will also have many opportunities to use your imagination and to find out about great writers.

1. What will I learn in English class?

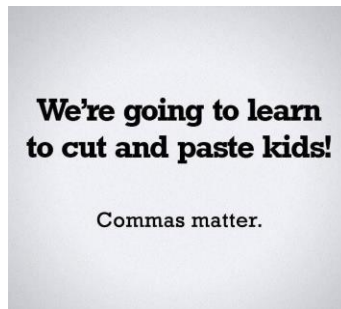
- How to communicate clearly.
- How to speak and write in interesting ways about things that happen in your daily life
- How to explore different ways of using English e.g. interviewing, storytelling, describing, newspaper reporting, writing advertisements or jokes etc.
- How to find out about the great writers of Ireland and the world, and enjoy reading some of their work.

2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

You may be asked to:

- write about your experiences and your opinions
- write a letter or a report or a speech
- respond to a poem
- write about a novel and a play that you have studied
- talk about TV programmes or newspaper articles or advertisements.

You may also be shown some short reading passages and you will answer questions on them. You can take the exam at Ordinary or Higher level. When the time comes to decide, your teacher / Guidance Counsellor will help you choose the level that suits you best.



3. Is learning English similar to what I did in primary school?

Yes, you will do similar work and you will continue to gain confidence in speaking, reading and writing in English. As in primary school, learning English will help you to develop your communication skills. You will continue to learn about the wonderful power of words and to develop your imagination.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

It is hugely important to have an excellent command of English for all career pathways. The better you are at English the more you are likely to enjoy speaking, reading and writing. Any third level course in English provides you with skills for a variety of positions in business, government, research, education, publishing, as well as in the cultural, entertainment, and communications industries.

Subject: Gaeilge/Irish

The aim of Junior Cycle Irish is to improve your ability to communicate through Irish. You will focus on improving your language skills through concentrating on four areas; your spoken language through speaking; your listening skills through listening to others, CDs; your written skills through writing in Irish, and your reading skills through reading passages, poems and stories written in Irish.

1. What will I learn in Irish class?

- how to develop your skills of communication through Irish
- how to use the Irish that you already have and add to it!
- how to develop your skills in listening, reading, and speaking in Irish
- how to write letters, postcards, essays, and stories in Irish.



2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

The Junior Cycle Irish exam is examined in two (or three ways):

- an aural exam - you will listen to a CD and answer questions
- a written exam - you will answer questions about what you have studied
- an oral exam (optional) - this consists of a conversation between you and your examiner.

You can take the exam at Higher, Ordinary or Foundation level. When the time comes to decide, your teacher / Counsellor will help you choose the level that suits you best.

3. Is learning Irish similar to what I did in primary school?

You will build on the many activities you have carried out in primary school such as creative writing, talking 'as Gaeilge' in pairs and in groups, listening to radio clips, watching TV clips and reading from a range of Irish poems and stories. All of the Irish you have learned so far will be of great help to you in Junior Cycle Irish.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

You will have the advantage of being bilingual. Irish is one of our official languages as well as being an official language of the European Union. Careers in which you may develop and use your Irish language skills include; teaching, working as civil servants, careers in business, law, and communication, and translation services. You need to have Higher Level Irish in order to train as a primary school teacher.

Subject: Maths

In Mathematics, you will develop your problem-solving skills and your ability to present logical arguments. You will be better able to use what you learned in Mathematics in real life situations in everyday life and work.

1. What will I learn in Maths class?

You will learn all about • sets • number systems • algebra • functions and graphs • trigonometry • geometry • statistics • applied arithmetic and measure.



2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

Ordinary and Higher level students will sit two written exam papers each consisting of six questions. Foundation level students will sit one written exam paper consisting of six questions. You can take the exam at Higher, Ordinary or Foundation level. When the time comes to decide, your teacher / Guidance Counsellor will help you choose the level that suits you best.

3. Is learning maths similar to what I did in primary school?

You will already have learned about number, algebra, shape and space, measures and data in mathematics in primary school. Junior Cycle Mathematics aims to build on this. Many Junior Cycle Mathematics teachers use practical work and real-life materials in their classrooms. Students often take part in investigations and project work. This is similar to the way you learnt Mathematics in primary school.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

Mathematics is an essential component of so many aspects of our lives. Studying mathematics prepares you for business calculations, for handling your money sensibly and for courses in science, engineering and technology. You should see mathematics as an opportunity to strengthen your thinking and problem solving skills.

In Leaving Cert, you can also choose to do **Applied Maths** as an optional subject. Applied Maths is, as its name suggests, the study of practical applications of mathematics to the real world and physical problems. It is typically associated with engineering and physics, but also finds use in economics, finance, business, environmental studies, and even chemistry and medicine.

Subject: Science

We come across science in everyday things in the world around us, both living and nonliving. Studying Science in school can help you to understand the importance of science in our lives and in the environment.

1. What will I learn in Science class?

The Science course covers the three sciences:

Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Biology is the science of living things.

You will learn about:

- plants and animals including humans
- the environment and how to care for it.

Chemistry deals with the composition of substances and their properties.

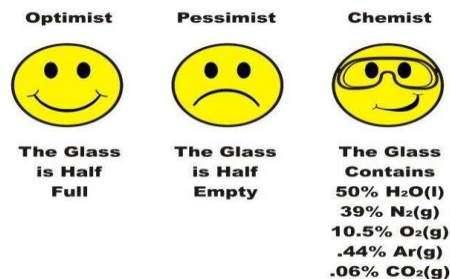
You will learn about:

- the materials that make up the world around us
- how materials can change and be changed.

Physics is the science of matter and energy and how they interact.

You will learn about:

- forces and energy
- how things work.



2. What is the Junior Cycle Science exam like?

In Junior Cycle Science you will be examined in two ways:

- course work - during the three years of the Junior Cycle you report on the investigations that you carry out in class.
- written examination - you will answer questions on the science topics that you have studied and on the skills (e.g.science investigation skills) that you have developed.

3. Is learning Science similar to anything I did in primary school?

In primary school you learned about living things, energy and forces, materials, and about care for the environment. In Junior Cycle Science you will learn how to work as a scientist in a laboratory.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

In third level, there are many different types of science courses on offer and many different careers open to science students. These include becoming a: pharmacist, radiographer, doctor, dentist, technician, psychologist, astronomer, teacher, vet and researcher. You can choose to study **Biology, Chemistry, Physics** and **Agricultural Science** in Senior Cycle.

Subject: History

History involves the study of people who lived in the past - ordinary people as well as famous people. In History, you will learn about the sources of evidence on which we base our understanding of their lives. You will find out about important changes that, over time, have helped to shape the world in which you live.

1. What will I learn in History class?

You will learn

- how people have lived during different periods
- how we find out about the past
- how important changes took place during different periods, what caused the changes and how people were affected by the changes and
- a broad understanding of local, Irish and international history

2. Is the Junior Cycle exam like?

You will:

- answer questions on different historical sources, such as photographs, cartoons and letters
- write accounts of what life was like for different types of people in the past
- answer questions about important events that happened in the past.

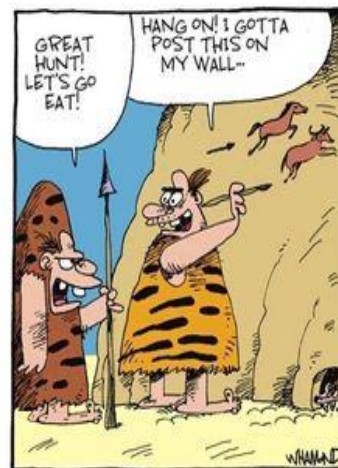
You can take the exam at Higher or at Ordinary level.

3. Is learning History similar to what I did in primary school?

When you studied History in primary school, you developed your knowledge and understanding of people, events and developments in the past. Junior Cycle History continues to build on these areas.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

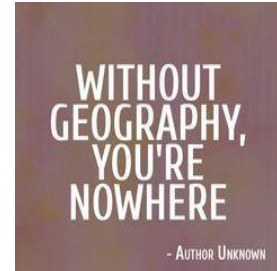
You will gain experience of working with evidence and learn to tell the difference between fact and opinion. This is a very important skill. History is a very practical subject because it involves learning about people, countries, societies and cultures. History can help you in many different careers, especially those linked with law, politics, heritage, tourism, research and the environment.



Early Facebook

Subject: Geography

In Geography you will study about places, people and what shapes the environment. You will learn how the environment influences people, and how they change the environment. You will develop your ability to draw and understand maps, graphs and diagrams, as well as studying photographs and collecting information outside the classroom through fieldwork.



1. What will I learn in Geography class?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- where people live (the human habitat) and why they live there (population and settlement patterns)
- the natural world and what influences and shapes it
- the world of human activities and what influences and shapes it
- how to get and use information from different sources such as textbooks, maps, photographs, graphs, diagrams, newspapers, DVDs and the Internet.

2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

In the examination, you will answer twenty short questions in the first part of the paper, and three questions requiring longer answers in the second part. There will be questions on map-reading, and on explaining photographs, diagrams and charts. There is also an optional field-study project.

3. Is learning Geography similar to anything I did in primary school?

In primary school, you have studied Geography as part of SESE. You have also learned about many geographical ideas through studying the local, national and global environment. Junior Cycle Geography builds on these geographical ideas.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

Everybody uses geography in their daily lives. When you think of where to go on holiday or wonder what tomorrow's weather will be like, you are thinking about geography. When you look at an atlas map, or a town plan, or a weather map, you use what we learn in Geography. Geography prepares you for careers in town planning, outdoor pursuits education, weather forecasting, tourism and transport. Geography keeps you informed of topics which arise in conversation, current affairs, newspaper reports, and on TV, such as climate change, renewable energy and aid to poorer nations.

Subject: Religious Education

In Religious Education (RE) you will learn about what people believe; why they believe and how these beliefs influence their own lives, the lives of others and the world around us. You will explore how many religions, particularly Christian religions, have shaped the Ireland you live in today.

1. What will I learn in Religion class?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- about at least one of the major world religions in detail
- how different communities of faith organise themselves: their leaders, celebrations, forms of worship and guidelines about their members' behaviour
- the different religious and non-religious ways of trying to understand the world
- how religious beliefs shape some ideas and laws.



2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

During the school year you will choose one topic from twelve and research this for a special project called a journal. Before your exam you will complete a booklet describing your journal work. In the exam, you will read and respond to different types of questions: short-answer questions, a comprehension passage, longer questions and some photos or pictures. You can take the exam at Higher or Ordinary level.

3. Is learning about Religion similar to what I did in primary school?

Different primary schools offer different kinds of religious education: you may have participated in an Ethics Programme; your religious education may have been separate from school; or you may not have taken part in a religion class yet. You will still be able to study Junior Cycle RE because you will use a lot of the things you have learned already, such as communicating your ideas, questioning, working in groups and finding out information using technology.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

RE will be useful to you in:

- helping you understand how people make decisions, how people are inspired by their religious beliefs, how conflict happens and how it can be solved
- helping you solve problems and thinking for yourself when working with others
- planning to travel to or live in other countries.

You can also continue studying RE as a Leaving Cert subject.

Subject: Wellbeing

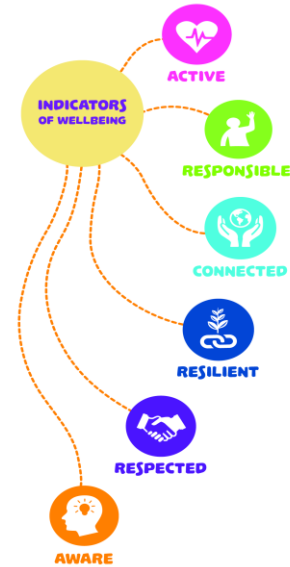
As part of the new Junior Cycle, students will be experiencing a new area of learning called Wellbeing. This will build on the work schools are already doing in support of students' wellbeing and make it more visible for students.

1. What will I learn in Wellbeing class?

Through the Wellbeing programme, students will learn about the skills to enable them to protect and promote their own wellbeing and that of others.

The four main pillars of the junior cycle Wellbeing programme are

- Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE),
- Physical Education (PE),
- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and
- Guidance Education
- Study skills



2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

This is a non-exam subject.

3. Is Wellbeing similar to anything I did in primary school?

Wellbeing will build on what you learned about 'Myself and the Wider World' in Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE).

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

We often associate wellbeing with mental or physical health. Wellbeing is broader than this. Wellbeing includes social, emotional, physical, spiritual, intellectual and environmental aspects. Learning in Wellbeing focuses on the students' journey across all aspects of wellbeing. While it is recognised that the journey towards wellbeing continues throughout our lives, it is one where schools play an important part.

Wellbeing matters not only because it leads to students doing better at school but it can also influence young people's outcomes as adults.

Optional Subjects

Subject: Business Studies

Business Studies helps you to make more informed decisions in the everyday business of living. It gives you a better understanding of the world of work. It encourages you to think about how and why people start up in business and why you too might also consider starting a business.

1. What will I learn in Business Studies class?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- good communication skills such as report writing
- how to collect, organise, and record financial information for yourself, your family, for clubs you may be a member of, and for businesses you may be employed with in the future
- what your rights and responsibilities are as a consumer (someone who buys or uses goods and services - that's you!)
- how to calculate your wages when you start working
- about why our membership of the European Union is so important to our economy.



2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

Business will be examined at a common level. The students will be examined on three main areas; Personal Finance, Enterprise and Economy. Personal Finance focuses on students making informed decisions to effectively and responsibly manage their financial resources. Enterprise encourages students to identify opportunities and develops an understanding of the financial, marketing and operational functions of an organisation. Our Economy enables students to understand the dynamic relationship between the local, national and international economic situation

3. Is learning business similar to anything I did in primary school?

The work you did in English will be a good help to you in letter and report writing. Your mathematics skills will help you to calculate wages, exchange rates, interest on savings and the cost of loans. Your knowledge of Ireland and the European Union from Geography (SESE) will also be of use to you in Business Studies.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

Business Studies helps you to make wise decisions about saving and spending your money. You will learn about the world of work which will introduce you to many possible careers such as: accountancy, finance, sales, marketing, and management. It also gives you a good foundation for the three Leaving Certificate business subjects: **Accounting, Business, and Economics**. If you wish to study any of these subjects for the Leaving Certificate, it would be helpful for you to have studied Junior Cycle Business Studies.

Subject: Modern Languages - French and Spanish

Learning a modern language is a very useful skill. By reading, writing and listening to the language in class, you will develop your language skills.

1. What will I learn in French/Spanish class?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how to speak in the language about yourself, your family and friends, your hobbies, your school, etc. This will help you to talk to people who speak the language
- the skills of listening to, reading and writing in the language
- the grammar of the language
- information about the countries where people speak the language, and their way of life.



2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

In your French/Spanish exam

- you will listen to and answer questions on conversations, news items, etc. in the language
- you will read and answer questions on texts like advertisements, articles, recipes and celebrity profiles in the language
- you will write texts like notes, cards and postcards in the language.



3. Is learning French/Spanish anything like what I did in primary school?

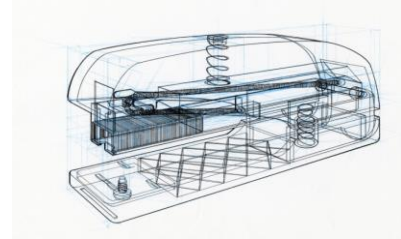
You may have been learning English, Irish, or even a modern language already, so you already know a lot about how languages work. This will be of great help to you as you make comparisons between the languages.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

Students who leave third level with a language as part of their degree are highly sought after by employers. You will also find modern languages useful in your personal life for travelling and in many careers including tourism, catering, education, business and translation services.

Subject: Technical Graphics

Technical Graphics is one of the technology subjects offered at Junior Cycle. In Technical Graphics you will learn how to represent 3-D objects on paper and on computer. You will develop problem solving and creative thinking skills through the solution of graphical problems.



1. What will I learn in Technical Graphics class?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how to produce drawings using drawing equipment, freehand sketches and computers
- how to read and interpret drawings and diagrams
- how graphics relate to the design and manufacture of products
- create models of recognisable items on the computer
- use freehand sketching, colouring and shading to represent objects

2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

You will sit a three hour examination paper. It is made up of two sections:

- short answer questions which you complete on the sheet provided and
- longer questions which require more detailed answers. The longer questions allow you to show, in greater detail, the drawing and problem solving skills you have learned.

3. Is learning about Technical Graphics similar to anything I did in primary school?

You will have learned and done lots of things in mathematics which will be built on in Technical Graphics. For example, you will have learned about 2-D and 3-D shapes, and lines and angles. In Visual Arts, you will have made drawings, experimented with lines, shapes and textures, patterns and tones. All of these previous learning experiences will be helpful when building up your skills in Technical Graphics. However your Technical Graphics teacher will start with the basic skills required and build on them throughout the course.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

Technical Graphics helps you to think in a more logical and creative way. You will be able to communicate information using diagrams and sketches. You will have learned how to present information in a neat and organised fashion. This subject will be of use to you if you want to progress into career areas such as architecture, construction or engineering. Many of our students go on to study **Design and Communication Graphics** in Leaving Cert after studying TG in Junior Cert.

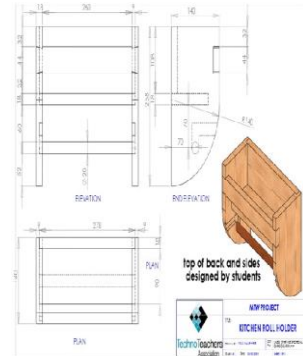
Subject: Materials Technology (Wood)

Materials Technology Wood (MTW) is one of the technology subjects offered at Junior Cycle. In MTW you will learn to design small projects and the skills required to use tools and equipment to make your designs. You will work mainly with wood but also with other materials.

1. What will I learn in Materials Technology (Wood) class?

You will learn

- how to design a project given a design brief
- how to use freehand sketching to communicate your ideas
- how to prepare a design drawing/plan of a project you design
- how to read design drawings and make small projects from these drawings
- how to safely use a range of hand and power tools in producing your design
- how to problem solve and use a design process to design projects.



2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

There are two parts to the exam:

- coursework – you will design a project based on a given design brief (instructions). You will then make the project and prepare a project folder to accompany it.
- written examination – there will be a written paper which examines the woodwork theory you have learned over the three years.

You can take the exam at Higher or at Ordinary level.

3. Is learning Materials Technology (Wood) similar to anything I did in primary school?

You will be building upon the drawing work you did in Visual Arts. You may already have learned a lot about wood as a material as part of your work in Science. You may also have learned about trees as part of the natural environment and as a habitat in both Geography and Science. The skills you developed when designing and making things in Science will also be very helpful in MTW. You will also use your mathematical skills quite a lot.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

This is an excellent subject for any student who has an interest in any aspect of the construction industry. You can go on to study **Construction** for Leaving Cert. You will know the correct procedures to follow when developing an idea into a finished product.

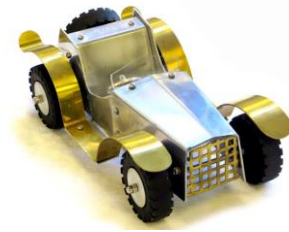
Subject: Engineering

Engineering is one of the technology subjects offered at junior cycle. It is an activity-based course focusing on metal. Other materials such as plastics and wood are also investigated and used in project work. You will be working with basic electronic components too.

1. What will I learn in Engineering class?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- how to read and follow a technical drawing
- skills in shaping, cutting and joining materials
- how to use a wide variety of tools and machines correctly
- the properties of different metals and how they are made
- the importance of metal in our everyday lives
- examine the properties of different metals, plastics and wood
- examine simple mechanisms and 'how things work'
- learn how to do freehand sketching
- develop good craft skills using hand tools and machines in a safe way



2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

There are a number of elements to the exam:

- coursework project - there is a project at Higher and Ordinary level. You will have approximately four months to complete it.
- written examination - the written paper is based on metalwork theory.
- practical exam (Higher level only) - This involves making and assembling parts from a given drawing and you will have three hours to do this.

3. Is learning Engineering similar to anything I did in primary school?

You will find that aspects of Maths you did in primary school will be useful to you, for example working out measurements from drawings. You will also have examined different materials in SESE: Science so you will be building on this knowledge.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

This is an extremely useful subject for any student who has an interest in Engineering. **Engineering** at Leaving Certificate level builds on what you learned in Junior Cycle Metalwork.

Subject: Art, Craft and Design

In Art, Craft & Design you will have the opportunity to create images and objects using a variety of tools, materials and special equipment. To understand Art, Craft, Design it is important to make things yourself so that you learn and understand by doing.



1. What will I learn in Art class?

In Art, Craft, Design you will:

- investigate by looking and recording your observations and experiences
- learn a variety of new crafts
- learn to work in 3-D e.g. sculpture or clay work
- learn about the design process and how to use it to create new design objects and images
- learn to make links between your artwork and that of other artists, craft workers, architects and designers from different countries and historical periods.

2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

In Art, Craft & Design, you will be examined in two ways:

- course-work - in third year, you will do a school-based project, chosen from a list of themes. You will research your theme, do preparatory work and complete a painting or graphic design, a craft piece, and a 3-D piece. You will relate your work to other artist's work.
- an examination in which you will draw an object and a person. You can take Art, Craft & Design at Higher or at Ordinary level.

3. Is learning Art, Craft & Design similar to anything I did in primary school?

You have already been expressing your creative abilities through drawing, paint and colour, print, clay, construction, fabric and fibre in primary school. You will continue to build on these skills and you will also learn to use other tools, materials and special equipment to create images and objects.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

Many of the skills you learn while studying Art, Craft, Design are very useful outside of school and in whatever job you choose to do in the future. There are many career opportunities in Art, Craft & Design - areas such as: architecture, illustration, education, photography and interior/industrial/fashion design.

Subject: Music

Music is an important part of everyone's life. In Junior Cycle Music, you will sing and possibly learn how to play an instrument. You will listen to many types of music such as pop, classical and traditional Irish music. You will also start composing.

1. What will I learn in Music class?

Some of the things you will learn include:

- about many types of music
- how to read and write music
- how to sing songs and maybe how to play an instrument.
- sing and play different instruments
- listen to music and discuss what you hear
- use technology and watch music-related DVDs
- use a textbook and workbook
- read music



2. What is the Junior Cycle exam like?

In Music you will be examined in two ways:

- a practical exam - you can sing or play an instrument for this exam - on your own or as part of a group
- a combined aural and written exam in composing and listening to music. You can take the exam at Higher or at Ordinary level.

3. Is learning Music similar to anything I did in primary school?

In Music in primary school, you may have been part of a school choir and/or school music group or orchestra. There, you started listening to, performing and composing music. In Junior Cycle Music you will improve these skills.

4. How will this subject be useful for me in the future?

Music has a very important part in many people's lives. Most of us will take pleasure in listening to music and many people will enjoy singing or playing an instrument throughout their lives. Some people may decide to take up a career in music in areas such as education (teacher, lecturer), business (sound engineer, lyricist, reviewer, therapist) and performance (composer, performer, conductor).

You can choose to study **Music** as a Leaving Cert subject if you so wish.