

Task 4: Vocabulary practice

1. Read the text about Roger Casement below carefully.
2. Study the highlighted words and think about their meaning.
3. Chose the correct definition for the highlighted words in the multiple-choice section below.

One of the most controversial figures of the Irish nationalist pantheon Roger Casement retains his allure and glamour nearly one hundred years after his death. During his life, Casement did it all. Since his death, he has proved a remarkably durable cultural icon. As an international humanitarian, he risked his life exposing colonialist atrocities in Africa and South America. He delivered one of the most famous and rousing speeches on Irish nationalism from the English dock before being hanged for participation in the 1916 Easter Rising. Complexly queer, he enjoyed, in his global travels, the lust and love of a modern homoerotic lifestyle. Casement has also been at the center of heated controversy between Great Britain and Ireland since his execution. Indeed, in many ways, as a cultural icon he condenses the vexing and violent history of Anglo-Irish relations over the course of the twentieth century. Lucy McDiarmid sums up the richness of Casement, writing that he “has offered a means of thinking about much of Irish life, indeed much of human life, in the twentieth century”.

Casement was born to a middle-class Protestant family in Sandycove, County Dublin, in 1864, and spent his career working both for and against the global economic and political arrangements of European colonialism. He became internationally famous while serving as British consul heading a parliamentary investigation into alleged atrocities in the Congo Free State in 1903. Casement led a similar investigation into humanitarian abuses in the Putumayo region of the Amazon in 1910. Both the Congo and the Putumayo situations involved the brutal exploitation of indigenous populations for the harvest of wild rubber. In 1911 he was knighted for his service to the Crown. (Mullen 77)

Nationalist:

- ◇ “a person who wants their country to be politically independent”
- ◇ “a person who wants their country to be superior to others”
- ◇ “a person who believes that their nation should become part of a union of nations”

Icon:

- ◇ “a person that is disliked for their cultural beliefs”
- ◇ “a very famous person or thing considered as representing a set of beliefs or a way of life”
- ◇ “a person liking and admiring everything within their own culture”

Atrocity:

- ◇ “an extremely cruel, violent, or shocking act”
- ◇ “an act that is frowned upon”
- ◇ “rules that existed in the colonies”

Controversy:

- ◇ “a misunderstanding between two countries”
- ◇ “a fight about something meaningless”
- ◇ “An argument or dispute on a matter of opinion; a (typically heated) discussion involving contrary opinions”

To condense:

- ◇ “to convert something into the state of gas”
- ◇ “to reduce something, such as a speech or piece of writing, in length”
- ◇ “to give detailed information about something”

Vexing:

- ◇ “something that is interesting”
- ◇ “annoying, worrying, or causing problems”
- ◇ “something that is not worth mentioning in detail”

Richness:

- ◇ “the state of being wealthy”
- ◇ “the quality of having a lot of something that is valuable or interesting”
- ◇ “when something is available in a large quantity”

Alleged:

- ◇ “claimed or asserted without proof, or pending proof”
- ◇ “scientifically proven, a lot of evidence”
- ◇ “when someone is uncertain of their own feelings”

Abuse:

- ◇ “way of life of certain cultures”
- ◇ “the use of something in order to get an advantage from it”
- ◇ “cruel, violent, or unfair treatment of someone”

Exploitation:

- ◇ “cruel, violent, or unfair treatment of someone”
- ◇ “robbing people of their possessions by fighting them”
- ◇ “the use of something in order to get an advantage from it”

Example sentences: Used the highlighted words in the text. You might have to adapt the form.

1. Sexual _____ is a problem that many women face all over the world.
2. Henry was kept in jail for _____ robbing a bank.
3. The referendum for same sex marriage was a _____ topic in Switzerland that was publicly discussed in the media.
4. Emilia was really stressed lately due to her _____ school situation.
5. Roger Casement was part of a big _____ movement, trying to gain independence from Great Britain.