

Achievements: Hard-Won Successes

60 minutes

Strand 1.1: Understanding Myself

Reflecting

Outcome LCW.M1.S1.VAL.4

Outcome LCW.M1.S1.VAL.3

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

You will treat achievement as hard-won success, then list 5-8 recent examples with one sentence each on what made them hard-won.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
LCW.M1.S1.VAL.4	identify their aptitudes, achievements and interests, reflecting on how they have developed.
LCW.M1.S1.VAL.3	recognise the unique nature of aptitudes, achievements and interests.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Define achievement as hard-won success, not only winning
- List 5-8 recent achievements with what made each hard-won
- Include at least two non-trophy successes (a job held, hard work finished, or responsibility taken)

KEY TERMS

Term	What it means here	For example
Achievement	A hard-won success you accomplished with real effort or skill, whether or not anyone handed you a prize for it.	Holding a part-time job for a full year while keeping school work going
Hard-won success	A result that cost you something: time, practice, courage, or sticking with it when it would have been easier to stop.	Finishing a difficult book you had abandoned twice, or learning a piece of music slowly over months
Participation	Turning up and taking part. It matters, but it is not the same as an achievement unless something was genuinely hard-won along the way.	Being on a team all season without a starting place can still be an achievement if you trained through it; just collecting the jersey is participation

BEFORE THE BELL

- Prepare the opening show of hands prompt on achievements without medals or trophies.
- Review key terms for the distinction between achievement and participation.
- Confirm students can create or open files in the Strand 1.1 Digital Portfolio folder.
- On screen this lesson: worked example.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

5 min	introduction	Getting Started
5 min	content	Key Terms
35 min	activity	Study Cian, Then Build Your List
10 min	content	Think About It
5 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

5 min Getting Started

Open with a quick show of hands: who can name an achievement from the last three years that involved *no* medal, certificate or trophy? That is the frame for the whole lesson.

If anyone says they have nothing to list, push gently toward ordinary hard things: a job, a book finished, a family responsibility, a skill practised alone. Silence often means they are only counting trophies.

5 min Key Terms

Spend under five minutes here. The load-bearing distinction is achievement versus participation: students often pad lists with things they attended rather than things they won through effort.

35 min Study Cian, Then Build Your List On screen: worked example

SUGGESTED TIMING

- **12-15 mins:** walk the worked example beats on the IWB or student screens. Pause before each reveal and ask the class what makes that line strong.
- **20 mins:** students write their own lists in `Achievements Strand1.1`. Circulate. Challenge trophy-only lists and empty "I am a hard worker" lines.

LOOK-FORS

- Each entry has a concrete occasion, not a character trait.
- The hard-won sentence names cost (time, courage, repetition, responsibility), not just outcome.
- At least two non-trophy items.

STUCK STUDENTS

Prompt with: a job or chores sustained over months; something finished after failing once; organising or fixing something for other people; staying with a skill or team when progress was slow.

ON EXAM-LEVEL EXAMPLES

Cian's Ordinary Level Irish line is context for self-driven effort, not a prestige ranking. Students should match the effort pattern, not the exam level.

10 min Think About It

Keep this to paired talk, about eight minutes, then a brief whole-class harvest of one non-trophy example per pair if time allows.

Reinforce: you do not have to win to have achieved. The second prompt is conditional so clean lists still get tightened rather than forced to invent a weak line.

Any edits happen in the same Achievements document before save, not as loose asides later.

5 min What you covered

Quick exit check: every student should leave with a saved `Achievements Strand1.1` document in Strand 1.1. Spot-check two non-trophy lines if you can circulate at the door.

ANSWERS AND LOOK-FORS

- "Kept my Saturday job at the local hardware store for fourteen months" - Specific and checkable - Names the place and the stretch of time. A reader can picture it. "I am reliable" would not do the same job.
- "showing up every week after late training on Fridays" - Names the hard part - The achievement is not just having the job. It is what it cost him week after week. That sentence is what makes it hard-won.
- "Nobody made me do it" - Self-driven effort - An achievement you chose under no pressure often says more about you than one a teacher or coach enforced.
- "when the original organiser dropped out three days before" - Pressure, not a tidy win - He stepped into a mess. Responsibility under short notice is a classic non-trophy achievement.
- "Stayed on the football panel after I lost my starting place" - Not a trophy - He did not win player of the year. Staying, training and contributing after a setback still counts as hard-won success.
- "trained through the whole season on the bench" - Effort without the headline - Participation would be collecting the jersey. Achievement is the season of work when the reward was thin.

TEACHING MOVES

- Model the first line of the example list and pause for class input on what makes it strong.
- Use whole-class discussion to clarify achievement versus participation.
- Circulate during the list building activity to prompt details on challenges overcome.
- Keep the key terms introduction brief to maximise time for the main task.
- Treat exam level in Cian's example (Ordinary Level Irish) as context for effort, not as a hierarchy students must match.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Listing only participation without effort. Solution: Require a sentence explaining the hard-won aspect.
- Focusing solely on trophy successes. Solution: Share non-trophy examples and restate the definition.
- Struggling to reach five entries. Solution: Provide prompts such as jobs held or tasks persisted with.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Provide sentence starters for explaining the effort in each achievement.
- Support: Pair students for the paired talk activity to generate ideas.
- Extension: Encourage students to link achievements to developed aptitudes or interests.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEFT WITH

- Achievements: 5-8 achievements from three years, each with one sentence on why it was hard-won