A growing townland.
A shrinking parish.

What can two census counts tell us about a place - and what remains unexplained?

Allow about 20-30 minutes. Work alone, in pairs or in discussion. No family-tree knowledge needed. Optional percentage work is on page 2.

Place and time

Tullynascreen is a townland, a small named land division, within the wider Killanummery civil parish grouping in County Leitrim. A civil parish need not match a Catholic parish. Do not add these nested population totals.

The comparison begins before the first potato blight. It spans 1841-1851; it does not isolate the Famine years.

Place / measure	1841	1851
Tullynascreen Population	90	159
Tullynascreen Inhabited houses	15	29
Killanummery parish group Population	4,605	3,719

1. Describe the population change in each place. Give the difference in people, with the years and place names.

2. What changed in the number of inhabited houses? What might you still want to know about those homes?

Source: Census of Ireland 1851, Leitrim, p.98 / PDF p.12. Full source and reuse details on page 2.

What would you say?

3. For each claim, say whether the supplied evidence supports it. Explain your reasoning; do not guess a single cause of the changes.

A. A townland can gain people while its parish loses people.

B. The parish figures show that exactly 886 people died.

C. Tullynascreen's growth means its households escaped hardship.

4. Finish these thoughts.

The table records... / It does not tell us... / To learn more, I would look for...

Optional: percentage change

For each population: (1851 count - 1841 count) / 1841 count x 100. Why can a larger percentage change involve fewer people?

Census of Ireland 1851, Leitrim, printed p.98 (PDF p.12), published 1852; via CSO. Government of Ireland. Statistical information: CC BY 4.0. Selected transcription and teaching material by The McPadden Project, 13 November 2026.

Original table: https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/statistics/archive/census1851/THE_CENSUS_OF_IRELAND_1851_-_Leitrim.pdf#page=12

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