



History of Saint Patrick's Day

Unit Study

Includes:

Language Arts

History

Geography

Science

Visual Arts

Drama

Reading Resources

Includes 10 St. Patrick's Day themed coloring pages



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~If you ever notice a typo, please let me know, a few slip by me now and then and I certainly want to fix them!

Blessings,
Annette
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SAINT PATRICK'S DAY UNIT STUDY

While this unit study is intended for 1st – 5th grades, some of the exercises could easily be tailored for younger children. I have also added some ideas in some of the subjects, to use with older children.

This unit encompasses a variety of daily subjects, including Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies/Geography and Visual Arts. In addition to the printables, you will need a dictionary, access to the internet, a US Atlas/Map (for reference), crayons, construction paper, scissors, glue and any additional items for the Science experiments and Visual Arts projects.

Language Arts/History

1. Have students read the History of Saint Patrick and the Symbols of St Patrick's Day (Handout A1 & A2).
2. After reading, have the student(s) define the vocabulary words and answer the questions on Worksheet A.
3. Use the "If I were a Leprechaun..." writing prompt for older students. Younger students can draw a picture of what they would do if they were a Leprechaun at the top and then write short sentences or dictate to you what they would do "If [they were] a Leprechaun..."

Additional Activity: Use the vocabulary word list and the following words as a special Spelling unit. These are just suggestions. Feel free to use words to fit your students' needs and abilities.

Saint Patrick	Ireland	Dublin	Leprechaun
Shamrock	Trinity	Parade	Marching
Apostle	Celebrations	Cabbage	Bacon

Social Studies/Geography

1. Using the map on Worksheet B, locate, label and color the country of Ireland green.
2. Using the map on Worksheet B, locate, label and color the country of Britain blue.
3. Using the map on Worksheet B, locate and label the city of Dublin, Ireland with a red star.

Older Students: Do more research on the country of Ireland itself. When was it founded? Who rules (king/queen, democracy)? What is the population? How large is it? Have them write up a written report on the country and its heritage.

Math

Use one of the activity/coloring pages for a FUN math exercise.

1. Four-Leaf Clover connect-the-dot #1-44 (Worksheet C). Then have students color the picture.
2. Color-by Number ages: PreK (Worksheet D), K-1st (Worksheet E), 2nd-3rd (Worksheet F) or 4th-5th (Worksheet G)

Science

1. Read about [the difference between reflection and refraction](#) and how they affect [the formation of rainbows](#).
2. Make your own rainbow [by following these easy instructions](#).
3. Another fun experiment is how to [Make your own Rainbow in Water](#).

Visual Arts

1. I have included 10 pages of St. Patrick's Day themed coloring pages.
2. Make this fun [handprint Leprechaun](#).
3. Have students create an "[I'm Lucky Because...](#)" Shamrock.
4. Make this fun, cute and creative [Fruit Loop Rainbow](#).
5. Make this quick & easy [Shamrock Wand](#)
6. Boys can make this fun [Leprechaun beard!](#)

Drama

1. Listen to some Irish speakers and have children try to imitate their accent. Here are some helpful videos to help you master the Irish accent:
[How to do an Irish Accent - Videojug](#)
[How to put on a convincing Irish accent - YouTube](#)
2. Use the rainbows and clovers you made and have a little St. Patrick's Day parade of your own! Be sure to talk with an Irish accent as you yell out common Irish phrases.

Extra Reading

Pingry, Patricia A. [The Story of St. Patrick's Day](#). Candy Cane, 2002.

Wing, Natasha. [The Night Before St. Patrick's Day](#). Grosset & Dunlap, 2009.

Holub, Joan. [Hooray for St. Patrick's Day](#). Puffin, 2002.

Bunting, Eve. [That's What Leprechauns Do](#). Sandpiper, 2009.

McDermott, Gerald. [Tim O'Toole and the Wee Folk](#). Puffin, 1992.

Edwards, Pamela Duncan. [The Leprechaun's Gold](#). Katherine Tegan, 2006.

Slater, Teddy. [The Luckiest St. Patrick's Day Ever](#). Cartwheel, 2008.

Yoon, Salina. [St. Patrick's Day Countdown](#). Price Stern Sloan, 2006.

Krensky, Stephen. [Too Many Leprechauns](#). Simon & Schuster, 2007.

Colandro, Lucille. [There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Clover!](#) Cartwheel Books, 2012.

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The History of Saint Patrick

Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated every year on March 17th. Why do we celebrate this strange holiday? Did you know that Saint Patrick was a real man? Saint Patrick was born in Roman Britain. When he was just 16 years old he was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. Even though he escaped to freedom, he later returned to Ireland and is credited with bringing Christianity to the people of Ireland. He is believed to have died on March 17, 461 A.D. After his death, many legends and myths began to surface about his life. One of the most well known legends is "that he explained the Holy Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) using the three leaves of a native Irish clover – or the shamrock. Saint Patrick is the patron saint and national apostle of Ireland.

The people of Ireland have been observing St. Patrick's Day since the ninth or tenth century. It is traditionally a Roman Catholic feast day in observance of Saint Patrick's death. Traditionally Irish families would attend church in the morning and celebrate in the afternoon. The holiday falls during the Christian season of Lent, which prohibits the eating of meat. But, on this one day, in honor of Saint Patrick, they were allowed to eat meat. The traditional meal for St. Patrick's Day is Irish bacon and cabbage.

How did this celebration come to America? During the Great Potato Famine of 1845, Ireland was hit very hard. Close to 1 million poor and uneducated Irish Catholics came to America in search of a better life and to escape starvation. The Irish immigrants took to the streets in celebration of the holiday and many newspapers reported on the event. Eventually they began to organize themselves and show their strength by holding festive parades. These parades became very popular. So popular, that President Harry S. Truman attended the St. Patrick's Day parade in New York City in 1948.

Soon other cities began creating their own traditions for the holiday. The most well-known is Chicago's annual dyeing of the Chicago River green. "The practice first started in 1962, when city pollution-control workers used dyes to trace illegal sewage discharges and realized that the green dye might provide a unique way to celebrate the holiday. That year, they released 100 pounds of green vegetable dye into the river – enough to keep it green for a week! Today, in order to minimize environmental damage, only 40 pounds of dye are used, and the river turns green for only several hours."

Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated in many countries worldwide and by people of all backgrounds. Although America is home to some of the largest celebrations, parades and productions, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in many other countries around the world as far away as Japan, Australia, Singapore and Russia.

In modern-day Ireland, celebrations are legendary. In fact, more than 1 million people travel to Ireland to participate in the St. Patrick's Day Festival in Dublin. The festival is a multi-day celebration which features parades, concerts, outdoor theater productions and firework shows!

Handout A1

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Information from History.com and History.com

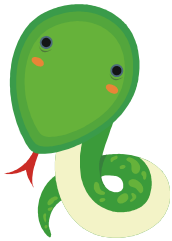
Symbols of St. Patrick's Day



Shamrock – The shamrock is probably one of the more popular symbols of St. Patrick's Day. The shamrock was also called the "seamroy" by the Celts (pronounced with a hard *k* sound). It was a sacred plant in ancient Ireland because it symbolized the rebirth of Spring. As the English began to take over Irish land, make laws against the use of the Irish language and forbid the practice of Catholicism during the 17th century, many Irish wore a shamrock as a symbol of their pride in their Irish heritage and their displeasure with the new English rulers.



The Leprechaun – Along with the shamrock, the Leprechaun is probably another widely popular symbol of St. Patrick's Day. The original name for these tiny little people is "lobaircin" (pronounced), which means "small-bodied fellow." Even though these little guys are just myths and legends, they were originally portrayed as cranky souls, responsible for mending the shoes of other fairies. They were most well known for their trickery, which they often used to guard their fabled gold treasures. It wasn't until 1959, when Walt Disney released a film called *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*, were Leprechauns associated with St. Patrick's Day. The movie portrayed them as cheerful and friendly, which quickly propelled them into the American culture and an easily recognizable symbol of both St. Patrick's Day and Ireland in general.

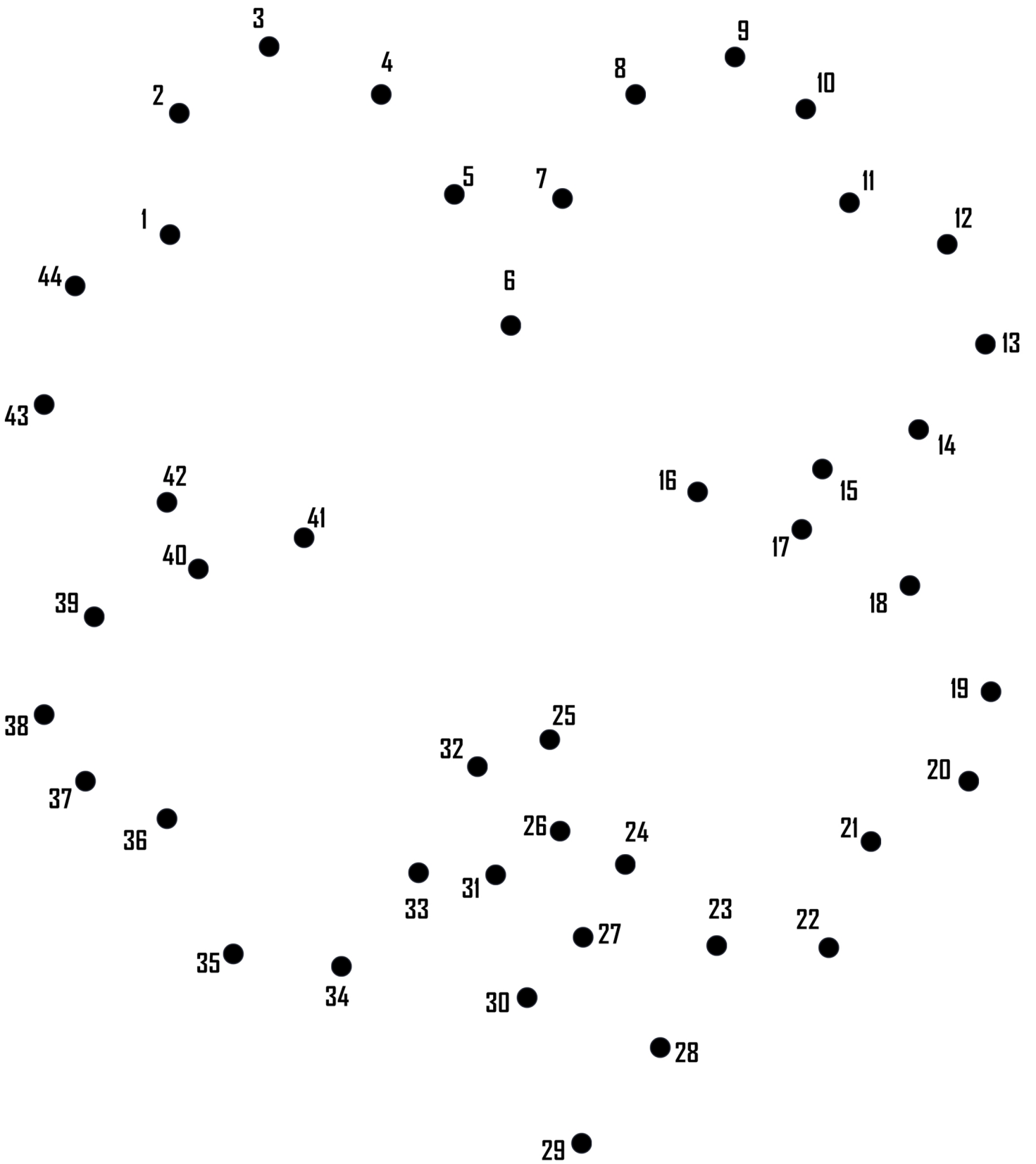


The Snake – As the legend goes, that during St. Patrick's mission to Ireland, he stood on a hilltop (which is now called Croagh Patrick, meaning Patrick's Stack) and with just his wooden staff he banished all snakes from Ireland. But in truth, the island was never home to any snakes. The "banishing of the snakes" was in all honesty a metaphor for the removal of pagan idolatry from Ireland and the triumph of Christianity. Within 200 years of Patrick's arrival, the island of Ireland was completely Christianized.



Picture credit

Corned Beef – Along with cabbage, this is now a traditional meal on St. Patrick's Day. Irish traditionally ate bacon with their cabbage, but the high prices in America drove the Irish immigrants living in New York City's Lower East Side to find a substitute. They learned about the cheaper alternative of corned beef from their Jewish neighbors.





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