

IRELAND

St. Patrick

Task 1: VOCABULARY

Look at the text below and check with your partner if you understand the words in bold.

Do you have to be Irish **to enjoy** Saint Patrick's Day? Not at all. It can still be fun to celebrate all things "Irish." Dress in green, join in a parade, eat **corned beef**, and search for a **leprechaun's treasure**.

In Ireland, and for Catholics around the world, Saint Patrick's Day is a religious holiday. It honors a Christian **missionary** to Ireland in the fifth century A.D. Patrick was sixteen when he was brought as **a captive** to Ireland where he worked as a **shepherd**. During his **captivity**, Patrick learned the Irish language and religion of his **captors**. However, his own Christian **faith** grew stronger. He began to have visions urging him to **escape**. After six years, he finally fled to northern Gaul, where he became a priest of the Roman Church.

Christian missionaries had been in Ireland for about a century. Some of the Celts had **converted** to Christianity, but had **strayed** from the teachings of the church. After Patrick was **ordained** a bishop, he went back to Ireland to spread Catholic teachings. In his missions throughout the north of Ireland, he used the **shamrock**, a three-leafed plant, to teach about the Trinity - a belief about the nature of God that is central to Catholic Christianity. For this reason, shamrocks have become a central symbol for St Patrick's Day.

He **remained** in Ireland for a total of thirty years. March 17, the day of his death, has been celebrated internationally as Saint Patrick's Day ever since. Originally, the color associated with Saint Patrick was blue. Over the years the color green became more popular. Green **ribbons** and shamrocks were worn in celebration of St Patrick's Day as early as the 17th century.

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Task 2: READING

Please read the text and answer the questions below.

1. Who was Saint Patrick?
 - a. A teacher
 - b. A missionary
 - c. A farmer
2. How old was Patrick when he came to Ireland?
 - a. 6
 - b. 16
 - c. We don't know.
3. Why did he return to Ireland?
 - a. To become a Bishop
 - b. To become a priest.
 - c. To spread the Catholic faith.
4. St Patrick's Day is celebrated in
 - a. Northern Ireland
 - b. Ireland
 - c. All over the world.
5. Why is green the color of St Patrick's Day?
 - a. It symbolizes spring and hope.
 - b. It grows only in Ireland.
 - c. It was used by St Patrick to teach about Catholic Christianity

Task 3: VOCABULARY

Read the text again and see if you can understand the meaning of the words you did not know before, from context.

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Teachers' Notes

This worksheet can be used before or after an Irish Culture workshop.

The material is for intermediate + students and aims at training students in guessing the meaning of words from context, so don't give it all away. However, with lower level groups you can do a vocabulary presentation before you ask the students to read the text, leaving maybe 4-5 words, the meaning of which should be guessed.