



# ST. PATRICK'S DAY

## THE HISTORY BEHIND THE HOLIDAY

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

foods or traditions, very few know the history behind the celebration! Have you ever wondered who St. Patrick was? Why we decorate with shamrocks, or try to camouflage our selves from leprechauns? Do you wonder about anything associated with this day?

The history behind the celebration is fascinating. Little is known about the early life of St. Patrick, but what we do know is that he was born into a wealthy family in Roman-Britain, (not Ireland like many assume.) When he was 16 he was kidnapped by Irish raiders and taken to Ireland to work as a slave. According to him, 7 years passed before the voice of God came to him in a dream telling him to escape slavery and to board a ship that would take him back home.

Ultimately he escaped and traveled 200 miles to the coast where a ship headed to Britain was docked. Upon arriving home, Patrick was welcomed by his family and he was fully converted to Christianity. It was then he again described hearing the voice of God telling him to travel back to Ireland, the home of his captors, to spread the Christian Gospel. Interestingly enough he went back to Ireland even though his neighbors said he wasn't fit for the job, and without permission from the Roman Catholic Church. Despite all of that and the risks and danger he knew he would face, he traveled back to Ireland and is now credited for the spread and introduction of Christianity to the Irish people. He is celebrated on March 17th, 461. The story of St. Patrick's Day is a fascinating one.

Today Saint Patrick is believed that he was about his belief of the Father, the other the believed to represent the

Before Christianity spread in Ireland, the Irish were Pagan believing in **Celtic Polytheism**. This is what we know about Celtic mythology. St. Patrick, who describes a vision in which he was to record their beliefs. Without the recordings from other Christian monks, much of what we know today would be lost because the teachings of these beliefs were passed on orally.

In Celtic **Mythology** there are many gods and goddesses. They even believed that there was a group that lived underground that they referred to as fairies. This is where leprechauns or the "wee folk," come into play! leprechauns were believed to be a type of fairy. To be clear were not talking the type of fairy you've read about in story books. These fairies were believed to be mischievous, deceptive, and even dangerous! leprechauns were the **cobblers** to this fairy race.

St. Patrick's Day, also known as the Feast of St. Patrick, is a holiday celebrated by many every March 17th. Even though millions of people all over the world enjoy this day by wearing green or serving festive

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**CHALLENGE:** DO YOUR OWN RESEARCH TO DISCOVER WHY SNAKES ARE DEPICTED IN THIS PICTURE.

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**Celtic:** Keltic Iron-Age Europeans, such as Welsh, Irish, Scottish. **Polytheism:** The belief in more than one god. **Cobbler:** a person who makes, or repairs shoes. **Mythology:** A collection of stories of myths that a culture tells to describe or explain events.

They made the shoes they wore, and were paid with a gold coin. They kept their gold in a cauldron and hid it from others in the Irish Countryside. Legend says if you find a leprechaun, he will reveal where he hides his pot of gold. That's right HE, there are only male leprechauns. Beware though, these tricksters will try to get you to look away and in an instance disappear.

One tale of a man that caught a leprechaun survives today. He says that a leprechaun told him his pot of gold was buried beneath a tree in the woods. He took the man to the tree, but the man realized he didn't have a shovel. So the man marked the tree with a red x, set the leprechaun free, and quickly went home to grab a shovel. He returned moments later only to find every tree in the forest marked with the same red x!

There have been other Leprechaun sightings since, leprechauns are even an Endangered Specie and are protected by law in a small Irish town called Carlingford! If you plan on catching a leprechaun, the one thing all leprechaun hunters agree that you will need is luck. The most sought after lucky charm in Ireland is a 4 Leaf Clover. 4-Leaf clovers are not to be confused by the shamrock that St. Patrick holds. This lucky charm out dates both St. Patrick's Day, and St. Patrick himself.

The 4-Leaf clover, is very rare. In fact it is thought that there is only 1 four leaf clover to every 10,000 three leaf clovers or shamrocks. The Druids, or religious teachers in Celtic mythology, taught that this ancient Irish symbol of luck could protect against unwanted spirits, and help them to see fairies. They believed the clover possessed mystical powers and that the 4 leaves represented, faith, hope, love, and ... you guessed it... LUCK. Just the right amount of luck someone would need to catch and outsmart a leprechaun.

# TEACHING

## ON

### lemon lane

While you're at it, make sure you wear green. Today we have adopted the idea that if you wear green, you will be invisible to pesky leprechauns looking to pinch, or play tricks on you. Kelly Green is the official St. Patrick's day color. Which is interesting because believe it or not but the official color of St. Patrick was "St. Patrick Blue," a light shade of sky blue. In fact, before the 1800's leprechauns were described as wearing red with a leather apron. It wasn't until the Irish Independence movement in the late 18th century that the color green began to be associated with Ireland. Which is appropriate because the nation is often referred to as the Emerald Isle due to the lush green hills, and leafy trees that cover it's landscape.

As you celebrate  
friend or a loved  
to keep an ear lis  
how you know a L  
the end of the day

celebration to a green, make sure legend says that's of gold richer by



## WHAT WAS SOMETHING



DESCRIBE A LESSON YOU CAN APPLY \_\_\_\_\_ ON THE LIFE OF ST. PATRICK? \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT WAS SOMETHING THAT SURPRISED YOU FROM THE READING? \_\_\_\_\_

HOW WOULD YOU OUTSMART A LEPRECHAUN? \_\_\_\_\_

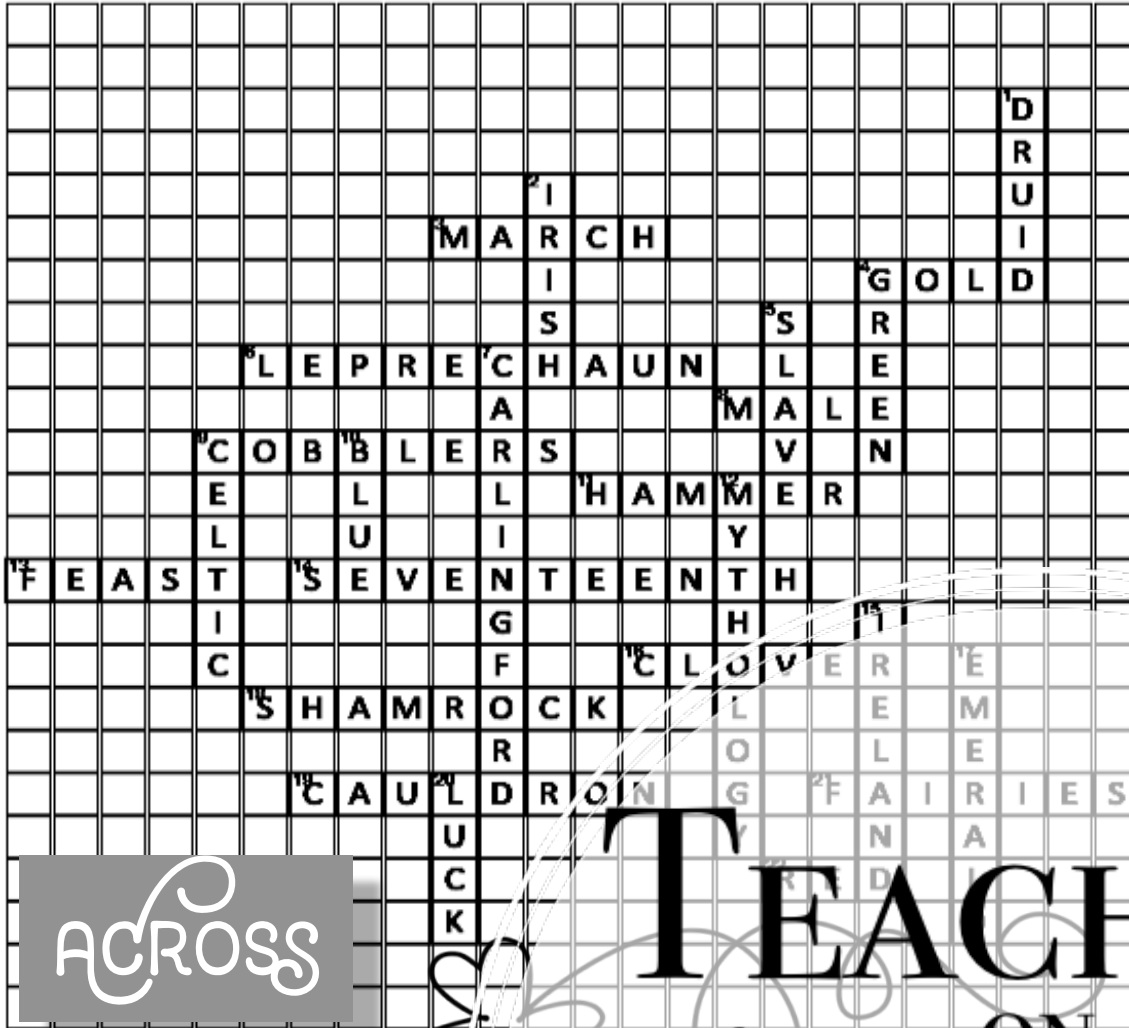




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Name: \_\_\_\_\_



ACROSS

3 It is believed St. Patrick died on \_\_\_\_\_ 17, in 461.

4 The fairies paid their cobblers with a \_\_\_\_\_ coin.

6 Wee-Folk

8 Leprechauns are only \_\_\_\_\_

9 Leprechauns were \_\_\_\_\_ to the fairy race.

11 The soft sound of a tapping \_\_\_\_\_ leprechaun

13 St. Patrick is known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Patrick.

14 St. Patrick's day is on the \_\_\_\_\_

16 A 4 leaf \_\_\_\_\_ is very rare

1 Religious teacher or magician in Celtic Mythology

2 St. Patrick is credited for the spread of Christianity to the \_\_\_\_\_ people.

4 Today we wear \_\_\_\_\_ to avoid being pinched.

5 St. Patrick was a \_\_\_\_\_ for seven years.

7 Leprechauns are protected by law in \_\_\_\_\_

9 Iron-Age Europeans such as Welsh, Irish, and Scottish.

10 The official color of St. Patrick was \_\_\_\_\_

12 A collection of stories or myths that a culture passes down.

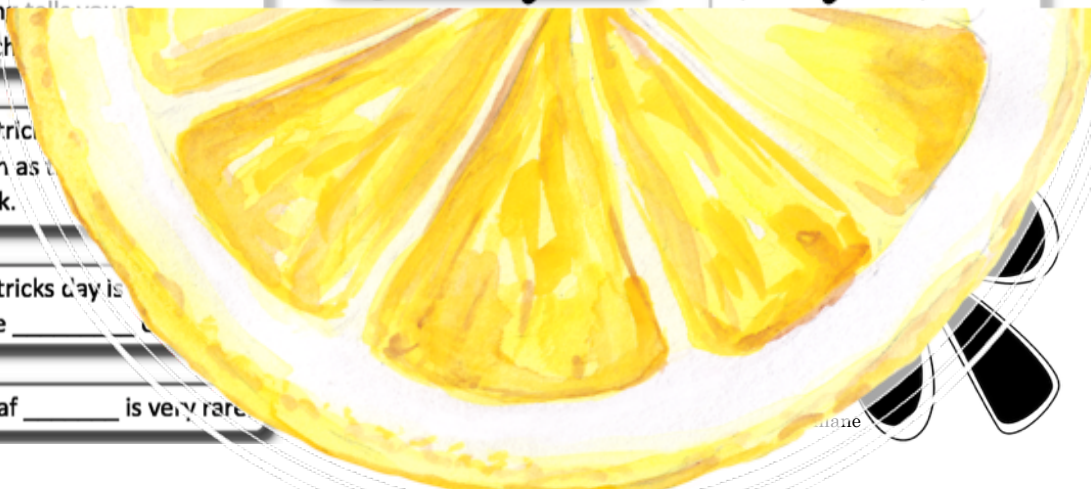
15 St. Patrick was not born in \_\_\_\_\_ we may assume.

17 Ireland is also referred to as the \_\_\_\_\_ Isles

20 The 4 leaves on the clover represent faith, hope, love,

# TEACHING ON

*lemon lane*



# St. Patrick's Day

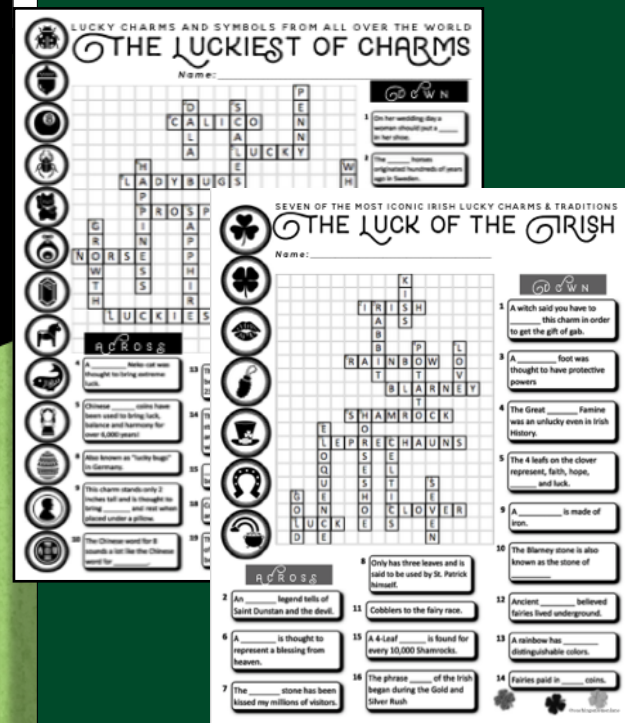
## THE HISTORY BEHIND THE HOLIDAY

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