

Saint Patrick's Day

Topic

Saint Patrick's Day

Learning outcomes

- Practice reading for detail
- Discover the significance of St Patrick's day
- Use subheadings to organise a written article
- Collaboratively write an article about a cultural event

Age group and level

Aged 13-17 and Adult B2+

Time

70 minutes + extension activity

Materials

Reading text (if offline lesson) – 1 per pair

Comprehension questions – document makes 2 worksheets. 1 worksheet per pair. There is an online and offline version.

Blank paper -enough for group of 3 or 4 to have 5 pieces of paper for making notes

Writing template (if needed)

Timer – this could be a clock, watch or mobile phone.

Introduction

The aim of this lesson is to give students practice in reading an article about St. Patrick's Day for specific information and then the opportunity to talk about the customs and traditions of their own country's national day.

The plan is based around a text from the British Council Learn English Central website at:
<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/magazine/saint-patricks-day>

The webpage also has a variety of online interactive activities.

We have also included the text for students and teachers without Internet access in class.

Procedure

1. Lead-in (10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students what they know about St. Patrick's Day. When is it? Where is it celebrated? What happens on that day? <p>:</p> <p>Note: Don't give much information at this point as learners will find out more in the following activity. If appropriate, you could ask them if they know any other Saint's days and how people celebrate them.</p>										
2. Reading (20 minutes)	<p>Note: This could be an online or offline activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write the following on the board: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>a) Shamrock</td> <td>1) A strong motivation to follow a career (using a religious one)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b) Leprechaun</td> <td>2) A small plant with 3 leaves.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c) A calling</td> <td>3) A kind of naughty elf</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d) Pagans</td> <td>4) A public celebration that involves marching</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e) Parade</td> <td>5) People who believed in a very old religion, usually connected to nature</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask learners to match the word with the meaning <p>Answers A2; b3; c1 ; e4</p> <p>Online version</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put learners into pairs and assign them a device for Internet access Ask them to go to this webpage about St Patrick's Day: http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/magazine/saint-patricks-day When all pairs have the webpage open elicit the subheadings: 	a) Shamrock	1) A strong motivation to follow a career (using a religious one)	b) Leprechaun	2) A small plant with 3 leaves.	c) A calling	3) A kind of naughty elf	d) Pagans	4) A public celebration that involves marching	e) Parade	5) People who believed in a very old religion, usually connected to nature
a) Shamrock	1) A strong motivation to follow a career (using a religious one)										
b) Leprechaun	2) A small plant with 3 leaves.										
c) A calling	3) A kind of naughty elf										
d) Pagans	4) A public celebration that involves marching										
e) Parade	5) People who believed in a very old religion, usually connected to nature										

- Patrick, the man
- Patrick and the snakes
- International popularity
- Big parades
- More 'modest' parades
- A day for green

- Ask learners if the subheadings are useful. Elicit why? Why not? Check where they'd see this genre of writing.
- Give learners the comprehension questions. Allow 10 minutes for them to find the answers.
- Ask 2 pairs to work together and check their answers before taking whole class feedback

Answers

1. March 17th
 2. Scotland and Wales
 3. In Ireland and internationally
 4. He was kidnapped and sold as a slave.
 5. To talk to Irish people about God
 6. Because Irish people migrated to other countries
 7. In the large events there are huge carnivals, people dress up and eat special food. In the smaller events there are local schoolchildren and a few tractors
 8. the Colosseum in Rome or the Christ The Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro are illuminated green. In Chicago they dye the river green. In Ohio they drink green beer.
 9. Some people believe that, but scientists think there are no snakes due for geographical reasons
 10. The flag of Ireland is green, so it is a colour associated with the country.
- **Commentary:** This is part of learner training and prepares learners for their own writing task. Learners should notice that using subheadings breaks down the information and makes it easier to understand and find information within a

long text. This genre is used in coursebooks, magazines, newspapers and online articles.

Offline version

- Give pairs a copy of the reading text. Elicit the titles of the subheadings:
 - Who Is St. Patrick?
 - History of St Patrick
 - Legend and folklore
 - What Do People Do on St. Patrick's Day?
 - Traditional Food and Drink on St. Patrick's Day
 - Irish proverbs
- Ask learners if the subheadings are useful. Elicit why? Why not? Check where they'd see this genre of writing (see commentary above)
- Give pairs the comprehension questions. Allow 10 minutes for them to find the answers.
- Ask 2 pairs to work together and check their answers before taking whole class feedback

Answers:

Note: Some of these answers are not obvious and require using critical thinking skills.

11. March 17th
12. It is the date of his death
13. In Ireland and internationally
14. He was kidnapped and sold as a slave. He turned to God for help.
15. To try and convert all the pagans in Ireland into Christianity.
16. To explain the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost) to his followers.
17. Ask him where his pot of gold is
18. Northwest of the Irish village of Cork. It is believed to be magical. If you kiss the stone, one will be given the gift of eloquence, meaning to have beautiful speaking abilities
19. We don't know. Some people believe he did, many others don't
20. Green clothes

<p>3. Writing task preparation (15 minutes)</p>	<p>Note: This is a learner training/ scaffolding exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put learners into small groups. Tell groups they must decide on an important national day or event to write an article about. Once groups have decided on the topic, give them 5 pieces of blank paper, and ask them to brainstorm subheadings for the article. Tell them they will be adding more information to the paper, so they don't write too large. Allow 5 minutes Monitor and support as needed throughout this task. Write any useful vocabulary on the board as needed. Now ask learners to select one subheading and write down as many key words associated with that heading in one minute. Use your timer and tell learners to stop at the end of a minute. Tell learners to select another subheading and to repeat the activity. Do this until there are keywords for all the subheadings.
<p>4. Writing (25 minutes)</p>	<p>Note: This written task can be done offline or online.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give learners the writing template or display the format on the board. Tell learners that they should write a subheading in each row. They then refer to their notes and make them into paragraphs under each subheading. Allow 15-20 minutes. Monitor closely. <p>Tip: If it is difficult to fit this into your lesson timing, his task could be started in class and finished for homework. In that case, make sure all group members have copied down their notes.</p>
<p>5. Peer check (10-15 minutes)</p> <p>OPTIONAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number the groups. Ask group 1 to give their article to group 2; Group 2 to give their article to group 3, etc. The final group give their article to group 1. Tell groups to read the article and to add one comment on the content. At this point they do not comment on the language. Encourage groups to be supportive.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask groups to read again and to note any language improvements. Allow 3-5 minutes for this. Monitor and answer any queries from groups. • The article is then returned to the group that wrote it. Allow 1 minute for them to check the comments.
6. Follow up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The articles could be displayed on the wall. • If online they could be put on the school website, added to an online notice board, such as Padlet or send to learnenglish.magazine@pt.britishcouncil.org • Learners could present their articles in the following lesson. Or you could arrange for learners to read the articles if on the wall or an online platform.
7. References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.history.com/topics/st-patricks-day • http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/magazine/saint-patricks-day • https://padlet.com/

Contributed by

Original activity by Alastair Bassett

Edited by Suzanne Mordue