

Luck o' the Irish to You!



St. Patrick's Day is March 17. From leprechauns to rainbows and gold, many things come to mind when we think of this national holiday in Ireland, including the color green. The Mini Page takes a look at St. Patrick's Day and leprechauns.

St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick was a missionary in Ireland during the 5th century. He was taken there to work in the country when he was a teenager. After he returned to his home in Britain, he believed he was called to go back to Ireland and spread Christianity. People began celebrating St. Patrick by having religious feasts on March 17 many centuries ago.

Leprechauns

Ireland is famous for its **folklore**, or traditional stories that are passed down from generation to generation. A favorite symbol of Ireland is the **leprechaun** (pronounced LEP-ruh-con), and it is often associated with St. Patrick's Day. Leprechauns are said to be mysterious and magical beings. According to Irish legend, leprechauns live in the countryside and are rarely seen by people.



Most pictures of leprechauns show jolly little elves with pink cheeks and smiles.

Folklore experts say leprechauns are believed to be small. Their clothing is usually untidy and shabby. They might wear an old blue or green coat, short pants, woolen stockings and a wide-brimmed hat or stocking cap. Leprechauns are thought to be mischievous, and they like to play tricks on humans. Some people say leprechauns try to teach valuable lessons with their tricks.



It was once a tradition for Irish people to leave milk, cheese, bread or other foods on their doorsteps at night to keep the local leprechaun from making mischief, or trouble, at the home.

Leprechauns make their homes in abandoned barns or churches, or in the woods or in caves.

Humans and leprechauns

Legend says that when the Vikings left Ireland, they left some of their buried treasure behind in the countryside. Some say the leprechauns decided to keep it so humans wouldn't fight over it.

Magical coins

It's said a leprechaun will promise great wealth to a person who catches him if he's allowed to go free. He carries two leather pouches. One contains a silver shilling. This coin reappears in his pouch each time it is paid out. The other pouch holds a gold coin, which the leprechaun uses to try and bribe his way out of difficult situations. This coin may turn to leaves or ashes as soon as he gives it away.

Pot of gold

Some say leprechauns are experts at hiding their treasure. But to their dismay, rainbows sometimes give away their hiding places.

Humans can tell where a leprechaun's treasure is hidden by following a rainbow to its end.



Music

Some folklore tells tales of leprechauns loving music. People say leprechauns can remember tunes that have been forgotten by humans. Some of the instruments leprechauns are said to like to play are the harp, fiddle and Irish pipes.

Resources



On the Web:

- bit.ly/MPStPatrick

At the library:

- "Celebrating St. Patrick's Day: History, Traditions, and Activities" by John O'Brien Jr.
- "St. Patrick's Day" by Gail Gibbons

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of St. Patrick's Day are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

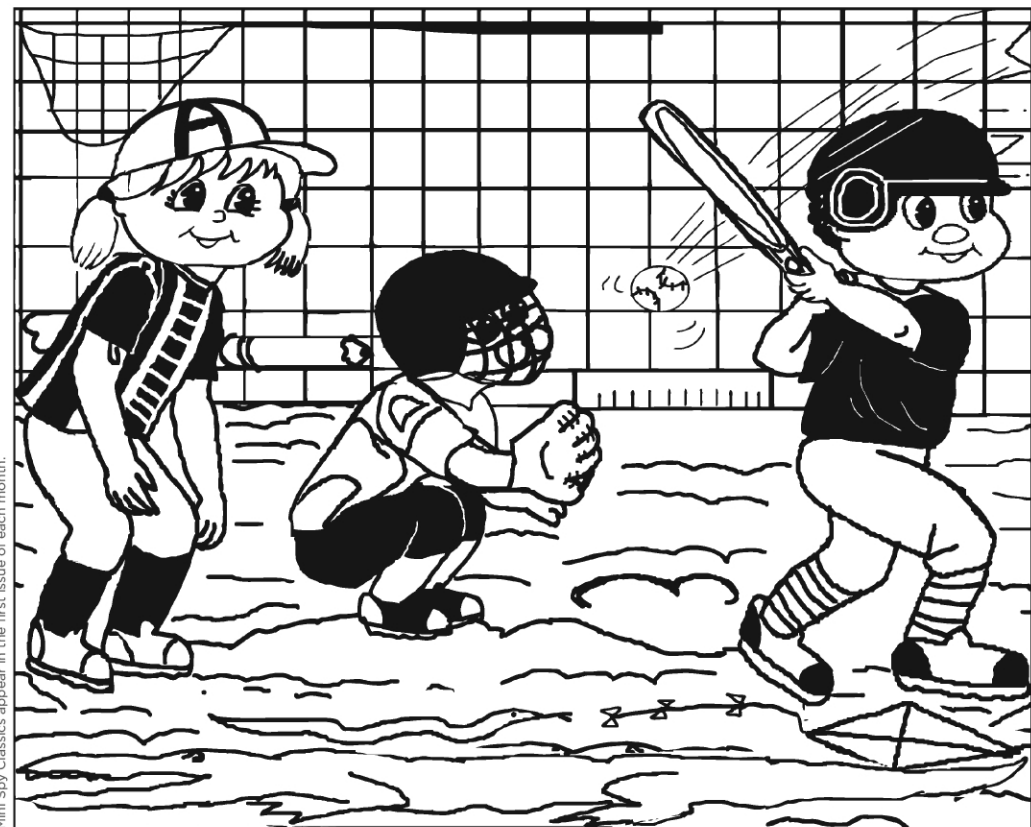


COINS, FOLKLORE, GOLD, HARP, IRELAND, IRISH, LEGEND, LEPRECHAUN, LESSONS, MAGICAL, MISCHIEF, MISSIONARY, PATRICK, PIPES, RAINBOW, SAINT, SYMBOL.

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| Y | C | O | I | N | S | K | W | K | I | M | S | X | Y | L |

Mini Spy Classics

Mini Spy and her friends are playing baseball. See if you can find the hidden pictures. Then color the picture.



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- | | | | |
|------------|-------------|------------|---------------------|
| • kite | • alligator | • ladder | • exclamation point |
| • pencil | • letter D | • bell | |
| • snake | • word MINI | • heart | |
| • number 3 | • letter O | • tooth | |
| • net | • ruler | • letter A | |

Mini Jokes



Tim: How is a good friend like a four-leaf clover?
Tara: They're hard to find!

Eco Note



Europe's Copernicus Climate Change Service says the past seven years have been the hottest on record, with 2021 coming in as the world's fifth-hottest year. A new report says the trend is obvious "by a clear margin" and that the average global temperature last year was 1.1 to 1.2 degrees Celsius above 1850-1900 levels. Researchers say the top 6,600 feet of the oceans were the hottest on record during 2021.

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For later:

Look in your newspaper for articles about St. Patrick's Day.

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