

St. Patrick's Day



Pre-reading

Questions:

- What do you know about St. Patrick's Day?

Definitions:

- Mass – a religious service in the Catholic church
- Bishop – a high-ranking minister or clergyperson
- St. = Saint – a very holy person

Reading

15 People of all backgrounds enjoy sharing in the fun of St. Patrick's Day. Many Americans
38 say "Everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day!" It is a day to dress in green and go to parties. It is a
time to celebrate Irish culture and history. March 17 is also a day to honor St. Patrick.

55 Green is the national color of Ireland. It is a country covered with green grass and
71 shamrocks. Shamrocks are small green plants with three leaves. People wear green hats and
86 clothes on St. Patrick's Day. In Chicago, the Chicago River is even dyed green.

98 Many cities have St. Patrick's Day parades and parties. People sing Irish songs and dance to
114 Irish music. They enjoy Irish food. Some people even drink green beer! On this holiday you can
131 buy a shamrock-shaped pizza, or try a green, shamrock shake.

142 St. Patrick's Day has been celebrated for many years all over the world. In Ireland it is a
160 national holiday, like Christmas and Easter. On March 17 most businesses are closed, and people
175 go to mass.

178 St. Patrick's Day came to America in the 1700's. It is not a national holiday in the United
196 States. Stores are open and people go to work. However, many Catholics do attend St. Patrick's
212 Day mass.

214 St. Patrick's Day honors the life of St. Patrick. He was born in 387 in Scotland. At the age
233 of 16, he was kidnapped by pirates and sold into slavery. He was a slave in Ireland for six years.

253 Patrick became a Catholic priest and taught many Irish people about God. He started many
268 schools and churches. He also became Bishop of the Catholic Church in Ireland.

281 There are many stories about St. Patrick. Some are **fiction**, some are fact. One story says
297 there are no snakes in Ireland because St. Patrick drove them away. However, Ireland is a country
314 that has never had any snakes. Another story tells of St. Patrick raising people from the dead.

331 It is known that St. Patrick often used 3-leafed shamrocks to explain the Trinity. These
347 small plants were used to explain how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit could be separate, but also
365 together as one. St. Patrick died on March 17, 461. Many Christians wore shamrocks in his honor.
382

Understanding

1. How old was Patrick when he died? _____

2. What are shamrocks? _____

3. When is St. Patrick's Day? _____

4. Where did this holiday begin? _____

5. What does the word **fiction** mean? _____

6. Why are shamrocks a symbol of St. Patrick's Day? _____

7. How do people celebrate this holiday? _____

Writing

Option A: In your own words, write about St. Patrick's Day.

Option B: How do you celebrate St. Patrick's Day?
