



Cultural awareness

Superstitions in Ireland

Fact box

The symbol of Ireland is the shamrock, or four-leaf clover. The Irish believe that anyone who has a four-leaf clover will have good luck!



IRISH BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITIONS

Hi, I'm Will. I've written this information page about Irish beliefs and superstitions. I hope you enjoy reading it. The Irish people have kept a lot of their old superstitions and traditions. Many of these come from the Celts, who lived in Ireland and other parts of Britain about 2,000 years ago.

FAIRIES

In the past, nearly everyone in Ireland believed in fairies! According to legend, fairies are little people who can do magic and bring people good or bad luck. A common name for fairies is 'the Good People', but they aren't always good! There are many different kinds of fairy. One well-known kind of fairy is the leprechaun, who likes to play tricks on people.



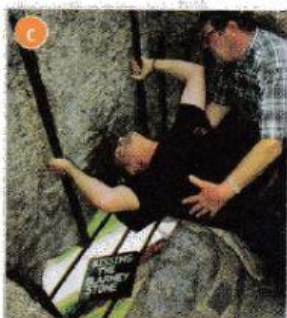
RAINBOWS

In Ireland we say that leprechauns keep a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. If you catch a leprechaun, you can make him give you his treasure! Leprechauns are difficult to catch, though, because they are very clever!



THE BLARNEY STONE

This is a stone in the walls of Blarney Castle near Cork. People say that if you kiss the stone, you will get 'the gift of the gab' and become a good speaker. Most Irish people have this gift already. We love to talk and are very good at it!



STONE CIRCLES

There are rings of stones all over the Irish countryside. According to legend, these are fairy rings, and if you destroy one, you'll have an accident before the end of the year. Local people have avoided them for centuries for this reason. However, archaeologists think that Stone Age people, not fairies, made them!



Thank you for reading this information page! I wish you all 'the luck of the Irish'!

Will, age 15

Word check

legend centuries archaeologist Stone Age rainbow treasure

1. Look at the web page. Pictures a - d are in the wrong place. Match them with the correct subheadings. Drag your answer to the picture above.

2. Read and listen. What is a leprechaun?

A. Rings of stones B. Little people who can do magic C. Gift of the gab D. A kind of fairy

3. Read again and choose the correct words.

A. The Celts lived only in Ireland / all over Britain.

B. The Irish believe that fairies are good and bad / usually good.

C. Some Irish people / archaeologists think it's dangerous to destroy some circles.

D. Leprechauns can show people where to find rainbows / money.

E. Irish people have a talent for speaking / kissing.