

e-lesson

Week starting: 10th March 2008**1. Ireland**

With St Patrick's Day approaching on 17th March, this week's lesson focuses on the country of Ireland.

Level

Intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Brainstorm on the subject of Ireland, asking students what they know about the country (being careful not to give away too many of the answers to Exercise 1). It would also be a good idea to have a map of the British Isles in order to help illustrate Ireland's geographical position.

2. Divide the students into pairs and give them a few minutes to consider the questions on Worksheet A, choosing an answer from the three options. In some cases the students will probably have to guess.

3. Give each student a copy of Worksheet B. Give them five to ten minutes to read the text and find out how many of their answers to Exercise 1 were correct. Encourage them to look up any new vocabulary.

4. Check answers in open class.

Answers : 1. c 2. a 3. a 4. b 5. a 6. c 7. a 8. a

5. Divide the students into two teams, A and B, and give each team the corresponding part of Worksheet C. The students have to refer back to Worksheet B and formulate questions based on the information using the words in the boxes. They will then put these questions to the other team as part of a quiz. The teams must use the exact words in the boxes, and avoid asking the same question more than once.

The words in most of the boxes can be used to create more than one question, and words such as 'why' and 'when' offer various possibilities. It is therefore possible that one team asks exactly the same question that the other team has prepared, in which case the other team has to formulate an alternative question.

Impose a time limit in which the teams have to formulate their questions. If a team is unable to create 12 questions, the other team should receive a point for each 'missing' question.

6. When the quiz begins, make it clear that the teams can no longer refer back to Worksheet B. The two teams take it in turns to ask and answer questions. Award one point for each grammatically correct question and for each correct answer. Award zero points for questions containing mistakes, repeated questions and incorrect answers. When both teams have asked all their questions, the team with the most points wins.

Ireland

Exercise 1

1. Which of these statements is true?
 - a) Ireland is part of the United Kingdom.
 - b) Ireland is part of Scotland.
 - c) Ireland is an independent country.

2. Which colour is associated with Ireland?
 - a) green
 - b) red
 - c) blue

3. What is the approximate population of Ireland?
 - a) 4.3 million
 - b) 21.5 million
 - c) 43 million

4. Which two sports are both very popular in Ireland?
 - a) football and American football
 - b) football and Gaelic football
 - c) golf and baseball

5. What is 'Guinness'?
 - a) a kind of beer
 - b) the capital of Ireland
 - c) a kind of Irish music

6. Which of these has *not* increased in Ireland since the 1990s?
 - a) the number of immigrants
 - b) foreign investment
 - c) the number of people leaving the country to live abroad

7. Which of these statements is true?
 - a) Irish people have a reputation for being talkative.
 - b) Ireland's national day is called Saint Rafael's Day.
 - c) It doesn't rain very often in Ireland.

8. What is 'Gaelic'?
 - a) a language
 - b) a kind of food
 - c) the capital of Ireland

Ireland

WORKSHEET B

Ireland (or to give its full name, the Republic of Ireland) is a European country covering most of an island situated to the west of Great Britain. The other, smaller country on the island is Northern Ireland. Whereas Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom (along with England, Scotland and Wales), the Republic of Ireland is a separate country that became independent from the United Kingdom in the early 1920s.

The population of Ireland is around 4.3 million, the main religion is Catholicism, and the main language of everyday life is English. However there is another language called Gaelic (also referred to as 'Irish'), which used to be spoken throughout the country before the English language arrived, and is still spoken in some areas.

Although Ireland is a small country, many aspects of its culture are quite well known around the world. The explanation for this goes back to the poverty that led millions of Irish people to emigrate during the 19th and 20th centuries. As a result there are now significant numbers of people with Irish ancestry in many different parts of the world, particularly in other English-speaking countries. According to a 2005 survey more than 10% of people in the United States have Irish ancestors.

There has been a huge change in Ireland's economic situation in the last 30 years or so. Foreign investment has increased rapidly, particularly since the 1990s, and now the country is one of the richest in Europe. For the first time in its history there are a lot of immigrants arriving in search of work, for example from countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

There probably aren't many countries that are strongly associated with a particular colour, but in the case of Ireland the colour green is almost a national symbol. The Irish countryside is well known for being very green due to the wet climate, and has led to Ireland having the nickname 'the Emerald Isle'. The shirts worn by the Irish national sports teams are green, and the colour is also present (along with white and orange) on the national flag.

The most popular sports in Ireland are football, rugby and golf, and also two very traditional sports that are not well known in other countries: hurling (which is a bit like hockey), and Gaelic football (a bit like a mixture of football and rugby).

Irish people have a reputation for being sociable and talkative, and Irish pubs are usually loud, friendly places. The most popular drink in these pubs, and indeed one of Ireland's most famous exports, is a very dark, almost black beer called Guinness.

Ireland's national day, Saint Patrick's Day, is on March 17th, and because of the number of people around the world with Irish ancestry it has become an international event. Perhaps the most colourful Saint Patrick's Day celebration takes place in Chicago in the United States, where the large river running through the city is turned green by putting dye into it!

Ireland

WORKSHEET C

Exercise 2

Team A

Using the information on Worksheet B, make questions using the words in the boxes. Use only one box for each question, and don't repeat any questions. When you have prepared the questions, Team B will have to answer them as part of a quiz.

why	nickname	dye	exports
national flag	popular	reputation	United Kingdom
when	religion	emigrate	how many

Team B

Using the information on Worksheet B, make questions using the words in the boxes. Use only one box for each question, and don't repeat any questions. When you have prepared the questions, Team A will have to answer them as part of a quiz.

how many	ancestors	why	national day
immigrants	traditional	colour	Chicago
language	sports	when	full name

Ireland – Glossary

abroad adverb

in or to a foreign country
We try to go abroad at least once a year.

ancestor noun [count]

someone who is related to you who lived a long time ago
Her ancestors went to America with the Pilgrims.

ancestry noun [uncount]

the people related to you who lived a long time ago
His family was of Danish ancestry.

be associated with phrase

to be connected with something in some way
His social problems were associated with heavy drinking.

Catholicism noun [uncount]

the religion of the Roman Catholic Church

dye noun [count/uncount]

a substance used for changing the colour of something such as clothing or your hair

emerald noun [count]

a bright green stone used in expensive jewellery

emigrate verb

to leave your country in order to live in another country
We're thinking of emigrating to New Zealand.

export noun [count]

a product that is sold to another country
Agricultural products are the country's largest export.

hockey noun [uncount]

game played on grass by two teams of 11 players who try to score goals by hitting a ball with a curved stick called a hockey stick

immigrant noun [count]

someone who comes to live in a country from another country
There has been a rise in the number of immigrants coming from Eastern Europe, especially Poland.

investment noun [count/uncount]

money used in a way that may earn you more money, for example money used for buying property or shares in a company
new tax incentives that will attract foreign investment

isle noun [count]

an island
the British Isles

nickname noun [count]

an informal name that your friends or family call you that is not your real name

poverty noun [uncount]

a situation in which someone does not have enough money to pay for their basic needs
There are many areas where the problems of poverty and unemployment still persist.

pub noun [count]

a place where people go to drink alcohol, especially in the UK and Ireland
Shall we go to the pub for a drink?

reputation noun [count/uncount]

a general opinion that someone or something has a particular quality
Clark had a reputation for arrogance and ruthlessness.

rugby noun [uncount]

a game played by two teams of players with a ball shaped like an egg. Goals are scored by kicking the ball over a high bar, and points called tries are scored by putting the ball behind the goal line.

situated adjective

in a particular place
The Business Library is situated on the ground floor.

sociable adjective

a sociable person is friendly and enjoys being with other people
I'm not feeling very sociable today.

survey noun [count]

a set of questions that you ask a large number of people or organisations
This survey shows the percentage of single-parent households in each area.

talkative adjective

a talkative person talks a lot

whereas conjunction

used for comparing two things, people, situations etc and showing that there is an important difference between them
Whereas knowledge can be acquired from books, skills must be learned through practice.