

1 Read the text and do the quiz.

- 1 In Irish legend, who climbed to the top of a mountain?
A Saint Patrick
B a leprechaun
C a snake
- 2 What did Saint Patrick use to explain an idea?
A gold
B legends
C a shamrock
- 3 What does the shamrock represent?
A Saint Patrick
B leprechauns
C the Christian Trinity
- 4 What do leprechauns look like?
A old men
B Saint Patrick
C beautiful fairies
- 5 According to Irish folklore, what happens if a person catches a leprechaun?
A They get tricked by the leprechaun.
B They get three wishes.
C They get the leprechaun's gold.

2 Collect information about another Saint Patrick's Day legend or myth. Then, write a short paragraph describing it.



Saint Patrick's Day

Legends and Folklore

Every year on 17th March, people all over the world, but especially in Ireland, celebrate Saint Patrick's Day. There are many tales about legendary Irish figures, symbols, and mythical creatures associated with Saint Patrick's Day. Here are a few of them!

Saint Patrick drives out the snakes from Ireland

This holiday is in honour of Saint Patrick, who has become a legend in Irish folklore. According to one tale about Saint Patrick, he once climbed up to the top of a mountain to pray to God for forty days. When he came back down, a large number of snakes had gathered at the base of the mountain. He quickly drove them into the sea. In fact, he banished all snakes from the island forever! To this day, there are no wild snakes in Ireland.



The shamrock



Shamrocks are an important part of Saint Patrick's Day. But why? Well, there is a legend that says Saint Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Christian religion's Trinity. The Trinity is the idea that God is made up of three parts: God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

In the legend about Saint Patrick, he explained that the three parts were like the three leaves of the shamrock plant; even though there are three leaves, together they make only one shamrock. In the same way, he said, the three parts of God make up one being. This is why the shamrock is an important symbol in Ireland.

The leprechaun

Leprechauns don't actually have anything to do with the legends of Saint Patrick, but they are an important part of Irish folklore, so, they have become Saint Patrick's Day symbols as well. Leprechauns are small fairies in Irish myths and legends, but they aren't beautiful like other fairies. They wear green suits and look like little old men. They are mischievous and like to play practical jokes on people. When they aren't playing tricks on people, they make and fix shoes. They also hide their pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. Legend says that if a person captures a leprechaun, the leprechaun has to grant them three wishes. Sometimes in myths, people tried to steal leprechauns' gold, too!

