

Theme * St. Patrick's Day & Ireland

Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

Clover-Clover-Leprechaun! (like Duck-Duck-Goose)

Bean bag toss – make round gold-colored bean bags to represent gold; toss them into a big black pot (can be a can covered in black paper or decorated with a St. Patrick's Day theme, or just use a laundry basket)!

Shamrock Search – hide shamrocks around the room like you would Easter eggs and let the children run to find them!

Treasure Hunt – Go for a walk to look for “treasure” (a stick, a leaf—things you would find outdoors); go over the list before the walk so the children know what to look for.

What Time is It Mr. Leprechaun? (See card #172) If he says “1 o'clock”, everyone takes 1 step forward, etc. If he says “midnight”, everyone runs back to home base before he catches them!

Science Activities:

Creating the color green – let children mix blue and yellow paint to make green... or use eye droppers to mix blue and yellow food coloring in water...

Scientific investigation – have the children search for things that are green. Make a list of them on the board or on a piece of poster paper. Categorize your findings. Make a bar graph to represent the categories.

Prism Fun – help children to see all the colors of the rainbow in the prism.

Grow shamrocks in the room! Grow them from seeds or transplant some from outside.

Math & Literacy Activities:

Flannel board: Count the 4-leaf clovers.

Match cards with the # to the number of clovers on another card.

Likenesses/Differences: Which leprechaun is different?

Count the number of pieces of gold in the pot at the end of the rainbow.

Shamrock Sequencing – using 4-5 sizes of shamrocks, let children line them up largest to smallest and smallest to largest.

Letters “G”, “S” and “L” – trace the letters with their fingers, draw them in the sand, etc.

Small Motor/Manipulatives:

Hide plastic gold coins in the sand table for the children to find.

Cut out several shamrocks from different colored paper, then cut each in half using a puzzle-type cut; children can put the puzzles together.

Sort Lucky Charms shapes using muffin pans. Put a different shape into each space on the muffin pan.

Put colored rice in your sand/water table and let children explore it with measuring cups, containers, funnels, etc. Hide plastic toys in the rice!

Make shamrock necklaces by stringing cereal on a piece of yarn, and putting a paper shamrock in the middle.

Snacks:

Gold Coins – miniature Ritz crackers & circles of cheese

Shamrock cookies – make sugar cookies and let the children decorate them with green icing and sprinkles.

Irish Stew – Serve Irish Stew for lunch; better yet, let the children help you make it! Or try some **cabbage soup!**

Green Milk – add a drop of green food coloring to the milk and serve it green!

St. Patrick's Day Ice Cream – add a drop or two of green food coloring to homemade ice cream. Add green sprinkles when you serve it!

Green food coloring can be added to whipped cream, clear soda pop, white grape juice, cream cheese, bread dough, etc., to make food more exciting. Also serve green foods, such as grapes, kiwi, spinach, lettuce...

Special Visual Aids/Room Set-Up/Field Trips:

Send a letter home to parents asking them to dress their children in green for St. Patrick's Day.

Cut large shamrocks to mark the children's seats for circle time. Put shamrocks and St. Patrick's Day decorations all over the room. Make a large rainbow out of butcher paper and let the children help you color it before hanging it on the wall. Make a cloud on one end with cotton balls glued to poster board, and put a black pot at the other end with gold “coins” made of crinkled gold wrapping paper.

Fingerplays: See St. Patrick's Day fingerplay cards

Dramatic Play:

- Have lots of green outfits in the dramatic play area, including hats with shamrocks taped to them.
- Kitchen play – have a few plastic shamrock cookie cutters and some green placemats, etc.
- Irish flags – let children dress up in their shamrock headbands or leprechaun hats and march to Irish music, waving Irish flags.
- Green Mardi Gras beads

Songs (card #s):

I'm a Little Leprechaun (#59)
On St. Patrick's Day (#60)
How Many Leprechauns? (#61)
I'm a Little Shamrock (#62)
Do Your Ears Point Up? (#65)
Catch Him If You Can (#69)
Can't Catch Me (#71)
The Shamrock is Green (#75)
Eeensy Weensy Leprechaun (#77)
St. Patrick's Day Song (#81)
St. Patrick's Day (#82)
Wee Little Patrick (#83)
The Leprechaun Song (#84)
Who Took the Shamrock? (#85)
R-A-I-N-BOW (#87)

Books:

St. Patrick's Day Countdown, by Salina Yoon (board book)
Hooray for St. Patrick's Day! by Joan Holub and Paul Meisel
Let's Celebrate St. Patrick's Day by Peter Roop
Jack and the Leprechaun, by Ivan Robertson and Katy Bratun
Luckiest St. Patrick's Day Ever by Teddy Slater
St. Patrick's Day in the Morning by Eve Bunting and Jan Brett
It's St. Patrick's Day by Rebecca Gomez & Mary Morgan
St. Patrick's Day by Gail Gibbons
St. Patrick's Day Alphabet by Beverly Barras Vidrine and Patrick Soper

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Art:

St. Patrick's Day Play Dough (add green food coloring or green Kool-Aid for the green color)
Green & White Art – let children make pictures using green glitter, crayons, pens, colored pencils, markers, paint, string, yarn, ribbon, tissue paper—anything you can find in your supply closet!
Blarney Stone – Let children paint a rock any way they wish to represent a blarney stone. These make great paperweights for parents!
Shamrock Mobile – Cut different shamrock shapes and hang from a hanger with yarn to make a mobile. Hang these around the room for decorations!
Shamrock Headbands – Make these from strips of green paper. Let children decorate with shamrock shapes they've cut out or stamped in green onto the paper. They can wear the headbands while singing some of the St. Patrick's Day songs or listening to Celtic music!
Leprechaun Hats – Make
Sponge art – Shamrock necklaces – Shamrock cookie cutter art
Rainbow collage – torn paper rainbows – rainbow crayons

Circle Time Activities:

Talk to the children about the history of St. Patrick's Day, or read stories about Ireland.
Using the flannel board, count the number of clovers as you add them or take them away. See fingerplay "How Many Leprechauns?"
Go on a Leprechaun Hunt.
Musical chairs – use Irish tunes and put a shamrock made of construction paper onto one of the chairs.
What color are you wearing? (#102)
Cut shamrock shapes from one color of paper. Label one set with numbers 1-10 and another set with corresponding numbers of dots. Give each child one shamrock and let them find the child with their match. You can also do this with upper- and lower-case alphabets to be matched, or with an alphabet and the picture of something that starts with that letter (i.e., "A" and a picture of an apple).
Shamrock Fishing Game – Attach paper clips to paper shamrocks and let children try to catch them. You can use different colored shamrocks or write letters and numbers on them so that children can try to catch specific shamrocks. You could also just have the children name what is on their shamrock.
Cut out large shamrocks to put on the floor for children to sit on at circle time. Laminate them and you can use them for several years.
What's under the rainbow? Using a very colorful sock, put something inside and let the children take turns feeling of it and trying to guess what is inside.

Blarney Stone: "Blarney Castle is located in County Cork, Ireland. Built in 1446 by Cormac Laidhim McCarthy (Lord of Muskerry) the Blarney stone is located in the southern tower wall between the main castle wall and the parapet. In order to kiss the stone one has to lie on their back and bend backward (and downward), holding iron bars for support. It is said that the Blarney stone has magical properties. As legend has it an old woman cast a spell on the stone to reward a king who had saved her from drowning. Kissing the stone gave the king the ability to speak sweetly and convincingly." Source: Alecia Dixon, <http://holidays.kaboose.com/patrick-history.html>