

UNIT 2: TUNE INTO IRELAND: TEACHING IRELAND THROUGH MUSIC

Fergal Kavanagh

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

This unit looks at Ireland's history, customs, language and lifestyle through its music. Each song is presented through a didactic activity, designed to raise learners' awareness of the language used in this medium. The activities elicit the knowledge students may already have. The history of the country is presented accompanied by traditional Irish music, and each song focuses on a particular area of the country's oft-troubled past. The accompanying activities dealing with sport, geography and Ireland's most popular drink (!), promote the development of language acquisition simultaneously with the students' creative skills.

BRAINSTORMING ACTIVITIES

1. *Knowing Ireland.* Check your knowledge of Ireland. Answer the following questions:

- a. Who is the patron saint of Ireland?
- b. How do you say "Dublin" in Irish?
- c. What happened in Ireland in 1848?
- d. Name four cities in Ireland.
- e. What is *hurling*?
- f. What is Ireland's most famous drink?

2. *Knowing the Irish press.* Choose the front page of an Irish newspaper and describe it. What makes it different from a Spanish one?

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3. Sounds & Music. Group the following words in the correct column, depending on their sounds.

achieve cold gold smoke believe deceive high sold boat die
leave stranglehold folk sky yoke by

/i:/

/ ʊ/

/ ɔɪ/

/aɪ/

Now, listen to the song *Trouble With A Capital T* by Horslips, about invaders arriving in Ireland and put the words in the correct order. The song can be found on www.youtube.com

4. Irish places. Look at the following places and locate them in a map of Ireland.

Aran Islands Cork Dublin Antrim Highlands County Down
Galway Bantry Bay Derry Quay Gougane Barra Belfast
Donegal Liffey Waters

5. Translations. What are the English translations of these Irish words?

croí – chroí:

grá – ghrá:

lá:

aréir:

Corcaigh:

Baile Átha Cliath:

coill – na gcoillte:

Now, find these words in the song *Tá Mo Chleamhnas Déanta– My Match Is Made* by Van Morrison & The Chieftains, a song sung in both Irish and English.

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PRESENTATION

Complete the information of this unit with the Power Point presentation enclosed.

POST PRESENTATION ACTIVITIES

1. *Paddy's Lament*. Read the chorus of the song and predict the plot and story.

Chorus:

Hear thee boys, now take my advice

To America I'll have ye's not be coming

There is nothing here but war, where the murderin' cannons roar

And I wish I was at home in dear old Dublin

Now, use your knowledge of the structure of storytelling to put the verses of the song "Paddy's Lament" in the correct order. Then listen to the song and check if your choice is the right one:

1. Well myself and a hundred more, to America sailed o'er

Our fortunes to be making we were thinkin'

When we got to Yankee land, they put guns into our hands

Saying "Paddy, you must go and fight for Lincoln"

2. Well it's by the hush, me boys, and that's to mind your noise

And listen to poor Paddy's sad narration

I was by hunger stressed, and in poverty distressed

So I took a thought I'd leave the Irish nation

3. Well I think myself in luck, if I get fed on Indianbuck

And old Ireland is the country I delight in

To the devil, I would say, God curse Americay

For in truth I've had enough of their hard fightin'

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4. General Meagher to us he said, if you get shot or lose your head

Every mother's son of youse will get a pension

Well in the war I lost me leg, all I've now is a wooden peg

And by my soul it is the truth to you I mention

5. Well I sold me horse and cow, my little pig and sow

My father's farm of land I then departed

And me sweetheart Bid McGee, I'm afraid I'll never see

For I left her there that morning broken-hearted

2. *The G.A.A. Championship.* Match the two parts of the sentences to sing the World Cup Chant.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. All storms begin | a. to join the immortals that have gone before them. |
| 2. Gradually they gain | b. strength and momentum |
| 3. And before long the powerful force | c. annual G.A.A. Championships |
| 4. It is the way of the | d. early summer breeze |
| 5. They build up from that | e. with a gentle breeze |
| 6. the increasing crowds | f. great atmosphere, camaraderie and expectation in Croke Park |
| 7. as the Championships advance and lead | g. takes control of us all |
| 8. And finally to those days of | h. to the big days at provincial venues |
| 9. where champions are crowned and go on from there | i. with the Championships? |
| 10. Does anything compare | j. north, south, east, and west |

3. *Whiskey In The Jar.* Rewrite the following words in the Past Simple, then listen to the song. Which verbs do you hear in their Past Simple form?

to be	to go	to rise	to swear
to blow	to make	to say	to take
can't	to meet	to see	
to count	to	to send	
to dream	produce	to sigh	
to fill	to put	to steal	

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COMPLEMENTARY EXERCISES

1. *Reading about Ireland and music.* Check in the web the article: "Ireland: A Culture Reflected in Its Music" by Fergal Kavanagh and answer the following questions:

<http://www.tuneintoenglish.com/Ireland,%20a%20cultural%20journey.pdf>

a. General summary question. Describe in one sentence the main purpose of the article.

b. Give a synonym or definition for the following words from the text:

TO FEATURE:

CHANT:

TO FLEE:

FAMINE:

TO FADE:

HOMESICKNESS:

HOMEGROWN:

INTERTWINED:

TENANT:

DEBAUCHED:

c. Write a key word/short phrase/title to summarise each paragraph.

Paragraph 1:

Paragraph 2:

Paragraph 3:

Paragraph 4:

Paragraph 5:

Paragraph 6:

Paragraph 7:

Paragraph 8:

d. Answer the following questions. For each answer, please provide the paragraph number where you got the information.

1. Why is the harp Ireland's national symbol?

2. What was the harpists' function in medieval Ireland?

3. What is the role of the band "Horslips" in the revival of Irish music?

4. How is Irish traditional music reflected in present-day Ireland?

5. What effect did the Famine have in Irish traditional music?

6. Despite being a rock band, how are Bono and U2 contributing to Irish traditional music?

7. How did music help emigrants in their new countries?

8. How has Irish music influenced other kinds of music?

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9. According to the text, which factor will contribute to the possible development of Irish music in the near future?
 10. What were the key factors for the success of the song *Trouble with a Capital T*?
 11. Why have many lyrics disappeared?
 12. How did British invasion affect Irish music?
 13. What did the emigrants do with the songs when they settled in America?
 14. Why is it difficult to know exactly how Irish music was during the medieval times?
- e. Is your country's culture reflected in its music? Write a short paragraph with specific examples.

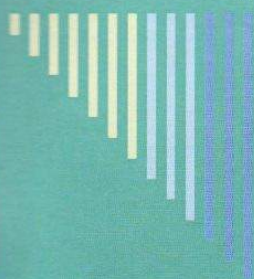
RECOMMENDED READINGS

- McCarthy, Marie (1999). *Passing It On: The Transmission of Music in Irish Culture*. Cork: Cork University Press.
- Murphey, Tim (1992). *Music & Song*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- O'Connor, Nuala (1991). *Bringing It All Back Home*. BBC Books.
- Pais Becher, Tatiana (1998). *L'Irlanda degli U2: musica, letteratura e radici culturali*. Arcana Editrice.
- Vallely, Fintan, ed. (1999). *The Companion to Irish Traditional Music*. Cork: Cork University Press.

USEFUL WEB LINKS

- <http://www.tuneintoenglish.com> (A web page with different activities to learn English through music. It includes an Irish karaoke section).
- <http://www.ireland-information.com/irishmusic/irishsongs-music-lyrics-midis.htm> (A large selection of traditional Irish songs, with music and lyrics).
- <http://irith.org/index.jsp> (*Irish Resources in the Humanities*. A Project of the Royal Irish Academy. Check the section entitled "Music").
- <http://multitext.ucc.ie/> (Multi-text Project in Irish History. An innovative educational project by the History Department, University College Cork).
- <http://www.irishhistoryonline.ie/projhist.php> (*Irish History Online*. A Bibliography of Irish history created by Irish History Online in association with the Royal Historical Society Bibliography and London's Past Online).

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TUNE INTO IRELAND: Teaching Ireland through Music

Fergal Kavanagh
Tune into English.com



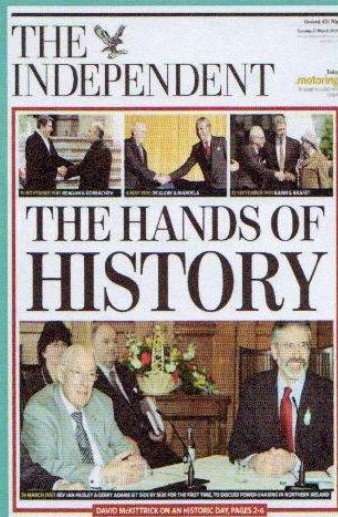
Introduction:

Answer the following questions:

- ☐ 1. Who is the patron saint of Ireland?
- ☐ 2. How do you say "Dublin" in Irish?
- ☐ 3. What happened in 1848?
- ☐ 4. Name four cities in Ireland.
- ☐ 5. What is hurling?
- ☐ 6. What is Ireland's most famous drink?

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Describe this photograph



Group the following words in the correct category depending on their sounds

achieve, cold, gold, smoke, believe,
deceive, high, sold, boat, die, leave,
stranglehold, folk, sky, yoke, by

- /i:/
- /əʊ/
- /əʊl/
- /aɪ/

Unit 2

Mark these places on the map

- Aran Islands
- Cork
- Dublin
- Antrim Highlands
- County Down
- Galway
- Bantry Bay
- Derry Quay
- Gougane Barra
- Belfast
- Donegal
- Liffey Waters



Read these Irish words:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| ■ <i>croí – chroí</i> | (heart) |
| ■ <i>grá – ghrá</i> | (love) |
| ■ <i>lá</i> | (day) |
| ■ <i>aréir</i> | (last night) |
| ■ <i>Corcaigh</i> | (Cork) |
| ■ <i>Baile Átha Cliath</i> | (Dublin) |
| ■ <i>coill - na gcoillte</i> | (woods) |

Unit 2



“Paddy’s Lament” I:

Read the Chorus and predict the plot of the song:

Chorus:

Hear thee boys, now take my advice
To America I'll have ye's not be coming
There is nothing here but war, where the
murderin' cannons roar
And I wish I was at home in dear old Dublin



“Paddy’s Lament” II

1. Well myself and a hundred more, to America sailed o'er
Our fortunes to be making we were thinkin'
When we got to Yankee land, they put guns into our hands
Saying "Paddy, you must go and fight for Lincoln"

2. Well it's by the hush, me boys, and that's to mind your noise
And listen to poor Paddy's sad narration
I was by hunger stressed, and in poverty distressed
So I took a thought I'd leave the Irish nation

3. Well I think myself in luck, if I get fed on Indianbuck
And old Ireland is the country I delight in
To the devil, I would say, God curse Americay
For in truth I've had enough of their hard fightin'

4. General Meagher to us he said, if you get shot or lose your head
Every mother's son of youse will get a pension
Well in the war I lost me leg, all I've now is a wooden peg
And by my soul it is the truth to you I mention

5. Well I sold me horse and cow, my little pig and sow
My father's farm of land I then departed
And me sweetheart Bid McGee, I'm afraid I'll never see
For I left her there that morning broken-hearted

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GAELIC FOOTBALL

Gaelic football is like a mix between **soccer** and **rugby**. There are **15 players** on each team, and each game lasts **60 minutes**

Kerry are the current **All-Ireland Football Champions (2009)**

HURLING and *The Gaelic Athletic Association* (G.A.A.)



Hurling is the most popular Irish sport, and is the **fastest** field sport in the world. It is also the **oldest** sport in Europe

It is played with a stick called a hurley, and a ball called a sloitar

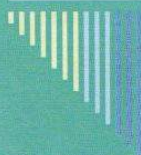
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The G.A.A. Championship:

Reorder the lines to complete the chant!

And we'll really shake them up
We're all part of Jackie's army
'Cause Ireland are the greatest football team
When we win the World Cup
We're all off to win the league



The World Cup Chant:

1. All storms begin
 2. Gradually they gain
 3. And before long the powerful force
 4. It is the way of the
 5. The build up from that
 6. the increasing crowds
 7. as the Championships advance and lead
 8. And finally to those days of
 9. where champions are crowned and go on from there
 10. Does anything compare
-
- a. to join the immortals that have gone before them
 - b. strength and momentum
 - c. annual G.A.A. Championships
 - d. early summer breeze
 - e. with a gentle breeze
 - f. great atmosphere, camaraderie and
 - expectation in Croke Park
 - g. takes control of us all
 - h. to the big days at provincial venues
 - i. with the Championships?
 - j. north, south, east, and west

Unit 2

Whiskey In The Jar: Sing the song and find the verbs in the past tense

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> to be | to go | to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> to blow | to make | to see |
| <input type="checkbox"/> can't | to meet | to send |
| <input type="checkbox"/> to count | to produce | to sigh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> to dream | to put | to steal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> to fill | to rise | to swear |
| | | to take |

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