



Báidín Fheilimí – Notes



- **Activity types:** ordering, listening for specific words, learning Irish.
- **Objective:** to sing a song in Irish
- **Note:** Báidín Fheilimí ('Phelim's Little Boat') is a traditional Irish children's song, originating in County Donegal. The lyrics, in Irish, tell the story of a boat owned by a man called Feilimí (Phelim). This worksheet is based on Sinéad O'Connor's 2002 recording but there are many versions available.

- 1) Ask students how people travel between islands, to elicit the word *boat*. Tell them they are going to listen to a traditional children's song in the Irish language (as *Gaeilge*). The Irish word for boat is [báidín](#).
(Note: click on the word to hear the pronunciation online)
(Language note: a boat is in fact a *bád*, but in Irish when something is small we add the suffix *-ín*)
- 2) Give each student a copy of the worksheet, or show them the picture of the boat. Tell them the man's name is Feilimí, so this is Feilimí's small boat, it is [Báidín Fheilimí](#).
(Language note: possession in Irish is expressed by first saying the object and then the owner, adding a *h* to the beginning of the name. In the case of the letter F, this becomes muted.)
- 3) Ask them to listen for the title as you play the song, how many times do they hear it?
Key: this will vary depending on the version you use, but the Sinéad O'Connor version repeats it 20 times.
- 4) Explain the story of the song:
One day Feilimí was going to an island in the north called Gabhla (Gola), one kilometre off the coast of County Donegal. He then (or instead?) went to Toráí (Tory) island, which is 14.5 km off the coast, where his boat crashed on the rocks.
- 5) The chorus of the song describes the boat as:
lively – tiny – lovely – willing – straight
In Irish these words are:
[beosach](#) – [bídeach](#) – [bóidheach](#) – [deontach](#) – [díreach](#)
In the song the chorus is repeated four times, ask students to put the adjectives in the correct order as they listen.
Key: bídeach (tiny) – beosach (lively) – bóidheach (lovely) – díreach (straight) – deontach (willing)
- 6) Ask students to unfold the worksheet, to read the lyrics and to sing along!



Báidín Fheilimí



Listen to the song, how many times do you hear the title of the song?

The chorus uses the following adjectives to describe the boat. In what order do you hear them?

beosach,	(lively)
bídeach	(tiny)
bóidheach	(lovely)
deontach	(willing)
díreach	(straight)

FOLD

Look at the Irish lyrics and compare them with the English ones, then sing along.

Báidín Fheilimí d'ímigh go Gabhla,
 Báidín Fheilimí is Feilimí ann.
 Báidín Fheilimí d'ímigh go Gabhla,
 Báidín Fheilimí is Feilimí ann.

Curfá

Báidín bídeach, báidín beosach,
 Báidín bóidheach, báidín Fheilimí.
 Báidín díreach, báidín deontach,
 Báidín Fheilimí is Feilimí ann.

Báidín Fheilimí d'ímigh go Toraí,
 Báidín Fheilimí is Feilimí ann.
 Báidín Fheilimí d'ímigh go Toraí,
 Báidín Fheilimí is Feilimí ann.

Curfá

Báidín Fheilimí briseadh i dToraí,
 Báidín Fheilimí is Feilimí ann.
 Báidín Fheilimí briseadh i dToraí,
 Báidín Fheilimí is Feilimí ann.

Curfá x 2

Feilimí's little boat went to Gola,
 Feilimí's little boat and Feilimí in it.
 Feilimí's little boat went to Gola,
 Feilimí's little boat and Feilimí in it.

Chorus

A tiny boat, a lively boat,
 A lovely boat, Feilimí's little boat.
 A straight boat, a willing boat,
 Feilimí's little boat and Feilimí in it.

Feilimí's little boat went to Tory,
 Feilimí's little boat and Feilimí in it.
 Feilimí's little boat went to Tory
 Feilimí's little boat and Feilimí in it.

Chorus

Feilimí's little boat broke on Tory,
 Feilimí's little boat and Feilimí in it.
 Feilimí's little boat broke on Tory,
 Feilimí's little boat and Feilimí in it.

Chorus x 2