

## Music in Ireland

### Essay 1: The Session in Gleeson's Pub (350 word minimum)

1. Read Chapter 1, "Invitation to a Session", in "Music in Ireland"
2. Provide written responses to the following questions below

The Irish (Gaelic) word for a session is *seisiún*. Colin Hamilton writes that a session is "a loose association of musicians who meet, generally, but not always, in a pub to play an unpredetermined selection, mainly of dance music, but sometimes with solo pieces such as slow airs or songs." There are usually one or more 'core' musicians, and others who are less regular. Although a session may appear to be a random event, there are factors that control the proceedings, e.g. ability, reputation, and age of musicians, as well as the instrument they play. Many publicans (those who run a pub) are keen to have their bars known as centers of good traditional music.

Source: Colin Hamilton, "Session", in *The Companion to Irish Traditional Music*, ed. Fintan Vallely (Cork: Cork University Press, 1999), pp. 345-46.

Answer the following questions about the session in Gleeson's pub on that June evening in 1997.

1. Who was the publican and how did he develop his pub as a center of good traditional music?
2. Who were the core musicians at the session? Were there other musicians present who attended less regularly?
3. Who was the audience for this music?
4. Name all the musical instruments that the authors saw or heard at the session?
5. The authors say that a session brings together all the strands of Irish traditional culture (p. 15). Show how this is true for the session in Gleeson's pub.