



Guide for Teachers and Parents

Book 15: Tommy Goes to Ireland

This is the fifteenth in the *Ewe Books* series of illustrated books available on the **Learning Page** Web site for downloading and printing free of charge. A new book in this series will be "published" every month.

These books are written to a second- or third-grade reading level, but children in pre-kindergarten through first grade will also love having the stories read to them.

Introduction

If possible, make enough copies of the book for each member of the class or group. See pages 2 and 3 of the Teaching Guide for Book 1, *The School Lunch Room*, for directions on how to make the book. If you download and copy the pages in advance, students can assemble the pages and tape or staple them together. Before starting the reading, have students color the covers of the books in any way they choose. While coloring, initiate a discussion on what the title could mean and what the next adventure might be.

Before starting to read *Tommy Goes to Ireland*, share with the class that this book is another in a series and that this story is part of a much longer one.

Planning with Ewe Books

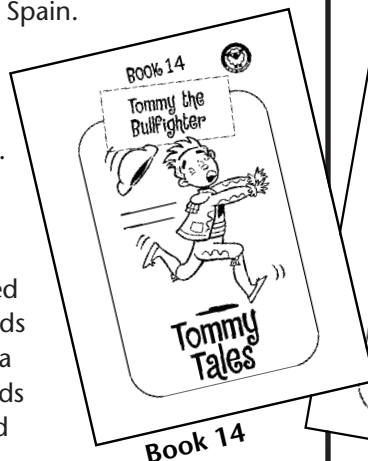
As you begin your planning for the year, depend on the **Learning Page** and this delightful serial story to add variety and fun to your reading routines. A new book regularly, and all accompanying teachers'

materials and **Fun Sheets**, supplement your other classroom activities and curricula.

THE STORY SO FAR . . .

In the last **Tommy Tales** adventure, a two-part series, Tommy and his friends traveled to Spain.

Tommy inadvertently ended up in a bullring after trying on a bullfighter's costume and being mistaken for a matador in training. Ultimately, he and his friends saved a bull from being killed in a bullfight and returned the bull to his home. The family that owned the bull gave Tommy and his friends a taste of Spanish hospitality with a wonderful Spanish meal. The friends returned home with full bellies and new memories.



Preparing for Reading

The last **Tommy Tales** story was the end of a two-part adventure in which Tommy and his friends went to Spain. *Tommy Goes to Ireland* is a new **Tommy Tales** adventure. Ask students to share any speculations they might have about this new story based on their knowledge of Ireland. Ask them to guess about any story elements or themes they might expect to encounter (e.g., leprechauns).

Reading Guide

You may structure the reading time for this story in many ways. Here are just two ideas:

1. You can read it aloud, all the way through, with the entire class on the rug during your regular story time. Then, review the story spread by spread and begin implementing the various objectives and **Fun Sheets**.
2. After reading aloud the first two pages, you can begin questioning for comprehension and work on some of the **Fun Sheets** and activities cited in this section. Proceed to the second two pages, and so on.

Opening Lesson

Introduce the book by showing the cover and saying the title clearly: *Tommy Goes to Ireland*. You can also write it on the board. Read the first two pages of the story.

Ask students what they can predict about the story from what you have read on these first two pages. Write their ideas on the board.

Rainbows

"Look at the rainbow," said Kim. This is a good opportunity to introduce your students to the concept of rainbows.

A rainbow is made up of three key parts. The first part of a rainbow is white light, or sunlight. The second part is water in the form of small droplets. These first two parts are the physical rainbow. Light shines through the water droplets, or mist, and becomes bent. White light is made up of all the colors in the spectrum (just as with pigment, all the colors combine to create black). When white light is bent in a raindrop, the light is separated into different colors that we see as a rainbow. It is the exact same light, but we are able to see all of its components (the colors).

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Tommy and his friends were playing in the park. Kim saw a beautiful rainbow in the sky.

"Look at the rainbow," said Kim. "Isn't it beautiful!"

"You know there's a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow?" asked Andy.



The third part of a rainbow is the person viewing it. If no one can see a rainbow (which is really only an illusion), does it exist?

You can also see rainbows with specially shaped crystals or glass, called prisms, that separate light in the same way water droplets do. If you have access to a prism, this is a good opportunity to demonstrate the color spectrum to students.

Make your own Rainbow!

Go outside with a misting bottle, or you can use a garden hose with a spray attachment. Make sure that there is strong sunlight in the path of the water as you spray the mist into the air. Look around until you find the rainbow you have made. It will be at an angle between the light source and your eyes.

"Which end?" asked Sam.

"I don't know," said Andy.

"Maybe RK-5 knows," said Tommy. "He knows everything."

Tommy pulled his little robot friend from his pocket.

"We have a question for you," Tommy said to RK-5. "Is there a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow?"

"And at which end?" added Sam.



The Search for Gold

Tommy and his friends are looking for a pot of gold. They are not the first people, nor will they be the last, to do so. Since the earliest days in humankind's history, gold has been seen as a precious thing, and people have gone to great lengths to find it. You may want to use this opportunity to teach students a little about the history of the search for gold and other treasures.

During the colonial invasions of South America, the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés was looking for the rumored city of El Dorado. "El Dorado" translates loosely to "City of Gold." In his search for gold and power, Cortés came across the heavily populated city of Tenotchtlan, which he conquered in the name of Spain. He never found the treasure he sought, but Mexico City was built on top of the destroyed city of Tenotchtlan. Throughout history, people from Spain, England, and other parts of Europe have gone on expeditions in search of gold and other riches.

Another gold-fevered event was the California gold rush, during which thousands upon thousands of people went west to seek their fortune in the gold mines of California. While the gold rush proved unfruitful for most, the massive migration helped to establish communities throughout the western United States, most of which continue to grow today.

In the Right Order

Use **Fun Sheet 012** to give students practice with putting words in alphabetical order. Sixteen words from *Tommy Goes to Ireland* are listed, and the task is to number them in alphabetical order.

Fun Sheet 15 asks students to put in chronological order various events that happen in the story.

Name _____

Put the following words about Ireland in ABC order.


Kerry.....(a county)	1. _____
Galway.....(a city)	2. _____
Limerick.....(a city)	3. _____
Dublin.....(the capital)	4. _____
Killarney.....(a city)	5. _____
Irish Sea.....(water to coast)	6. _____
Cork.....(a city)	7. _____
Wicklow.....(a town)	8. _____
Shannon.....(a city)	9. _____
leprechauns...(little people)	10. _____
Tralee.....(a town)	11. _____
Aran.....(islands)	12. _____
Tipperary.....(a town)	13. _____
Leitrim.....(a town)	14. _____
Slieve Donard.....(a mountain)	15. _____
Blarney.....(a castle)	16. _____

Fun Sheet 012

Name _____

Put the following actions in the correct order from 1-6, beginning with the earliest.

_____ Kim found a black feather.
_____ RK-5 told the friends to stop near a huge oak tree.
_____ Dozens of birds were singing.
_____ The children landed safely in a pile of hay.
_____ The leprechauns danced an Irish jig.
_____ There was a flash of light and a cloud of blue smoke.



Fun Sheet 015

Words to Watch

These words from the story may be new or unfamiliar to students, or might present a spelling challenge. Use them for a spelling test to be given sometime after you have introduced the story.

1. leprechaun (p. 4)
2. bright (p. 6)
3. castle (p. 6)
4. disaster (p. 10)
5. daybreak (p. 11)
6. thieves (p. 12)
7. immediately (p. 13)
8. listening (p. 13)
9. jackdaw (p. 14)
10. shinier (p. 14)

Write the words on the board and have students copy them onto a piece of paper. Then, using dictionaries or online, have them write a definition for each word. Remind your students to reread the sentences in the story where the words appear to make sure they choose and write the correct definition.

At a later time, have students read the definitions they chose for each word. Then have them write a sentence using each word.



"There is gold at the end of rainbows," replied RK-5. "But only in one country," he added. "The gold is guarded by little people called leprechauns. The country is called Ireland."

"Wow! Can you take us there?" asked Lucy. "I'd love to see the gold at the end of the rainbow."

"I'd love to see the leprechauns," said Sam.

Leprechauns

Tommy and his friends are on the lookout for leprechauns. Use this story to give students the inside scoop about leprechauns.

The word *leprechaun* comes from the Irish phrase *Leith phroyan*, meaning "shoemaker," the chosen profession of the leprechaun. Many stories exist about the origin of Irish leprechauns. There are many similar fairies that gather treasures, play tricks on humans, and grant wealth to those lucky enough to find them. Leprechauns are akin to genies, dragons, unicorns, and other magical wish-granters, mischief-makers, and guardians of treasure.

A likely source of the legends surrounding the leprechaun may have been the poverty

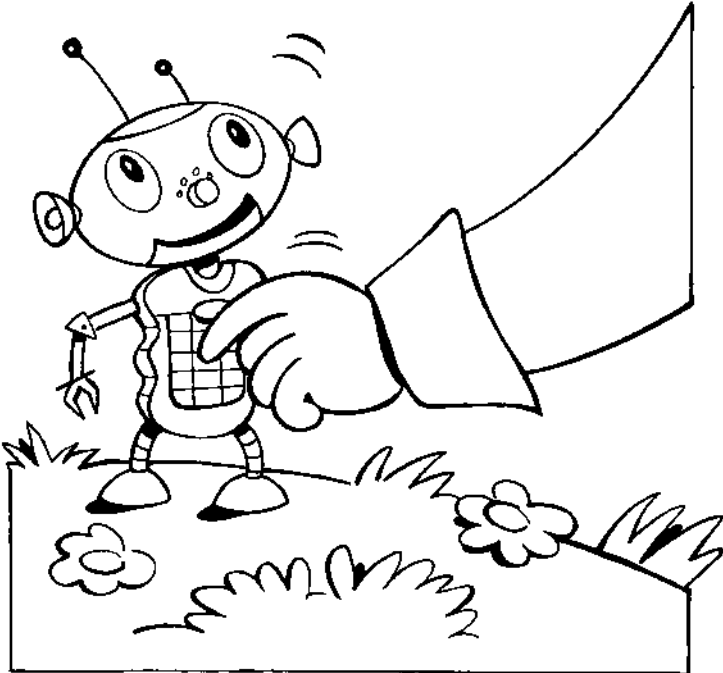
in Ireland during difficult times in history. Leprechauns gave people hope that comfort and wealth might be just around the corner if they could only look at the right time in the right place.

In one version of the leprechaun legend, leprechauns are magical tricksters. They hide pots of gold at the ends of rainbows. They repair shoes in the wee hours of morning. They sneak out at night and hide humans' car keys. They grant wishes when captured. But if a human steals the gold of a leprechaun, the gold will turn to dust, and the thief will be left with nothing but a guilty feeling.

Extension Have your students make up their own legends about leprechauns or another of their favorite magical beings. They can also make up a story about an encounter with a fairy or another magical creature.

"Of course I can take you to Ireland," said RK-5. "I can take you anywhere you want to go."

They quickly decided that they would go to Ireland to find the leprechauns. RK-5 told Tommy which buttons to press on his button pad. There was a flash of light and a cloud of blue smoke.



Ireland

Tommy and his friends are going to Ireland. This is a great time to discuss what it is like in Ireland—a very beautiful land.

You can begin with the geography of Ireland. **Tommy Tales Fact File 21** is a map of Ireland that students can refer to while reading this story and learning about Ireland. Students can also use **Fun Sheet 18** to test their knowledge of some of the basics of Irish geography. The country of Ireland is surrounded by the North Atlantic Ocean and the Celtic and Irish Seas. It is located on the northwest side of Europe, just above the main continent. The climate of Ireland is generally cloudy and cool. The abundance of rainfall makes the land very lush.

The culture of Ireland is a mix of many influences. There may have been people in Ireland as early as 7000 BC. Ireland has seen many changes throughout its history. Among the groups that have had direct influences on the Irish culture are the Celts, the British, the Vikings, and the Romans.

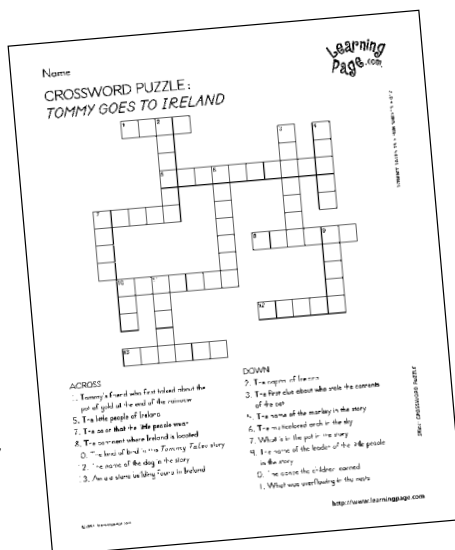
Irish mathematicians, scientists, and artists have made significant contributions to the world. Irish poets, playwrights, and novelists have changed the way we view literature. The writer James Joyce was an Irishman who is today considered by some to be the most complex and talented writer ever. The wonderful rhythms and soaring melodies of Irish music have shaped the musical tastes of nearly all who encounter it. You may wish to bring in some Irish music to play for your students.

Irish celebrations are famous throughout the world. If you have ever seen "Riverdance," you might understand why. Irish people are famous for their joy and passion for life. However, the Irish people have seen much strife in their country. The potato famine, invasion, and perennial conflicts between cultural and religious groups have been devastating, but the people of Ireland are strong, and their culture has prevailed.

Extension Ireland is not the only country that has been influenced by many different cultures. Have your students come up with five different foods, five different words, and five inventions that have come from other countries.

Crossword Puzzle

The crossword puzzle for *Tommy Goes to Ireland* (Fun Sheet 017) includes some facts about Ireland as well as many details from this **Tommy Tales** story. Reading the puzzle clues gives students the opportunity to think verbally as well as visually, which helps to reinforce their knowledge.



Fun Sheet 017

Castles in Ireland

As in most of Europe, there are many castles in Ireland. Take time to explore the castles of Ireland with your students.

The castles in Ireland number in the hundreds. These castles were not originally built for luxury, but rather for the protection of the rulers and citizens of the provinces. There was much unrest during medieval times, and every large castle had hundreds of soldiers defending its walls. Today, castles are beautiful monuments to history. People still inhabit some of the castles of Ireland.

Extension Building a Castle

Present your students with the challenge of constructing castles of their own. You can have your class work in groups or individually to complete their castles.

You will need these supplies:

- Heavy paper
- Boards or heavy paper for a base
- Glue

Other suggested materials:

- Sticks (for support)
- Foam blocks
- Paint
- Other miscellaneous items that you can provide or that students may want to bring from home

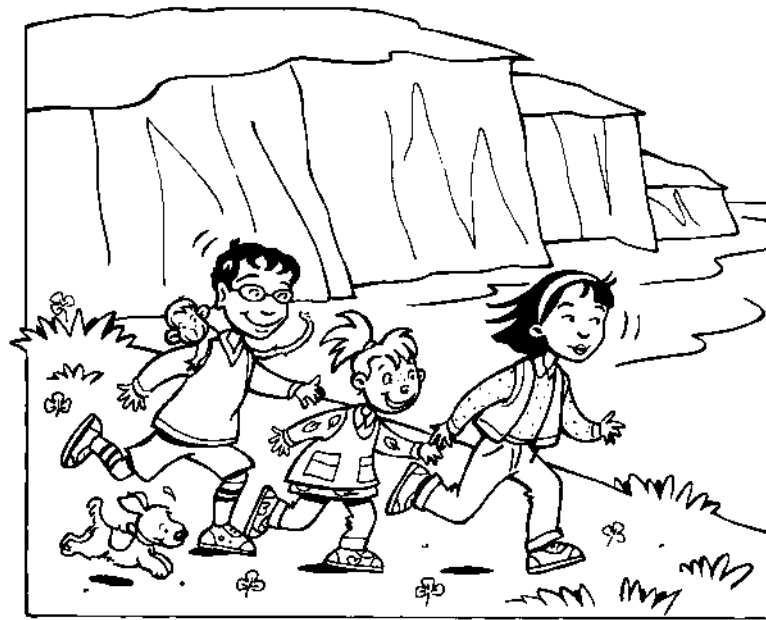
Have students first make sketches of what they would like their castles to look like. Next, have them set up their boards in a location that will be undisturbed until the glue is completely dry. Give students the supplies and time they need to create their own castles, but make sure that they have a plan before they begin. This activity will likely take several days to complete.

Extension During the week when students are creating their castles, a homework assignment might be for them to research various aspects of life in a medieval castle. What did the inhabitants eat? How did they cook food? How did they bathe and wash their clothes? You might divide students into small groups, each of which researches a different aspect of medieval life in a castle. Have them present their findings to the class.

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When the smoke cleared, the friends found that they were in a field of bright green grass. Behind them were pointed rocks leading down to the sea. In front of them was a big castle on top of a hill.

"There's no rainbow," said Kim. "How can we find leprechauns if there's no rainbow?"



Compare and Contrast

Fun Sheet 16 asks students to compare and contrast pairs of characters in this story. You can wait until the end of story before asking them to think about this topic. Alternately, you can introduce the concept of comparing and contrasting at various points in the reading so that students have a sense of this skill by the time they reach the end of the story.

Name _____

Compare and Contrast

In the chart below, list some of the characters from the story. Then, list some things that are the same about each pair (comparisons), and some things that are different (contrasts).

character	same	different
Torony	can talk	human
AK-S	can talk	robot

Fun Sheet 016

"We don't need a rainbow," said RK-5.
 "I know where to find the leprechauns.
 First, we must walk toward the castle."

When they were near the castle, RK-5
 told them to stop near a huge oak tree.
 Among the roots of the tree was a small
 hole. RK-5 told them to enter the hole.
 They squeezed in, one by one.



Life in a Tree

The tree in this **Tommy Tales** story is an oak. There are many varieties of oak tree. All of them share common characteristics that classify them as members of the oak family. Let's look at some of these traits.

Oak trees can live to be 200 years old. Oak trees grow a new ring around their trunk each year, making them thicken and toughen to the elements as they age. While they do not live forever, oaks are known as "mighty oak trees" because of their hearty shape and their long lives. The largest oak tree lives in Maryland. It is the oldest oak on record at 400 years old.

Oak trees are thirsty and require a lot of water. They do not thrive in arid climates. A fully grown oak tree will drink about 50 gallons of water a day. An oak tree planted in the wrong environment can be hard on both the tree itself and on the amount of water available in the area for other plants as well as for animals, including people. This is one reason why it is important to check into the needs of specific plants before planting any nonindigenous plant.

Oak trees are deciduous, which means that they lose their leaves every fall when the air drops below a certain temperature. The lowered temperature signals the tree that it is time to cut back on its exposed parts in order to survive the winter. The spring brings temperatures back up, and once again the tree is signaled. New leaves begin to grow. This cycle is repeated during every year in the life of an oak tree.

Trees are the source of wood with which many houses around the world are built. Some trees are large enough to live in by themselves. The giant redwood tree that grows in California is an example of a tree that is large enough to house a whole family. In fact, a woman named Julia Butterfly Hill once lived in a redwood tree for close to two years! The time she spent in the tree was a protest against the cutting down of trees and the destruction of nature.

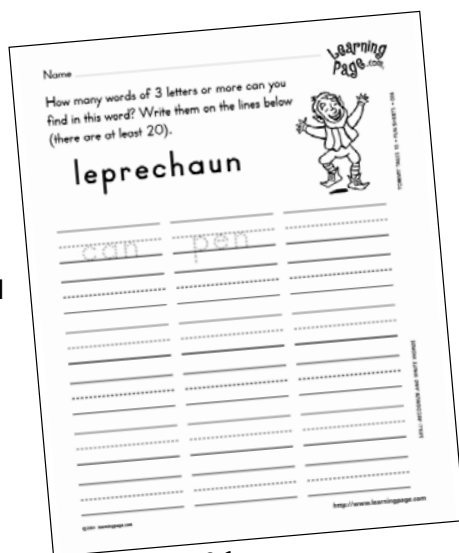
Students who want to learn more about Julia Butterfly Hill can go to:

<http://www.circleoflifefoundation.org/>

The Circle of Life Foundation, founded by her, supports people to live in a way that honors the diversity and interdependence of all life.

Word Find

Use **Fun Sheet 006** to give students practice with the skill of a word find. This task helps to strengthen spelling skills as well as visual and spatial skills.



Fun Sheet 006

Surprise Visits

Tommy and his friends have just landed in the middle of a cave that happened to be the leprechauns' home. Initiate a discussion with your students about the way they might feel if a group of strangers decided to pay a surprise visit.

In Ireland (and in many other places), many strangers have dropped in and stayed, often against the will of the inhabitants. In Ireland and elsewhere, this has led to problems for both the invaded and the invaders.

In this story, Tommy and his friends did not mean to invade the leprechauns' cave—they just happened to land there. In some instances, the invading nations have not intended to disrupt the native peoples of Ireland or of other countries. This might happen if large numbers of people are kicked out of their own land, or when large numbers of people are forced out of a nation by poverty or despotic rule. When people are able to understand why others do the things they do, conflict can more often be resolved in nonviolent ways.

In other cases (as with the gold thieves in this story) people invade lands to take from the inhabitants without regard for the results. In these cases, it is unreasonable to expect the invaded peoples to understand why they have been invaded. In fact, true invasion is very disrespectful of the native peoples of an area. In essence, invasion is stealing a nation's land, resources, and often freedom as well.

In any case, it is always best to be respectful when you visit someone's home, community, or country. That way, the people there will not feel that they are being "invaded," and everyone can have a better time.

Extension To encourage students to think more about this idea, try this exercise with your class. Pretend that there are two different groups of people, and divide the class accordingly. Have both groups find spots for themselves in an area that they find comfortable. Have children come up with names for each of their groups. (Be sure to use a made-up division rather than a real one such as girls and boys.) Allowing plenty of time for discussion, have each group (without the groups hearing each other) decide on the following:

- 8 Suddenly, they found themselves falling. They tumbled down for several seconds. Then they landed softly in a pile of hay.

"That was fun," said Sam.

When their eyes got used to the dark, they saw that they were in a damp cave. Circled around them was a crowd of little people dressed in green.

The little people looked friendly, but curious.

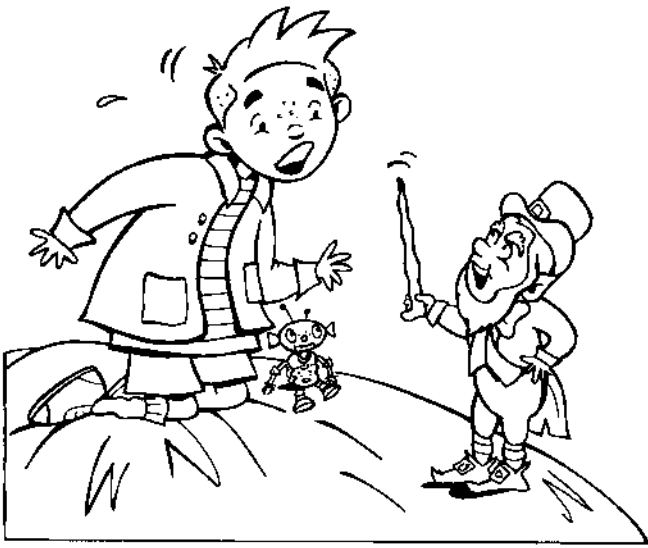


- The best food
- The best sort of house
- The best music
- The language they speak

All of the above can be purely imaginary.

Now tell one group that they have to leave their land to live with the other group. Allowing less time, have the two groups try to decide the same things they decided on in their original groups.

Was it easy or difficult? If you'd like, you can have the groups reverse roles and try again. Discuss how each group felt in each situation. This is an excellent way to work on communication, understanding, and acceptance of differences between groups.



One of them stepped forward. He had a big gray beard and carried a walking stick.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" asked the old leprechaun.

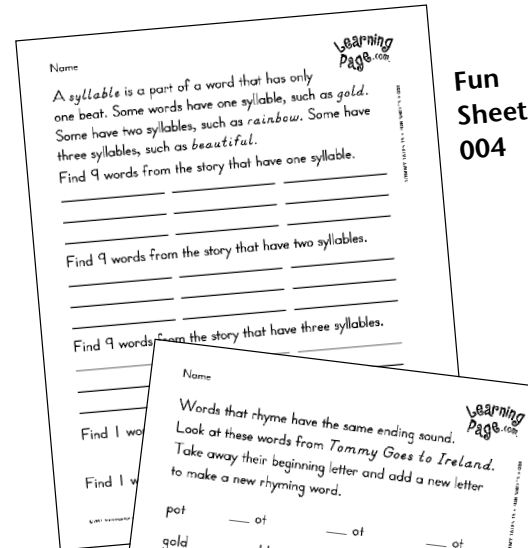
"We're looking for the leprechauns," said Tommy. "We want to see the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow."

"Well, you've found us. We are the leprechauns. I am Paddy, the leprechaun leader. But you can't see our gold because someone stole it last night," said Paddy.

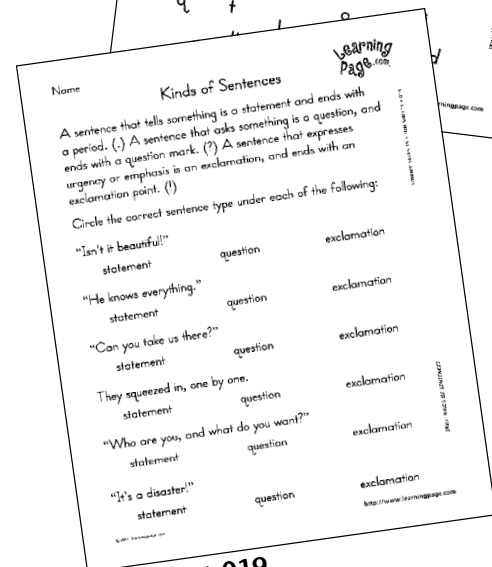
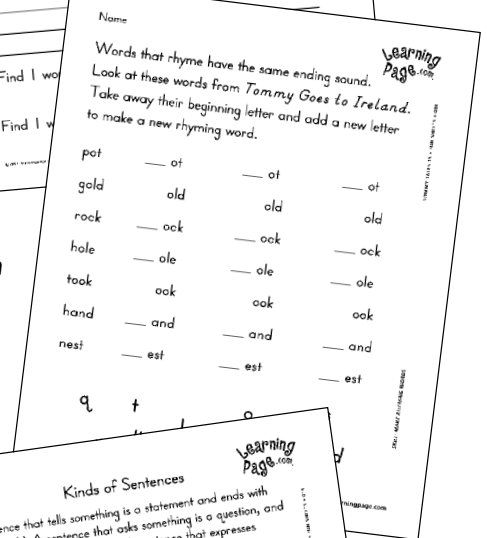
Language Skills

The teaching materials that accompany every **Tommy Tales** story provide a wealth of opportunities to practice language skills. Some of the **Fun Sheets** associated with *Tommy Goes to Ireland* that are designed to strengthen students' language skills include:

- **Fun Sheet 004** for practice with syllables
- **Fun Sheet 008** for practice with rhyming
- **Fun Sheet 019** for practice with kinds of sentences



Fun Sheet 008



Midway Comprehension Check

Pages 8–9

- Why did Tommy and his friends go to Ireland?
- Who first suggested that they should go to Ireland?
- What were the first things that the children saw when they landed in Ireland?
- Where did they find the leprechauns?
- Why can't Tommy see the leprechauns' gold?
- What is the name of the leprechaun leader?

Poverty in Ireland

In Ireland, as in most of the world, there is poverty. The leprechauns in this story help the poor by giving them gold from their pot. During the most difficult times in Ireland's history, even the wealthiest people had trouble keeping themselves from poverty.

Perhaps the worst time in Irish history was the Irish Famine of 1845–1850, which was a five-year battle with hunger. Potatoes were the main staple in the Irish diet. The famine was caused by a highly contagious fungus that infected Ireland's potato crops. The infected potatoes were inedible. Because the fungus spread so quickly, the Irish people could not come up with other crops to substitute for their valued potatoes. A famine lasted for five years and killed an estimated one million people. Another million left the country to seek a better life free of hunger. Many died on board ships, though many survived.

The population of Ireland has since recovered, and now there are many different crops in Ireland as well as in most other countries. The Irish Famine taught the world a lesson about the dangers of putting all of one's eggs in one basket.

Stealing

When a person takes something that does not belong to him or her, it is called stealing. Throughout history, there have been thieves, particularly in places where many people do not have enough to eat. Sometimes, stealing is just plain greedy. Some thieves steal simply because they want things for free. These thieves make it difficult for others to feel safe. However, sometimes stealing is a matter of sheer survival.

Have a class discussion about stealing. Address issues such as the reasons people might feel the need to steal, the ways to help prevent stealing in your neighborhood, and the ways to prevent stealing in a socially beneficial manner.

Encourage students to help address the problems in your community, and share ideas with them (see **How Can I Help?** at right). If we all can help in our own communities, we can make the world a safer and better place.

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"It's a disaster! Without our gold, we can't help the poor people of Ireland," Paddy sadly added.

"Don't be sad," said Tommy. "We'll help you find out who stole your gold. Show us where you last saw it."

They left the cave and went out into the bright sunlight. A wonderful, big rainbow arched above them. Paddy led them to the nearest end of the rainbow.

All they found was a large iron pot. It was empty.

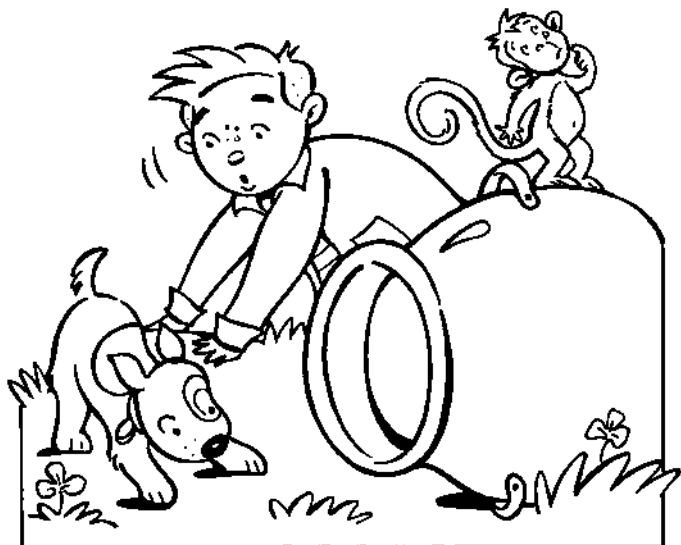


How Can I Help?

While it is hard to help everyone in the world, there are many ways to help people in our own community. You can teach children about the many opportunities to help people who do not have enough food, clothing, money, or shelter.

Here are some ways to help that children should be aware of. You might want to organize a group activity to help in one of these areas, or come up with other ideas with your students.

- Organize a canned-food drive in your school.
- Donate old or new clothes.
- Hold a bake sale or car wash, or collect money to donate.
- Volunteer time to help clean up an area or help fix a house.
- Be respectful to those who are less fortunate. Inside, they are just like each of us. Anyone in the same situation would want to be treated with the same respect.



"This pot was overflowing with gold yesterday. When we arrived at daybreak this morning, it was empty. Overnight, someone took all of the gold."

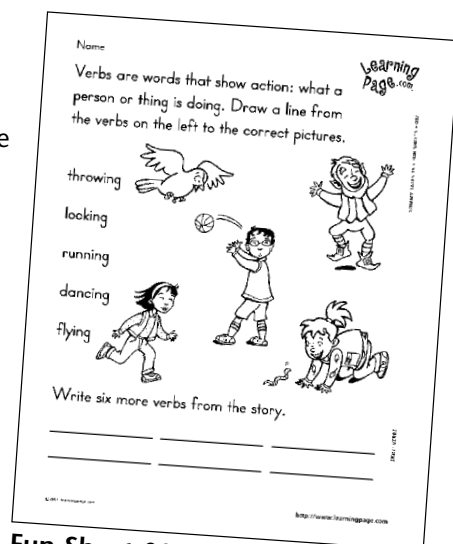
"We must look for clues," said Tommy.
"Look everywhere."

The five friends got down on their hands and knees. They began to look in the grass for clues. Taffy carefully sniffed the ground around the iron pot.

More Language Skills

Here are more **Fun Sheets** for *Tommy Goes to Ireland* that are geared toward strengthening students' language skills.

- **Fun Sheet 007** for practice with verbs
- **Fun Sheet 009** for practice with prepositions
- **Fun Sheet 010** for practice with vowels
- **Fun Sheet 013** for practice with adjectives



Fun Sheet 007

Crime Technology

Crime solving is an interesting field with many new technological advances. Early detectives had to rely on their instinct, witnesses, and obvious clues. Today, police officers can even trace a single piece of hair back to a criminal.

Fingerprints

Fingerprints are unique. Anytime you touch a smooth surface, you leave behind a fingerprint. This means that the oils on your skin are pressed on the surface in the shape of your fingertips' surfaces. When a fingerprint is left at a crime scene, police can sometimes match the print with a person who has been fingerprinted before. Today, detectives can take another type of print—a DNA print. DNA, like fingerprints, is unique to every person, but it can be found in hair, skin, and any other part of the body. DNA is like a label that tells exactly who we are, and detectives can use that information to their advantage.

Detective Dogs—The Secret Weapon

How can a dog solve a crime? Dogs are used in crime-solving cases today because they have a keen sense of smell and an even keener sense of devotion to the people who work with them. Dogs can be 95 percent accurate in identifying smells. That means that if you put 100 different socks from 100 different people in a row, a dog could identify 95 of the socks' owners just from the scent on the cloth. This requires a pretty amazing sense of smell.

Once a dog is trained to find a specific smell, the dog will be so determined to find that smell that it will not rest until it succeeds. This determination is breed-specific, and it has to do with a dog's ability to concentrate on one task at a time. Some of the best dog breeds for police duty include retrievers, hounds, and German shepherds. All of these breeds are able to focus, and they are equally affectionate and loyal. Dogs are by far some of the best detectives in the business.

Would your dog be a good detective? If your dog can chase a ball all day long, he or she might be a good detective. Detective dogs tend to be very single-minded and happy to work at the same task for long periods of time. So if you're worried that your dog is obsessive, you can stop worrying. It's a normal and often beneficial trait.

Birds of Ireland

Most people enjoy listening to birds or watching them fly with outspread wings. Many people are devoted bird-watchers. In this **Tommy Tales** story, the young detectives have found a bird feather. You can use this part of the story to introduce your students to two of the rarer birds of Ireland.

The mute swan is a nearly silent bird that moves with grace. It has fluffy white feathers and a curved neck. This beautiful creature loves the climate of Ireland. It often feeds on aquatic plants and also eats smaller birds and an occasional fish. It is one of the favorite birds of Ireland.

Another fascinating bird found in Ireland is the cormorant. It has a long neck and strange eating habits. It can be seen dipping under water to pluck out a fish. The cormorant has black feathers. In the summer, the male cormorant gets white patches on his flanks and face. He is a very handsome fellow to the female cormorant, but to people he is sort of funny-looking.

Activity Bird watching with your class

- Make a list of all the birds in your area. You can find this information at the library or online. (Leave blanks for write-ins.)
- Familiarize students with a bird book that you have purchased or borrowed from a library. Teach them how various types of birds are organized in the book (e.g., by color or by how they feed).
- Take your class for a walk regularly, and have them look for birds. They should pay attention to the coloration and other physical details of the birds they see so that together you can later identify the birds using classroom resource materials.
- Record your findings for a month.
- Make a bar graph of all the birds you have seen.
- Have your students share their experiences with family members.

As an extra activity, visit the local zoo with your class and check out the aviary. Compare the birds of the aviary to the birds you have seen as a class. Is there more variety in the aviary? Are there more colorful birds? Where do the birds at the zoo come from? This is a wonderful opportunity to encourage students to be curious about the world around them.

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Even though the area was muddy, there were no footprints besides their own and those of the leprechauns.

Kim was the first one to find a clue. She found a black feather. Then Lucy found another black feather.

"Birds!" said Kim. "The thieves must be some kind of birds."

Just as she said it, they became aware of dozens of birds singing. The birds were in a tall oak tree right above them.



Still More Language Skills

- **Fun Sheet 005** for practice with writing dialogue
- **Fun Sheet 011** for practice with singular/plural
- **Fun Sheet 013** for practice with adjectives
- **Fun Sheet 014** for practice with silent letters

Fun Sheet 014

Name _____

Silent Letters

Words sometimes have silent letters in them. An example of a silent letter is the "s" in *masks*. You can't hear the "s" but you need it to spell the word correctly. Circle the silent letter in each of the words listed below. Then use each of these words in a sentence.

know _____

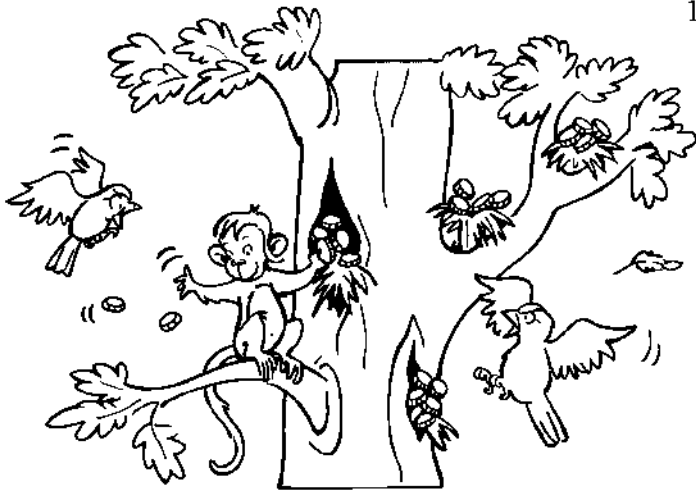
friend _____

guarded _____

castle _____

Write six more words from the story that have silent letters.

Fun Sheet 014



Bongo immediately climbed up the tree. There, among the branches, he found many nests. Each nest was overflowing with gold coins. Bongo threw some of the coins to his friends below.

Everyone cheered. They were all happy except for the birds. Two of them flew to the ground to rescue the coins.

As the birds were picking up the coins, RK-5 spoke to them. After listening to RK-5, the birds dropped the gold coins and flew back up to the tree.

How the Cow Became a Credit Card

No, the cow was not a magician. The history of money is not as complicated as it may first seem to students. Teach them this basic chronology of how we went from trade societies to credit cards:

Trade (barter)

The earliest form of currency was trade. If you give me a cow, I will give you ten chickens. But over time this became difficult, and easier ways developed to deal with trade.

Early money

Shells were later used as something that people would trade for. Later, chunks of precious metal took their place. The shells and metal bits were used as money, almost exactly as money is used today. A person could trade these small items for goods and services instead of having to come up with an equal trade every time they needed something.

The first coins

The chunks of metal were soon made into even amounts to ensure fair trade. These gold, silver, and copper pieces were soon being shaped in ways that represented the communities in which they were used. This was the dawn of money as we know it today.

The first cash

Coins were very heavy to carry around. Soon, people were using banks to store their gold and silver to keep it safe. Paper money was invented, not to replace coins, but to represent the gold and silver that a person had. The first paper money was created in China around 1300 A.D. This was new because the paper itself was not valuable—its value was in the exchange of money for goods. Later, countries began to make their own money, which represented fixed amounts of gold and silver in the nation's treasury. Each bill represented a piece of the nation's wealth. In the U.S., the real gold, silver, and copper coins were removed from circulation, and only the representative money remains in circulation.

Up to date

This paper money system worked so well that we became even more removed from our precious metal by using electronic cash. We can now pay by moving numbers in a computer that represent our money rather than actually having to carry paper bills. Staggering, isn't it?

Comprehension

Several **Fun Sheets** contain questioning strategies to aid students' understanding of *Tommy Goes to Ireland*.

Fun Sheets 001 and 002 test students' comprehension of the story. After assessing their answers, reread the story as needed to clarify anything that students don't understand.

Fun Sheet 003 asks students to use their imagination in answering questions related to the story.

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Name _____ True or False?

Decide whether the following statements are true or false, then circle the correct answer.

1. This Tommy Tales story takes place in Scotland.	true	false
2. The pot of gold is guarded by munchkins.	true	false
3. The children crawled inside the oak tree and suddenly found themselves falling.	true	false
4. Tommy told Paddy that he and his friends would find out who stole the gold.	true	false
5. Kim found the thief's footprints.	true	false
6. Bongo found the gold high up in a tree.	true	false
7. The birds in the story were ravens.	true	false
8. RK-5 worked some magic to get back the gold coins.	true	false
8. At the end of the story, the children learned how to dance the Irish jig.	true	false

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Fun Sheet 002

Irish Dancing

Initiate a discussion on Irish dancing. Ask your students if they have ever seen Irish dancing live or on television. You might want to discuss the important role dancing has played in Irish culture, as well as most other cultures around the world.

Irish dancing as it exists today has developed over many hundreds, even thousands, of years with influences from a variety of other cultures. Probably the earliest identifiable forms of Irish dancing were done by the Druids, who performed circular dances as part of their religious ceremonies. It is thought that Druids lived in Ireland over 2,000 years ago. There is very little solid evidence about their daily lives, but it is widely held that they were very advanced in mathematics, philosophy, and astronomy and that their religion was nature-centered.

Over the centuries, Irish music and dance have been influenced by both immigration and invasion. As new populations came to Ireland, they brought their own forms of dance and music, which over time have been woven into Irish cultural identity.

Dances were customarily the primary social event for a community. They were incorporated into most religious and secular festivals throughout the year. Community dances offered an important diversion for people whose lives were often very hard.

Today, these dances offer us a little glimpse into Ireland's past. Dances usually tell a story or are based on an event, occupation, or way of life. Many dances reference a sea-faring life as well as working with the land. A good example of this is a dance called "Harvest Time." This jig is unusual in that it requires half as many men as women. The reason for this is very practical. During the harvest season there was often a shortage of men, as many left home to find work in other parts of

Ireland, returning when the season was over.

As dance titles and themes mimic everyday life, so do many of the steps and moves. Many dance patters represent the movements of the sea, boats, fish, farming and even courtship.



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"The birds are called jackdaws," said RK-5. "They are not really thieves—they just like shiny objects. They can't resist taking any they find. I told them if they bring back all the gold, the leprechauns will give them some even shinier objects."

As soon as RK-5 had finished speaking, dozens of jackdaws flew down to the iron pot and dropped in gold coins. After ten minutes, the pot overflowed with gold coins.

All the leprechauns clapped their hands and jumped up and down in happiness.

Often, people refer to any type of Irish dance as a "jig." But there are many different types of dances performed in Ireland, and the jig is only one specific type. Jigs, as well as reels and hornpipes, are all types of Irish step dances. These dances can be performed by individuals, as for competitions or shows, or in groups during social activities.

A feature of Irish dancing that makes it look somewhat different than folk dancing of other cultures is the lack of arm movement. In fact, arm movement is discouraged in Irish dance, as dancers are taught that still arms demonstrate control and grace. It was not always like this, however. In the early 1800s, Irish dancing included vigorous arm movements.

For more information on Irish dancing, go to www.irelandseye.com. This Web site also has illustrations of some of the basic dance steps for some Irish dances.

The leprechaun milkman drew up in his milk cart. Tommy helped him lift a big box of shiny bottle tops from the cart. There were bright silver bottle tops and shiny gold ones, too.

The leprechauns left the box of bottle tops for the birds. The jackdaws knew that they could take the bottle tops whenever they wanted. They now knew that they were not allowed to touch the gold.

The leprechauns were so pleased to have their gold back. They danced an Irish jig. They even taught the friends how to jig.

When they were all tired, Tommy and his friends said goodbye to the leprechauns.

It had been a great day, but now it was time to go home.



Write a Letter to a Tommy Tales Character

After reading *Tommy Goes to Ireland*, have students write a letter to one of the characters in the story. Leave the content up to them. Be sure to have students follow a traditional letter-writing form, with the date, salutation line, closing, and a signature.

We want to hear from your students! Please e-mail the letters to editor1@learningpage.com.

Dear Paddy,
I think you and your leprechaun friends are really wonderful. I'm glad you found your gold, too. However, I don't think it would be fun to wear green all of the time.
Your friend, Danté

Relationships

This story, like the other stories in the **Tommy Tales** series, continues to reveal to us aspects of the children's relationships with each other. Each adventure teaches the importance of friends and family, teamwork, and staying together on adventures. These stories also encourage readers to think about right and wrong and to make wise choices in their lives. As a way of wrapping up this story, ask students to share something they have learned from this **Tommy Tales** adventure that they can use in their everyday life.

Feedback

Remind students that this is the fifteenth book in the **Tommy Tales** series. Ask, "How do you like it so far?"

Ask students to write a critical book review of this story or of the series so far. Reviews can be in the form of a written essay, a poster, or a drawing. E-mail your reviews to editor1@learningpage.com for possible inclusion in future Teaching Guides.

More Feedback

Students who have followed the **Tommy Tales** stories may have ideas about adventures they would like Tommy and his friends to go on. Suggestions for future story adventures can be sent to editor1@learningpage.com along with book reviews. Imagine the excitement of a student whose idea is incorporated into a future story!

Conclusion

Ask students for their feelings and thoughts about this story. Students will naturally be curious and enthusiastic to see what happens in the next **Tommy Tales** adventure. As RK-5 continues to transport Tommy and his friends to new places, readers' knowledge and understanding of the world around them continues to grow.

