



Ireland and Europe: *Discussion Guide*

Overview

Millions of Americans celebrate St. Patrick's Day every year on March 17. The day has become an Irish-American stew of parties, parades, corned beef, and even green bagels. These video segments place the celebration in its cultural context. The first segment introduces students to the potato famine of the 1840s, which led millions of Irish to immigrate to America. The other segments provide a broader look at Ireland's geographical setting—Europe.

Use this discussion guide and related videos in your classroom to help students learn about the culture, geography, and history of Ireland and Europe.

Classroom Activities

1. Show the segment "Flight From Famine" from the *World History: The Modern Era* video.
 - **Writing:** Stress that being an immigrant has always been a challenge. Have students create posters or brochures that advise immigrants on adapting to life in the United States.
 - **Research:** Have students interview their parents, grandparents, or other family members to find out about their ethnic heritage. Then have them write short essays telling the story of when their ancestors came to the U.S. Students should include information about where their ancestors came from and why they chose to come to this country.
2. Show the segment "Overview of Europe" from the *World Geography Europe* video. (Access to *unitedstreaming* is required.)
 - **Vocabulary:** Ask if anyone can explain the meaning of the terms "arable," "tundra," and "taiga." You may choose to direct students to find definitions in dictionaries and encyclopedias. Discuss how these terms help students create a mental image of the physical geography of Europe.
 - **Social Studies:** Visit <http://geography.about.com/library/blank/europe.jpg> to download a printable outline map of Europe. Give copies to students and direct them to atlases and other geography resources. Have students label countries and color European Union members.

3. Show the segment “London Fog” from the *City Life in Europe* video. (Access to *unitedstreaming* is required.)
 - **Discussion:** People originally moved to the outskirts of London to escape the deadly “fog” that hung over the city. Now many people move out of the city for other reasons. Discuss the reasons people move. Then talk about the differences between urban and suburban areas.
 - **Graphic Organizer:** Invite students to make Venn diagrams that convey the similarities and differences between life in London and life in cities in the United States.
4. Show the segment “Europe United” from the *City Life in Europe* video. (Access to *unitedstreaming* is required.)
 - **Discussion:** Ask students why soccer is so popular. Then talk about the segment’s premise that soccer can help Europeans feel a deeper sense of unity. Do pupils agree? Why or why not?
 - **Writing:** Ask students to imagine that the European Union has hired them to suggest ways that Europeans might strengthen their common bonds. Have students write short speeches in which they advise EU officials.

Academic Standards

This discussion guide addresses national standards.

SOCIAL STUDIES: **National Council for the Social Studies**

<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands/>

- Culture
- Time, Continuity, and Change
- Individual Development and Identity
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Global Connections

