Stepping into Irish Dance
with Máire Clerkin

A QUICK HOW-TO
Here is an experience to introduce you to traditional Irish dance and music.

1. Do you know where Ireland is located? It is a close neighbor of Great Britain in Western Europe, where the people speak English and Gaelic.

2. Can you remember how dancers prepare their bodies to dance? Look below under “Healthy Body.” Can you remember some of the moves Máire did in her warm-up? How many can you do?

3. Can you describe the Irish Dancing (stepping, jumping, hopping, kicking, etc.) that Máire did? Are you able to do some of the steps with Máire?

4. Máire introduced an Irish “Reel” step called Promenade. It is also known as Skip Two Three or Hop 1-2-3. Can you try it? Step R (front), step L (back), step R (front), and Hop. Repeat other side, and so on.

5. Irish music includes instruments such as flute, fiddle, whistle, and drum (bodhrán). What did you hear during the introduction of eight counts of music (8-bar intro)? Were you able to dance the Promenade in time to the music? What other movements did Máire do? What did you like best?

NEW WORDS

Irish Dance
A traditional form of dance from Ireland. It is energetic, usually danced with a straight spine, arms held down by the sides of the body, and up on the toes. One popular dance is the “Reel.” Movements used include: kicking, jumping, hopping, turning, balancing, and traveling. Steps are a combination of these basics.

Irish Music
A traditional style of music that accompanies traditional Irish dancing. It is often quick and lively; and features the fiddle (violin), flute, whistle, drum (bodhrán), accordion, and more.

Promenade Step
Step R - back L - step R; repeat on other foot - step L - back R - step L. Continue changing from R to L feet and travel forward. A little hop (hiccup) is added to the end of each phrase.

Healthy Body
Drink plenty of water.
Eat healthy food.
Get plenty of sleep.
Warm up before dancing.

THINK ABOUT IT
What did you learn about Irish dancing? What words would you use to describe it? What more would you like to know about the dance, music, or Irish culture?

DIG DEEPER
See if you can find Ireland on a map. Which ocean separates Ireland from the United States? To learn more about Irish dance, Máire suggests you watch Riverdance.com.

TRY THIS CHALLENGE
Teach the Promenade to someone in your home. See if you can create simple dance steps that can be performed to Irish music.