



W R I T E



Volume #1 Issue #6

"I must write down my story before it is too late." -Anne Morrow Lindbergh*

March, 2003
*North to the Orient

Irish: Great Storytellers, Fabulous Writers



Anne Morrow Lindbergh
1906-2001

Although a wonderful writer herself, Anne Morrow Lindbergh enjoyed reading many other authors throughout her lifetime. Poetry was a particular favorite. One author Anne enjoyed was Irish poet William Butler Yeats. When I tried to pull a passage or quote from him, I discovered that Yeats is one of those writers you need to read for yourself. His writings are all around us- I found him in our elementary media center, at the public library and bookstores, and the Internet is packed with 'Yeats' sites.

Other Irish authors you may be interested in, or interested in sharing with your students, are: Oscar Wilde, Seamus Heaney, James Joyce, Maev Binchy, and of course children's authors Eoin Colfer ('Artemis Fowl') and P. J. Lynch ('The Christmas Miracle of Jonathon Toomey').

To discover the true world of storytelling, at least in the eyes of the Irish, try these writings:

- The Children Of Lir by Michael Scott
- The Book Of Irish Legends by Iain Zaczek
- Ireland's Master Storyteller: The Collected Stories Of Eamon Kelly
- According to Custom by Eamonn Kelly

* * * * *

March is a Celebration of Women's History!

Women's history month is celebrated during March. It's a nice opportunity to recognize women's accomplishments in different fields, and a great interdisciplinary opportunity. There are dozens of women's history resources that span the curriculum gamut from science to literature to government. You can use them to build your own unit, or turn your students loose to do their own research. Some terrific women's history resources are at:

<http://www.teachersfirst.com/tchrkeyword.cfm?keyword=3Dwomen&lower=3D1&u=>

Writer's Workshop Unit

As we strive to make writer of our students, we can always use fresh, new ideas. Check out this site for a complete unit, or use bits and pieces of it. You don't have to invent all of the ideas you use, nor do you need to take them directly out of a text book. Try this:

<http://www.teachersfirst.com/feature.htm>

Anne Morrow Lindbergh was a woman of many 'firsts', but that is not how she chose to be remembered. Like so many that accomplish great things, she wanted to attain her goals, because they were important to her sense of self. She did not do things to be 'the first or the only' but rather to know that she could do them- and do them well. Referring to her mother's exploratory flights with her father, **Reeve Lindbergh wrote:**

*"This was the beginning of my mother's global exploration, and the beginning, too, of her inward exploration, the deeply thoughtful work that inspired her writing for a lifetime. I think that her survey flights of the Earth's surface in the 1930s paralleled an inward survey of her own growing confidence and capability, not only in writing, but also in aviation, a field only a few women had entered during that era. A quiet, studious diplomat's daughter, she became a flyer and an explorer, a radio operator and a navigator, and in 1930 among the first women to obtain a glider pilot's license in America. Through all of these adventures, she wrote down her impressions and experiences, and has left for us an eloquent record of the day-to-day life of a writer who was also a pilot: a woman who loved words and wings." **

As we teach our children that they can do so many things, that they should try to do anything, it is important that we give them the confidence necessary to become 'great or firsts'.

*Source: from the introduction of **'Living with Cannibals and other Women's Adventures'** by Michele Slung.

Famous Women to Research This Month!

Amelia Earhart	Eleanor Roosevelt	Rachel Carson
Sally Ride	Bessie Coleman	Susan B. Anthony
Marie Curie	Phyllis Wheatley	Anne Morrow Lindbergh
Jane Austen	Barbara Jordan	Sandra Day O'Connor
Sally Hemings	Anne Frank	Elizabeth Blackwell, M.D.

Table of Contents Page

<i>Irish Storytellers & Writers.....</i>	<i># 1</i>
<i>Web Possibilities.....</i>	<i># 1</i>
<i>AML, a Pioneer.....</i>	<i># 1</i>
<i>Writing Ideas: Blarney Wanted</i>	<i># 2</i>
<i>Journal Dreams</i>	<i># 2</i>
<i>Bulletin Board Idea Gift of Blarney</i>	<i># 2</i>
<i>Writing Ideas: Irish Riddles.....</i>	<i># 2</i>

*from "Bring Me a Unicorn" by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

The Leprechaun



Kids often ask, are Leprechauns real? I tell them to do research and find out for themselves! I took my own advice, and this is what I found in my research.

The Leprechaun is an Irish fairy. He looks like a small, old man (about 2 feet tall), often dressed like a shoemaker, with a cocked hat and a leather apron.

According to legend, leprechauns are aloof and unfriendly, live alone, and pass the time making shoes. They also possess a hidden pot of gold.

Treasure hunters can often track down a leprechaun by the sound of his shoemaker's hammer. If caught, he can be forced to reveal the whereabouts of his treasure, but the captor must keep their eyes on him every second! If the captor's eyes leave the leprechaun (and he will try to trick them into looking away), he vanishes and all hopes of finding the treasures are lost.



Are leprechauns real? I don't know, but over a cup of tea on St. Patrick's Day many years ago, my very Irish Grandmother told me to always continue to look for an enchanted little guy, hammering away, with a pot of gold just for me!

The Blarney Stone is a What?

The Blarney Stone is a stone set in the wall of the Blarney Castle tower in the Irish village of Blarney. Kissing the stone is supposed to bring the kisser the gift of persuasive speech (blarney). The castle was built in 1446 by Cormac Laidhiv McCarthy-- it's walls are 18 feet thick, necessary to thwart attacks by Cromwellians and William III's troops.

The origins of the Blarney Stone's magical properties aren't clear, but one legend says that an old woman cast a spell on the stone to reward a king who had saved her from drowning. Kissing the stone while under the spell gave the king the ability to speak sweetly and convincingly.

It's tough to reach the stone-- it's between the main castle wall and the parapet. Kissers have to lie on their back and bend backward- and downward- holding iron bars for support! Most Irishmen are very amused to watch the tourists contort themselves until they have accomplished the kiss, and then laugh behind their backs. *You see, the tourists just paid to kiss the wall of the castle's former toilet!* **No blarney!**



Bulletin Board Idea

The Gift of Blarney!



Explain what 'blarney' is. (see left) Have the kids each write a piece of blarney, mount on shamrocks!

















Journal Your Dreams ~ ~ ~

~ Kids dream about wonderful, imaginative things. In their minds, anything is possible. Have them journal about: what they would like to be when they grow up; how it would be different for them if they were the oldest/youngest in their family, or if they were the family pet instead of a kid; what it would be like to live on the moon or in the south during the Civil War; why they have to go to school; if they could be 'first' at anything in the world, what would it be and why. ~ Or have them share their dreams for the world. the possibilities are endless.

Creative~ Simple~ Forms of Poetry

Rhyming Answer Poems:
feature a question that is answered in rhyme~

Why did Harry go home sick?

He didn't have his arithmetic!

Story Poems:
string several couplets together to create a simple story~

I can make a simple rhyme
Anywhere, any time.
Don't ask me how, don't ask me why,
Just name a subject, I comply!

Name Poems:
short/simple couplets~
Source: [The Mailbox Magazine, A/M 03](#)

My name is Terry
And I'm very merry!

Irish Riddles!

The Irish love the use of word riddles. In an oral tradition true riddles seem to offer a playful challenge to one's conventional views of the world. See if the kids can figure this out, or have them try writing their own!

- It was in the river but wasn't drowned*
- It was in the grass but wasn't cut*
- It was in the shop but wasn't sold.*

Source: [Irish Riddles](#) by Pat Fairon, Loughall, Co. Armagh Ireland