

Welcome to Orison Orchards! I'm so glad you decided to download this fun St. Patrick's Day Unit Study -- I hope your kiddos enjoy it!

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If you have any suggestions or questions, I'd love to hear about them in the comments section at the St. Patrick's Day Unit Study post.

Sincerely,

Amy

OrisonOrchards.com

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History of St Patrick's Day Unit Study

This unit study is intended to be used by elementary school-aged children, though my preschooler certainly enjoyed all of the activities right along with us. It covers geography, history, science, math, art and literature -- all taught in a delightful way your kiddos will devour!

We use this unit study to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in our homeschool every year, with minor variations, and my kiddos still aren't sick of it. We're glad to have you join us!

History

Read the third page of this unit study packet, which outlines the history of St. Patrick and St. Patrick's Day.

1. Choose one of these [St. Patrick's Day history videos](#) to watch.
2. See if you can name 2 other 'missionaries' who impacted the world similarly to St. Patrick.

Geography

This unit study contains 2 black line maps of Ireland, one with all the counties labeled and the other without. The third map shows you where Ireland fits into Europe, along with all the country boundaries and bodies of water.

1. On the less detailed map, draw a line separating Northern Ireland (which is part of the United Kingdom) from the Republic of Ireland. Label both portions.
2. Mark Dublin and Belfast, each with a red star, then color both portions different colors.
3. Label and color the bodies of water surrounding Ireland.
4. Google how Ireland compares to your own state in size.

Science

You'll need a set of prisms, white posterboard, and a flashlight for this activity. We're going to learn about light and make beautiful rainbows in our very own kitchens!

This prism set is fabulous, because the differently shaped prisms will help your kiddos better understand refraction. Prisms work by bending, or refracting, the light that hits them. There are several simple experiments you can do to show examples of this refraction.

1. Lay the white poster board on your kitchen table and shine the flashlight through the convex prism like the online photo.

2. Explain that white light (regular, everyday light) is comprised of all the other colors of light. Each of them has a different wavelength, from red at 700 nm to violet at 400 nm. The varying wavelengths causes the light to bend at a different angle, causing white light to separate into a rainbow of colored light, ranging from the longest wavelength to the shortest wavelength. Note the order of colors: ROY G. BIV. The physics of color is tremendously interesting and could be explored in much greater depth if your kiddos want to go further! But for now, we're just experimenting with refraction.
3. Now try to recreate Isaac Newton's famous prism experiment by adding a second prism. Line them up carefully, so that the rainbow produced by the first prism hits the second prism. Place the white surface behind the second prism so that light will hit it. You'll find that the second prism refracts the light again, combining the colors of the rainbow back into white light.
4. Write your name in fairly large, dark letters on a piece of white paper. Hold a small, triangular prism a short distance over the paper. Looking through the prism, you should be able to read the words on the paper, but they'll seem to be in a different location on the paper. Use a protractor to measure the angle by which the words have been refracted. Try again with a different prism and see if you can figure out how the prisms shape and size affects the angle of refraction.

Math

Have some St. Patrick's Day fun with this real-life math application! You will need a box of rainbow cereal, the printables, paper and pencil and a box of crayons. Hand each of your kiddos a cup of cereal pieces. If you want to keep the fractions/decimals simple for younger kids, count out 50 pieces per cup. Random numbers of cereal pieces will challenge your child more.

Your kiddos will have fun with this Fruit Loops frequency graph, tally marks and fractions. The printables to play these games with fruit loops are in the printable packet.

Your younger kiddos will have fun sorting cereal pieces by color, recording the number of each color on the chart, and creating a pie graph. Older students can decipher fractions, decimals and percents. Just focus on one skill at a time, and you'll have all kinds of great math discussions with this activity.

Art

Use the fruit loops from the math activity you completed to make edible rainbows (in the correct light color order), using white marshmallows as the clouds on each end.

Literature

Learn more about the history of St. Patrick's Day with this fun book: [Patrick: Patron Saint of Ireland](#) by Tomie dePaola. Or check out this fun list of our favorite [St. Patrick's Day books](#).

Writing- How to write a Limerick

Limericks are short, funny, rhyming poems with a bouncy rhythm that makes them easy to memorize.

Like all poems, limericks have a poetic form you need to follow. The rules for a limerick are simple:

- They are 5 lines long.
- Lines 1, 2 and 5 rhyme with each other and have 3 'beats' (7-10 syllables).
- Lines 3 and 4 rhyme with each other and have 2 'beats' (5-7 syllables).
- They are usually silly.

It helps to think of the word AABBA. The A lines rhyme with each other and have 3 beats. The B lines rhyme with each other and have two beats.

Clap the bolded words while you read this example by Edward Lear:

There **was** an old **man** with a **beard**.
Who **said**, 'It is **just** as I **feared**!
Two **owls** and a **hen**,
Four **larks** and a **wren**,
Have **all** built their **nests** in my **beard**!

It's your turn! Let's build your poem the easy way. Write lines 1, 2 and 5 first.

1. There once was a man from _____.
2. Look up words that rhyme with the place you chose above and write line 2.
3. Now write line 5. Make it rhyme with lines 1 and 2. Make sure it's silly!
4. Now think up lines 3 and 4. They should be shorter and rhyme.
5. Go ahead and change your words if it improves your poem.
6. Remember that it will be hard at first, but it gets easier!

Fruit Loops Frequency Graph

Separate your fruit loops by color. Fill out the table, coloring one box for each corresponding fruit loop.

RED	ORANGE	YELLOW	GREEN	BLUE	PURPLE

How many fruit loops did you have? _____

Which color occurred the most frequently? _____

Which color occurred the least frequently? _____

How many MORE of the most frequent color were there than of the least? _____

Fruit Loop Tally Marks

Color	Tally Marks
Red	
Orange	
Yellow	
Green	
Blue	
Purple	

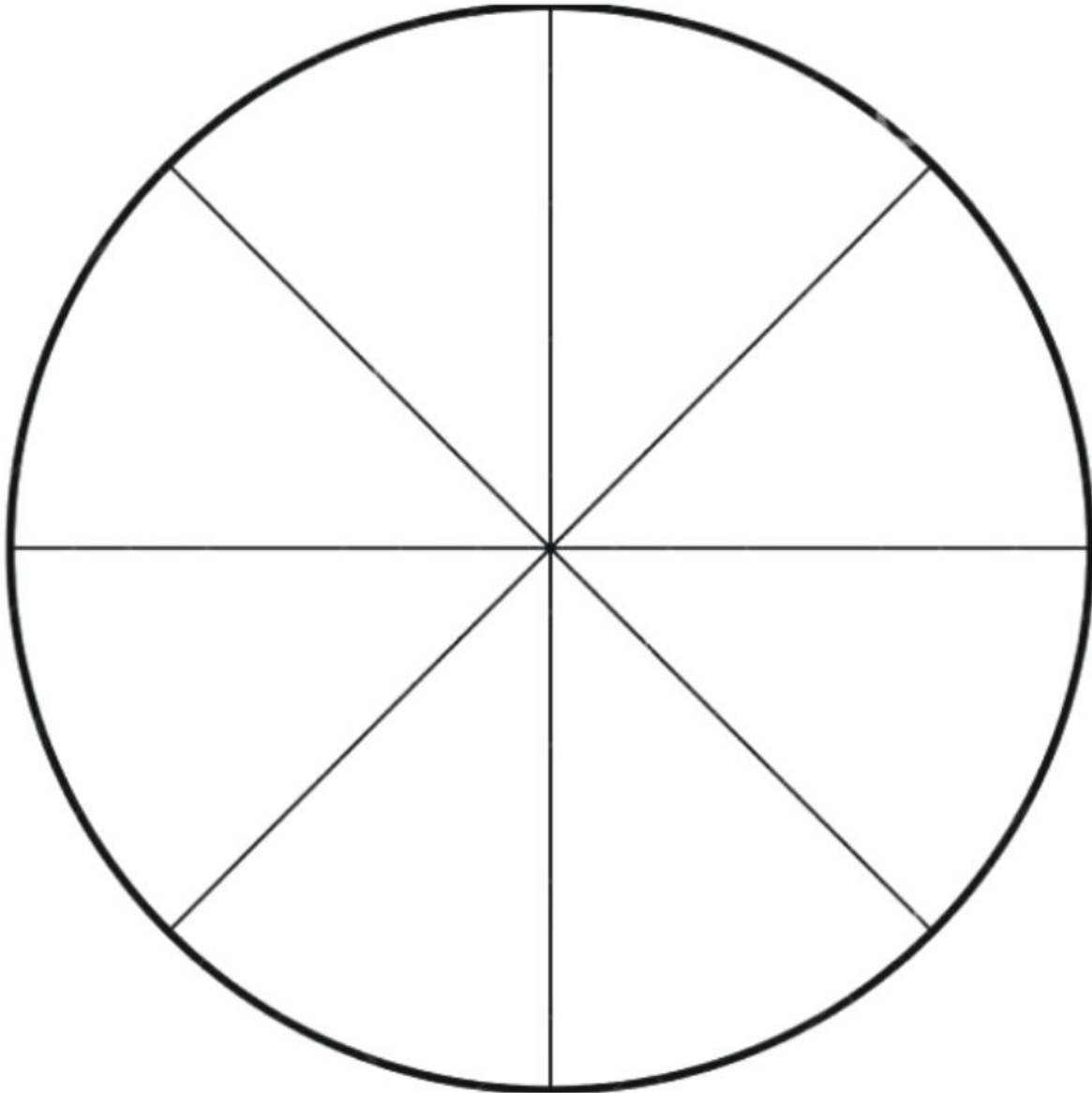
Fruit Loop Fractions, Decimals and Percents

Use your frequency graph, above, to figure out fractions, percentages and decimals.

Colors	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Totals
Number							
Fraction (color/total)							
Decimal Numerator ÷ Denominator							
Percent (Decimal x 100)							

FRUIT LOOPS PIE GRAPH

Complete fraction/decimals/percents page first. Convert the percentages to degrees (a circle is 360 degrees) then color sectors of the pie graph, using crayons that correspond to the cereal colors. The lines are just a guide.



Saint Patrick's Day History

Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated annually on March 17 to mark the death date of the most commonly-recognized patron saint of Ireland, Saint Patrick. The Irish have observed this day as a religious holiday for over a thousand years.

On St. Patrick's Day, which falls during the Christian season of Lent, Irish families would traditionally attend church in the morning and celebrate in the afternoon. Lenten prohibitions against the consumption of meat were waived and people would dance, drink and feast on Irish bacon and cabbage.

Saint Patrick, who lived during the fifth century, was born in Roman Britain. At age 16, he was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He later escaped, but returned to Ireland to testify of Christ. In the centuries following Patrick's death, the mythology surrounding his life became ingrained in the Irish culture. One legend is that he explained the Holy Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) using the three leaves of a shamrock.

While Ireland has celebrated March 17 as a feast day since the 9th or 10th century, the first parade held to honor St. Patrick's Day took place in the United States. On March 17, 1762, Irish soldiers serving in the English military marched through New York City.

Over the next 35 years, Irish patriotism among American immigrants flourished, prompting the rise of Irish-aid societies. Each group would hold annual parades featuring bagpipes and drums. In 1848, the societies decided to unite their parades to form one official NYC St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Up until the mid-19th century, most Irish immigrants in America were middle class Protestants. But in 1845, when the Great Potato Famine hit Ireland, close to 1 million poor and uneducated Irish Catholics immigrated to America to escape starvation. Despised for their alien religious beliefs and unfamiliar accents by the American Protestant majority, the immigrants had trouble finding even menial jobs. They were ridiculed and persecuted.

The American Irish soon began to realize, however, that their large and growing numbers endowed them with political powers. They started to organize, and their voting block, known as the "green machine," became an important swing vote for political hopefuls. Suddenly, annual St. Patrick's Day parades became important to political candidates.

As Irish immigrants spread out over the United States, other cities developed their own traditions. One of these is Chicago's annual dyeing of the Chicago River green, which began in 1962, when city pollution-control workers used dyes to trace illegal sewage discharges and realized that the green dye might provide a unique way to celebrate the holiday. Today, people all over the world celebrate St. Patrick's Day.

Information taken from History.com

KEY FACTS & TRADITIONS

- St. Patrick's Day is an annual feast day celebrating the patron saint, St. Patrick. It is a national holiday in Ireland, celebrated on March 17.
- St. Patrick, a Roman-Britain-born Christian missionary, was born in the late fourth century and is credited with bringing Christianity to the Irish people.
- St. Patrick was not Irish.
- Saint Patrick is known as the Apostle of Ireland.
- Maewyn was Patrick's birth name before he adopted Patricius after becoming a priest.
- The Shamrock was originally a Christian teaching tool. St. Patrick is said to have used the 3-leaved plant to explain the Holy Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) to the pagan Irish.
- For many years, blue was the color most associated with St. Patrick's Day. Green was considered unlucky. St. Patrick's blue was considered symbolic of Ireland for many centuries and the Irish Presidential Standard is still blue.
- It is believed St. Patrick drove all the snakes out of Ireland. However, post-glacial Ireland never actually had snakes. Many believe that the term "snakes" referred to the serpent symbolism of the Druids.
- Currently, most people, whether they are Irish or not, wear green on this day. One of the Irish traditions is to pinch anyone who is not wearing green on St. Patrick's Day.
- Irish immigrants began observing the holiday in Boston in 1737 and the first St. Patrick's Day parade was held in New York City in 1766.
- Corned beef and cabbage are traditional foods eaten on St. Patrick's Day. The shamrock, pots of gold, and leprechauns are also associated with the holiday. The shamrock was worn on the lapel.
- Three is Ireland's magic number and the three leaves that make up the shamrock are supposed to bring good luck.
- Leprechauns are small Irish fairies. They dress like a shoemaker, with pointed shoes, a hat and a leather apron. Leprechauns are supposed to be unfriendly little men who live alone in the forest, spending all of their time making shoes and guarding their treasures.
- If someone catches a leprechaun, he will be forced to tell where he hides all his pots of gold. However, the leprechaun must be watched at all times. If his captor looks away, the leprechaun will vanish along with his treasure.
- Many Catholic churches move the date of the Feast of Saint Patrick if March 17 falls during Holy Week.
- In Chicago every year since 1962, the Plumbers Local 110 union dumps forty pounds of dye into the Chicago River, which dyes the river "Kelly" green. It lasts for about five hours.
- An annual tradition at the White House -- the Irish leader hands a crystal bowl full of shamrock to the US President. The shamrock, grown in Kerry, is immediately destroyed by the Secret Service after the exchange.
- The shamrock is Ireland's national flower. It is also one of the main symbols of St. Patrick, which represents the Holy Trinity.
- It's a common mistake to confuse a four-leaf clover and a shamrock. The four-leaf clover is considered lucky because they're generally hard to find.

St. Patrick's Day Symbols Matching Game

This is Ireland's national symbol. St. Patrick used the three leaves of the shamrock to visually explain Christianity's Holy Trinity.



This color and shamrocks symbolized Irish rebellion against the British.



Supposedly, this is where the leprechaun hides his pot of gold. You'll never find it unless you can catch a leprechaun!



These mischievous fairies have long been a beloved part of Irish folklore. If you catch one, he must grant three wishes to be freed.



This beautiful instrument has long held special significance for the Irish as a national emblem. Similar to the color green and shamrocks, it was used as a rebellious symbol of Irish pride.



This is one of the most graphic Irish symbols, and was regularly used as ornamentation in early Christian manuscripts like the 8th century's *Book of Kells*.

