



SPEAK IRISH

@BobCarneyGTR

BOB CARNEY



Boo

“Inniu bigil lá San Seoirse” arsa sí. “Nach bhfuil a fhios agat go bhfuil lánréim ag ainsprídí an tsaoil an nóiméad a bhuaifidh an clog ar uair an mheán oíche anocht?”

“It is the eve of St. George’s Day” she said. “Do you not know that tonight, when the clock strikes midnight, all the evil things in the world will have full sway?”

From the novel *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

Teaching children, and some adults, can be a difficult process sometimes. Especially when you’re talking about Irish language. My grandchildren have a, shall we call it, a reserved interest in the language. Most of the time I think they’re just trying keep crazy old grandpa happy.

But, if we turn language development into a game, that can be a different story altogether. So even though I’m talking about my

grandkids, in a way we’re all still just “Toddlers” when it comes to speaking Irish

Irish Journal Scríbhneoireacht

Many people both young and old keep journals, and others like to tell stories of all kinds. Years ago I took a writing class I know, hard to believe) and I remember the instructor saying, “if you can talk, you can write.”

This time of year, nothing beats a scary story and my grandkids can spin them fairly easily. What I ask them to do is use my dictionaries and substitute a word or phrase in Irish to give the story a feeling of place or time. We even did something similar in one of our Speak Irish classes a while back, where we took a line from one of our favorite stories and embellished it with some Irish.

This is really not too much different than using the words and phrases I’ve shared before in our everyday Irish columns, in daily conversation. Using Irish in this way can become so easy, that after awhile you don’t even think about it.

Other Irish Games Rud a mharcáil

Another fun exercise requires a pad of post-it notes and a dictionary. Most kids are pretty adept at using a phone and teaglann.ie is a great on-line dictionary that is easy to use. Set a time limit, not too long or interest fades. The person who identifies the most objects and labels them correctly in Irish wins.

You can take it a step further and

have them use the audio section of teaglann to pronounce the name of the object as well. I encourage beginners in Speak Irish Cleveland classes to use this around the house to help strengthen their vocabulary skills. But don’t limit it to just that, there’s a huge world out there!

You can put a spin on this game by coming up with a list of things. This time of year, Halloween related vocabulary can be fun.

Everyone gets an index card with ten items written on it, it works better if they vary somewhat, the first to spot and check off the items on their list wins the game. Consider it an Irish vocabulary scavenger hunt.

When driving, use colors and numbers. Locate a license plate that ends in 625, a sé, a dó, a cúig, or whatever number you pick. First to spot a red car, dearg, and so on.

By now you get the idea, make it fun for the kids and they’ll come up with their own games. You might find yourself learning new words too.

Irish Numbers

Zero a náid (*uh noyj*); One a h-aon (*uh hayn*); Two a dó (*uh doe*); Three a trí (*uh tree*); Four a ceathair (*uh kya-her*); Five a cúig (*uh koo-ig*); Six a sé (*uh shay*); Seven a seacht (*uh shakht*); Eight a h-ocht (*uh hawkht*); Nine a naoi (*uh nee*); Ten a deich (*uh jeh*).

Irish Colors

Yellow búí (*bwee*); White bán (*bawn*); Red dearg (*jer-uhg*);

Purple corcra (*kor-kuh-ruh*); Orange oráiste (*or-awsh-tuh*); Pink bándearg (*bawn jer-ugh*); Black dubh (*duhv*); Blue gorm (*gor-um*); Brown donn (*duhn*); Grey liath (*lee-uh*); Green glas (*gloss*).

Irish Around the House

Dog madra (*mod-ruh*); Pup coileán (*kill-on*); Cat cat (*kaht*); Kitten piscín (*pish-keen*); Carpet brat (*brat*); or another word for carpet cairpéad (*car-payed*); Lamp lampa (*lamp-a*); Curtains cuirtíní (*ker-teeny*); Couch tolg (*tull-ug*); Table bord (*bored*); Coffee table bord caife (*board ka-fey*); Oven cócairean (*co-ker-un*); Fridge cuisneoir (*kwish-nore*); Sink doirteal (*der-tul*); Cupboard cófra (*ko-fra*); Plate pláta (*plaw-ta*); Glass gloine (*glin-a*); Fork forc (*fork*); Spoon spúnóg (*spoon-ug*).

Bonus Irish Words and Phrases

Yes sea (*shah*). No ní hea (*nee hah*); Thank you go raibh maith agat (*gorra mah ah-gut*); You’re welcome Tá faillte romhat (*taw fahl-cha roe-it*); Please le do thoil (*lay duh hull*); Excuse me Gabh mo leithscéal (*guh mo leshkale*); Good job Maith thú (*mah who*); Very good An mhaith (*ahn wah*).

Irish Halloween

Witch cailleach (*kayell-ach*); Cauldron cailderu (*call di roo*); Skeleton creatlach (*krat lukh*); A witches broom Scuab chaillí (*skoo-ab hall-ee*); An ogre or monster Torathar (*tahr-a-har*); Scarecrow Taibhse préachán (*taiv-shuh pray-chawn*); Bat Sciathán leathair (*skihawn la-hayr*) lit. “leather wing”; Pumpkin Puimecín (*pum-keen*); Ghost Taibhse (*tiv-shuh*); Vampire Vampir (*vam-peer*), although someone who is a drinker of blood is called a dearg dililat (*jer-ug dil-ih-laht*).

Feast of Samhain

The first of November is the feast of Samhain, a celebration marking the end of summer and the beginning of winter, a very important holiday for the ancient celts. It was more than just a feast day, every member of the community that was able was required to attend, so matters of importance could be discussed and settled upon.

Continued on facing page



7 YEARS

WRITING FOR



ilrish

magazine

Ahern Catering

Banquets, Weddings, Graduations

ON-SITE & OFF-SITE

Catering

440-933-7500

aherncatering@aol.com

A Preferred Caterer at the West Side Irish American Club

www.aherncatering.com

159 Crocker Park Blvd., Westlake, OH 44015

