

## CELEBRA EL DÍA DE SAN PATRICIO LESSON PLAN FOR GRADES 3–6



Book/Text Set:

*Celebra el Día de San Patricio con Samantha y Lola /  
¿Qué es el Día de San Patricio?*

by Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy

**Content Overview:** Lola learns Irish dancing from her friend Samantha, one step at a time. Every day she learns a little more until one day, Samantha surprises her with the opportunity to perform a solo dance at the St. Patrick's Day celebration show. The non-fiction section introduces St. Patrick as Ireland's patron saint, presents several St. Patrick's Day customs, and gives background on shamrocks and leprechauns.

### Materials and Preparation

- chart paper and markers
- writing paper
- assorted picture books about St. Patrick's Day and related topics

### Standards Covered

#### NCSS Social Studies Strands

- I. Culture: c, e  
III. People, Places, and Environments: a, e  
IV. Individual Development and Unity: a, b, d, f, h  
IX. Global Connections: a

NCTE/IRA English Language Arts Standards: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12

### Vocabulary

- F: danza / participar / admira (admirar) / pasos / esperanza / meta / presentación  
talentos / practica (practicar) / imita (imitar) / programa / nerviosa
- NF: Irlanda / irlandés/irlandesa/irlandeses / costumbre / gaita/gaiteros / instrumento  
trébol/tréboles / creencia / leprechaun / fantásticos / leyendas / duendes  
tesoro / arco iris

**Pacing Guide** 3 days; 30–45 minute sessions, plus optional extensions

## Reading and Activities

### DAY 1

#### Explore the Topic: St. Patrick's Day / Lograr metas

Start a discussion about setting goals and accomplishing new things. Have a few students recall times when they wanted to learn something new. Then tell students you are going to be reading a book about a girl who learns how to do Irish dancing by watching a friend who is preparing for a St. Patrick's Day show.

#### Vocabulary Introduction

On a large piece of chart paper, start a vocabulary list. Write the vocabulary words for the fiction section in a column. Read the words aloud with students, and ask if anyone knows any of the meanings. As students respond, add to their responses as appropriate to give clear definitions. Note that in this context, the word "pasos" refers to a series of movements in a dance, rather than the movements of walking from one place to another. Also, you might want to explain that "pasito a pasito" is an expression about how little by little, with patience and persistence one can achieve a goal. Tell students they will hear these words in the story.

#### Fiction Read-Aloud & Discussion

In this session you will read aloud only the fiction story, *Celebra el Día de San Patricio con Samantha y Lola*. Before reading the story, show students the cover and read the title aloud. Ask students to describe the cover and predict what they think the story might be about.

Read the story aloud. As you read, stop and have students help you use context to define new words. Help students recognize Lola's determination in practicing the dance steps, and what she does to learn more and more steps each day. Have students predict what they think will happen next, and also infer how Lola is feeling at different points during the reading.

When finished, ask students to tell you about the story. Ask the following questions, using the illustrations in the book whenever appropriate to help students with their responses:

<b>Beginning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. ¿Qué talento tiene Samantha?</li><li>2. ¿Qué le gustaría hacer a Lola?</li><li>3. Describe cómo practica Lola la danza irlandesa.</li></ol>
<b>Intermediate</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. ¿Qué le gusta a Samantha de la danza irlandesa?</li><li>2. ¿Por qué Lola admira a Samantha?</li><li>3. ¿Quién baila sola en la presentación?</li></ol>
<b>Advanced</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. ¿Qué siente Lola cuando ve a Samantha bailar? ¿Por qué?</li><li>2. ¿Qué tiene que hacer Lola para bailar como Samantha?</li><li>3. ¿Cuál es la sorpresa que recibe Lola?</li></ol>

When discussion is over, return to the words “practicar” and “meta” on the vocabulary list. Have students describe what Lola did to practice her dancing. Have students connect to their own lives by giving examples of times when they had a goal and needed to practice in order to achieve that goal. Refer back to some of the earlier responses as reminders.

## **DAY 2**

### **Vocabulary Activity**

Review the words on the previous vocabulary list by having students reread, define, and use them in sentences. On a new piece of chart paper, create a second vocabulary list with the words from the nonfiction section. Write “Día de San Patricio” at the top of the list. Read the words aloud with students and ask if they know the definitions of any of the words. Add to student responses as appropriate to give a clear definition of each word. By asking the name of the countries they were born, talk about the nouns we form to express people’s national or local origins (e.g. Irlanda: irlandés, irlandesa, irlandeses).

Introduce St. Patrick’s Day symbols and customs with individual photographs or pictures from books or the internet. Include photographs of shamrocks, the Irish countryside, Irish dancers, bagpipe players, and rainbows, along with illustrations of leprechauns and pots of gold.

Display all the pictures and ask students to make observations based on their prior knowledge. Give additional information when necessary, referencing the vocabulary list when appropriate. Leave the pictures on display.

Show students the cover of *Celebra el Día de San Patricio con Samantha y Lola* and ask them to recall the story. Tell them that the dance Lola learned is a traditional Irish dance often performed on St. Patrick’s Day and that you are going to read them a story that tells about the St. Patrick’s Day celebration.

### **Non-Fiction Read-Aloud & Discussion**

Open the book to pages 16–17 and have students read the section title with you. Before reading the story, ask students to tell you a few facts they already know about St. Patrick’s Day.

Read the story, *¿Qué es el Día de San Patricio?* On page 18, ask students to identify Ireland’s land form (an island) and to estimate its size relative to the United States. As you continue to read, have students use the context to define words they may not know. Give students the opportunity to comment on the photographs and to make any connections they might have to previously read texts and to their own experiences.

When the read-aloud is finished, have students discuss the information by answering the following questions. Use the book as a resource to help students with their answers:

<b>Beginning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿Qué es una gaita? ¿Y un gaitero?</li> <li>2. ¿Qué planta abunda en Irlanda?</li> <li>3. Describe un <i>leprechaun</i>.</li> </ol>
<b>Intermediate</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nombra algunas cosas que verías el Día de San Patricio.</li> <li>2. ¿Por qué la gente se viste de verde el Día de San Patricio?</li> <li>3. ¿Qué hacen los <i>leprechauns</i>?</li> </ol>
<b>Advanced</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿Cómo se celebra el Día de San Patricio?</li> <li>2. ¿Qué creen los irlandeses acerca de los tréboles?</li> <li>3. ¿Por qué se celebra el Día de San Patricio en Estados Unidos?</li> </ol>

After discussion, review learned information with students. On a large piece of chart paper, write, “El Día de San Patricio es...” Have students tell things they’ve learned and write their own responses. Review all responses and leave the chart on display.

## DAY 3

### Vocabulary Review

Review all vocabulary words orally. Have volunteers read, define, and use the words in sentences. Then have students work on the [Sustantivos del Día de San Patricio worksheet](#).

Set aside time for students to browse and read additional picture books about St. Patrick’s Day customs and Ireland. After reading, they may want to revisit the “El Día de San Patricio es...” chart.

### Writing Activity

Explain to students that they will write a short essay telling about something they would like to learn to do, and what steps they would take to go about achieving the goal. Ask students to give some ideas of things they’d like to learn, and write their ideas on the board. Try to get a variety of different types of responses.

Tell students to include the following in their writing:

- Qué les gustaría aprender a hacer y por qué
- Qué pasos seguirían para alcanzar esa meta
- Cómo se sentirían después de haber alcanzado la meta, y por qué

Give an example of something you would like to do and tell the steps you would take to achieve the goal, writing a short outline or list on the board using each of the prompts as a main outline bullet. Tell students that they will make a list or outline first and then do the actual writing. Students who have already learned standard essay form should write three paragraphs.

Review the initial vocabulary list and the students' list of ideas. Ask students if there are any other words they might need for their writing, and write the words on the board for easy reference.

When students are finished, have them reread and revise as needed, and draw an illustration to go with their writing if they wish.

## Extensions

### Writing

Have students draw a fantastic character and then write a story about it, including information about where the character lives, how it acts, what it does for a living, etc. Have them read their stories to the class.

### Art

Make a collage using assorted torn pieces of green and yellow tissue paper glued onto a large tagboard shamrock shape. Students can design and cut out their own shamrock shape. Use white glue thinned down with water. Brush glue onto the tagboard base, arrange tissue paper, and brush glue over it. Cover the whole area.

### Music

Research Celtic music including bagpipes and listen to some Celtic music online at <http://www.iregua.net>

Listen to the music of traditional Irish songs in midi format at <http://www.contemplator.com/tunebook/ireland.htm>.

Learn about "Riverdance" at

<http://groups.msn.com/RiverdanceTheShow>

Small video clips of "Riverdance" can be viewed online at

[http://www.riverdance.com/htm/multimedia/video\\_clips/index.htm#](http://www.riverdance.com/htm/multimedia/video_clips/index.htm#).

### Mathematics

Create a symmetrical design with shamrock shapes. Draw several different sizes of shamrocks on green construction paper and double the paper to cut out pairs of each shape. Glue several different pairs of shamrock shapes onto black construction paper to create the design using radial or lateral symmetry.

### Science

Read about rainbows and explore the use of prisms.

### Social Studies

Read and learn more about Ireland, Irish people, and other Irish customs. Make a "travel guide" showing what you've learned.

## Technology

Listen to samples of bagpipe music online:

<http://www.iregua.net/servicios/descargas/desmusic.htm>

Learn about Irish history, Irish geography, Irish government, Irish language (Gaelic), Ireland's flag, Ireland's currency, and Irish symbols:

<http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irlanda>

Listen to the national anthem of Ireland:

<http://www.banderas-e-himnos.com/irlanda.htm>

## Creative Reading

Share this book with your students using Alma Flor Ada's Creative Reading methodology based on the principles of Transformative Education. [Suggested questions](#) to initiate the dialogue are provided for Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced levels as well as self-assessment tools for [teachers](#) and students—in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

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