

Ireland, or Eire, is the third largest island in Europe, located between the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea, and is about 84,000 square kilometres. Five sixths of the island is known officially as the Republic of Ireland, the capital city being Dublin and the (1) _____ being the euro. The other sixth is Northern Ireland, part of the United Kingdom, which is unofficially known as 'the North', or 'Ulster', with Belfast as its capital. The country is bisected by the river Shannon, at 386 kilometres the longest river in Ireland. The official language of Ireland is English, but it is a (2) _____ country, since Irish (Gaelic) is also spoken. The (3) _____ is around 5 million.

Ireland is known as the 'Emerald Island' because of its lush (4) _____, including forests, woodland and open farmland. The west coast is particularly mountainous, green and beautiful. The reason that Ireland is so green is that its climate is mild but (5) _____, with lots of frequent but soft rainfall.

Ireland's major (6) _____, apart from tourism, are steel and lead, brewing, food products, textiles, chemicals, machinery and glass. Turnips, barley, potatoes, sugar beets, wheat, beef and dairy products are among its (7) _____ products.

Ireland is home to hundreds of plant (8) _____. Some animals, such as the red fox, hedgehog, stoat and badger are very common, and Ireland is also home to about 400 species of birds, including golden eagles.

Gaelic football and hurling are the national sports in Ireland, and are very popular. Golfing tourism is also a (9) _____ industry there. Boxing, rugby and cricket are all-island sports, which means that teams include players from north and south.

The Irish tradition of folk music and dance is also (10) _____. U2, Enya, The Corrs, The Cranberries, Boyzone and Westlife are amongst the Irish artists known all over the world.

Words

CURRENCY	the money used in a particular country
BILINGUAL	(written in or speaking) two languages
POPULATION	the number of people living in an area
VEGETATION	plants and trees
UNPREDICTABLE	often changes
INDUSTRIES	the production of goods in factories
AGRICULTURAL	the work or business of farming
SPECIES	a plant or animal group with similar general features
MAJOR	important, serious, large or great
WIDELY KNOWN	famous

Questions

Where is Ireland?

Which part of Ireland is bigger?

What currency do they use in the Republic of Ireland?

What is the name of the longest river in Ireland?

What language do they speak in Ireland, apart from English?

Why is Ireland sometimes known as the 'Emerald Island'?

Name three agricultural products Ireland is famous for.

Name three animals living in Ireland.

What sport is a major tourist attraction?

Name three Irish pop artists known worldwide.

Once visited, never forgotten

Activity Reading quiz

Aim To read a text about Ireland and revise or learn new vocabulary.

Interaction Pairs/groups

Language focus Revision and extension of vocabulary connected with the general description of a place or country

Skills focus Reading, speaking

Preparation Copy one worksheet for each pair. Cut up the missing words and their explanations into separate strips and mix them up. Cut out the text with the missing words and the questions for the quiz.

Time 30 minutes

Procedure

- 1 Write *Ireland* on the board and elicit information about the country.
- 2 Explain that the students are going to match 10 words with their explanations. They will then complete a text about Ireland with these words.
- 3 Pre-teach some necessary vocabulary from the text, omitting the missing ones.
- 4 Divide the class into pairs and distribute the missing words and their meanings. Set a time limit and monitor the work. If the students need some more explanation, give them the sentences presenting the word(s). Check the task orally.
- 5 Distribute the text. Ask the students to complete the text with the words they have just matched. Set a time limit, monitor, and check the answers when the time is up.
- 6 Retrieve all copies of the text, then place the quiz questions face down on a table in front of the class. Divide the class into groups of four and decide who will start.
- 7 Explain the game:
 - One student from the starting group comes forward, chooses and reads a question aloud.
 - If their group knows the answer, they get two points. If not, the question is put to the group on their left. If they don't know it, the question is put back face down.
 - The next group to the left asks and answers a question. Play continues in this way.
 - Keep a record of the points on the board. Act as a referee if the students are unsure of the correct answers. The group with the highest amount of points wins.

Key

- A** The words and their meanings are in the correct order on the worksheet before it's been cut up.
- B** The words to be filled in are in the correct order on the worksheet before it's been cut up.
- C**
- 1 Between the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea.
 - 2 The Republic of Ireland.
 - 3 The euro.
 - 4 Shannon.
 - 5 Irish (Gaelic).
 - 6 Because it's so green. / Because of its lush vegetation.
 - 7 Turnips, barley, potatoes, sugar beets, wheat, beef, dairy products.
 - 8 Red fox, hedgehog, stoat, badger, golden eagle.
 - 9 Golf.
 - 10 U2, Enya, The Corrs, The Cranberries, Boyzone, Westlife.