Trinity Irish Dance Company
Teacher Resource Guide
About UMS

One of the oldest performing arts presenters in the country, UMS serves diverse audiences through multidisciplinary performing arts programs in three distinct but interrelated areas: presentation, creation, and education.

With a program steeped in music, dance, theater, and education, UMS hosts approximately 80 performances and 150 free educational activities each season. UMS also commissions new work, sponsors artist residencies, and organizes collaborative projects with local, national as well as many international partners.

While proudly affiliated with the University of Michigan and housed on the Ann Arbor campus, UMS is a separate not-for-profit organization that supports itself from ticket sales, grants, contributions, and endowment income.

UMS Education and Audience Development Department

UMS’s Education and Audience Development Department seeks to deepen the relationship between audiences and art, as well as to increase the impact that the performing arts can have on schools and community. The program seeks to create and present the highest quality arts education experience to a broad spectrum of community constituencies, proceeding in the spirit of partnership and collaboration.

The department coordinates dozens of events with over 100 partners that reach more than 50,000 people annually. It oversees a dynamic, comprehensive program encompassing workshops, in-school visits, master classes, lectures, youth and family programming, teacher professional development workshops, and “meet the artist” opportunities, cultivating new audiences while engaging existing ones.

For advance notice of Youth Education events, join the UMS Teachers email list by emailing umsyouth@umich.edu or visit www.ums.org/education.

Cover Photo: Trinity Irish Dance by Lois Greenfield

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UMS Youth Education

Trinity Irish Dance
Friday, April 20, 10am-11am
and 12pm-1pm

Power Center, Ann Arbor
121 Fletcher Street

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

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About the Performance

Photo by Lois Greenfield.
We want you to enjoy your time in the theater, so here are some tips to make your Youth Performance experience successful and fun! Please review this page prior to attending the performance.

What should I do during the show?
Everyone is expected to be a good audience member. This keeps the show fun for everyone.

Good audience members...
- Are good listeners
- Keep their hands and feet to themselves
- Do not talk or whisper during the performance
- Laugh only at the parts that are funny
- Do not eat gum, candy, food or drink in the theater
- Stay in their seats during the performance
- Do not disturb the people sitting nearby or other schools in attendance

Who will meet us when we arrive?
After you exit the bus, UMS Education staff and greeters will be outside to meet you. They might have special directions for you, so be listening and follow their directions. They will take you to the theater door where ushers will meet your group. The greeters know that your group is coming, so there’s no need for you to have tickets.

Who will show us where to sit?
The ushers will walk your group to its seats. Please take the first seat available. (When everybody’s seated, your teacher will decide if you can rearrange yourselves.) If you need to make a trip to the restroom before the show starts, ask your teacher.

How will I know that the show is starting?
You will know the show is starting because the lights in the auditorium will get dim, and a member of the UMS Education staff will come out on stage to introduce the performance.

What if I get lost?
Please ask an usher or a UMS staff member for help. You will recognize these adults because they have name tag stickers or a name tag hanging around their neck.

How do I show that I liked what I saw and heard?
The audience shows appreciation during a performance by clapping. In a musical performance, the musicians and dancers are often greeted with applause when they first appear. It is traditional to applaud at the end of each musical selection and sometimes after impressive solos. At the end of the show, the performers will bow and be rewarded with your applause. If you really enjoyed the show, give the performers a standing ovation by standing up and clapping during the bows. For this particular show, it will be most appropriate to applaud at the beginning and the ending.

What do I do after the show ends?
Please stay in your seats after the performance ends, even if there are just a few of you in your group. Someone from UMS will come onstage and announce the names of all the schools. When you hear your school’s name called, follow your teachers out of the auditorium, out of the theater and back to your buses.

How can I let the performers know what I thought?
We want to know what you thought of your experience at a UMS Youth Performance. After the performance, we hope that you will be able to discuss what you saw with your class. Tell us about your experiences in a letter or drawing. Please send your opinions, letters or artwork to: UMS Youth Education Program, 881 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1011.
The Performance at a Glance

Each of these different elements can be the basis for introducing students to the upcoming performance.

Who are the Trinity Irish Dance Company?
Trinity Irish Dance Company were formed in 1990 by Mark Howard in an effort to showcase Irish music and dance as an art form. The company is made up of 18-25 year olds, and has received great critical and popular acclaim from audiences throughout the world. They have performed all over the world, and have collaborated with many notable contemporary choreographers and musicians. Trinity holds a unique place in the dance world, offering a highly skilled presentation of progressive Irish step dance.

Who is Mark Howard?
Mark Howard is the founder and artistic director of the Trinity Irish Dance Company, and choreographs much of the company’s work. Born in Yorkshire, England, and raised in Chicago, Mark Howard began dancing at the age of nine, and later went on to become a North American champion Irish dancer. He started the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance at the age of 17, and dancers from this school have won 18 world titles for the United States at the World Irish Dance Championships in Ireland.

Howard wanted to find a way for his dancers to do more than just compete for trophies and prizes, so in 1990 he founded the Trinity Irish Dance Company as a way to showcase Irish music and dances as an art form.

Mark Howard continues to choreograph new works for the company, and he has expanded his independent career to work in theater, television, concert and film. Name one of Irish American Magazine’s Top 100 Irish-Americans for his innovative work in Irish dance, he was even served as choreographer to-the-stars, serving as Tom Hanks personal dance coach.

Choreography
Choreography (also known as dance composition) is the “art of making visual structures in which movement occurs.” People who make these compositions are called choreographers. A choreographer creates a dance by having a vision and then arranging or directing the movements of the dancers. The choreographer must work closely with the dancers, the stage manager and musicians during rehearsals. Although mainly used in relation to dance, choreographers also work in various settings including fencing, gymnastics and ice skating.

What is Irish Dance?
Traditional Irish dancing is an old art form with strong ties to the community, religious ceremonies, and rituals, and national pride. The Irish people created music and dances for weddings, fairs, saints’ days, annual festivals and harvests. In the late 19th century, many Irish people immigrated to the United States and brought their music and dance to share with American audiences.

In Irish step dancing, the dancers hold the upper body very straight and the arms close to the sides. The emphasis is on the footwork—the speed of the quick
changes of position, the height of the jumps -- and the uniformity of the dancers. Dancers wear hard shoes (called “jig” shoes) when they wish to use their feet like and instrument to beat out the rhythms, and soft shoes (ghillies) for swift jumps and crossover steps. Often, the dancers’ costumes highlight Irish culture in the use of decorative lace and embroidered designs.

What is folkloric dance?
Folkloric dance, like its equivalent English term “folk dance,” means dances of the people. It is dance that reflects the traditions, customs, legends, beliefs and lifestyles of people in particular countries and regions. Folkloric dance expresses the life and spirit of a people through its movement and music, and with a vitality and immediacy that instantly transport the viewer to the heart of that culture. It is both historical and current, preserving tradition yet shifting with the present times.

Types of Irish Dance
Irish dancing can be broadly separated into the performance dances and the social dances, the former including solo and set step dancing (this is the kind you will see during the Trinity Youth Performance) and the latter divided further into céilí (kay-lee) and set dancing (please see page 27 for details about the social dances).

Performance Dances
Central to the Irish dance tradition is the technique of “stepping,” which involves a concentration on foot movements close to the floor in which the tempo of the accompanying music is beaten out by the dancer. The four types of Irish music and associated dances are the jig, reel, hornpipe, and the set dances.

Jig
A number of variations of the jig are performed including the single (or soft), double, treble, and slip jig. The music is always in 6/8 time (the emphasis on beats in a jig is: ONE-two-three four-five-six), except for the slip jig which is in 9/8 time (ONE-two-three four-five-six seven-eight-nine). The single jig is faster than the double jig with more aerial steps and is named for its single batter. Dancers perform single or soft jigs in soft shoes. The double jig is characterized by a distinctive “double batter” or shuffle which is the main step element in this dance. The hop, or slip, jig is a similar solo step dance in 9/8 time and has a characteristic light and airy step. The slip jig (soft shoes) is the most graceful of Irish dances and features light hopping, sliding, skipping and pointing. Only women dance the slip jig. It is a fast dance with steps very similar to those of the single jig, but between steps the dancers travel around the floor using a characteristic slipping and hopping step.

Reel
Reel music is in either 2/4 or 4/4 time and it is danced at a relatively fast tempo (ONE-two-three-four). Today, both males and females perform all reels, though historically some reels (the treble reel, for example) were performed only by males. For women, it is a light, rapid soft shoe dance that allows for plenty of leaping and demands an energetic performance from the dancer. Men often dance the reel in hard shoes.

The single reel, usually written in 2/4 time, is fast with simpler steps, and is used to teach beginning dancers. The double reel, usually just referred to as the ree/,
is slower to allow for more complex stepping. It is usually written in 4/4 time, though it has been said that in reality, it is more like 8/8 time.

**Hornpipe**
The hornpipe is in 4/4 time, reminiscent of a slow reel with accents on the first and third beat (ONE-and-a two-and-a three-and-a four-and-a). A notable feature is the frequent use of a rocking motion with the ankles. As an Irish solo dance, it is slower than the other solo measures, allowing a greater complexity of steps. It was originally danced exclusively by males in hard shoes, but now, both men and women dance it.

**Solo Set Dancing**
Solo set dancing consists of specially composed step dances which were “set” to specific tunes. Both males and females dance sets in hard shoes. Some individual dances portray certain themes or tell stories.

**Modern Dance Influences**
During the performance, you will see choreography which fuses traditional folkloric dance with modern elements. Howard’s progressive take on Irish dance is an amalgam of traditional Irish movement, modern dance, ballet, tap, flamenco, performance art, African and other World Beat rhythms, and is accompanied by a mix of Irish, rock, and multicultural music, and narrative choreography. Of this unique blend, Howard says, “This new art form could never have happened in Ireland. It’s a child of North America.” Mark Howard has taken the group outside of the framework of ethnicity, and constantly strives to expand the company’s range and repertoire into imaginative new directions.

**Costumes**
Two types of shoes are worn in step dancing: hardshoes and softshoe. The hardshoe (“heavy shoe”, “jig shoe”) is unlike the tap shoe, in that the tips and heels are made of fiberglass, instead of metal. The first hard shoes had wooden taps with metal nails. Later the soles were changed into resin or fiberglass to reduce the weight. The soft shoe, which are called ghillies, resembles a ballet shoe minus the hard toe and the ribbons for laces. Ghillies are only worn by girls while boys wear a black leather shoe which resembles a black jazz shoe with a hard heel. Boys soft-shoe dancing features audible heel clicks.

Several generations ago the appropriate dress for a competition was simply your “Sunday Best”. In the 1980s ornately embroidered dresses became popular. Today even more ornamentation is used on girls’ dresses, including lace, sequins, silk, extensive embroidery, feathers, and more. Irish Dancing schools have team dresses, but dancers, once they reach a level decided by their school, may get a solo dress of their own design and colors. Today in competition, most men wear a shirt, vest, and tie paired with black pants; kilts are occasionally worn.

The costumes of today’s dancers reflect the clothing of Ireland from the eighth century. The dresses worn by women are copies of the traditional Irish peasant dress and they are adorned with hand-embroidered Celtic designs based on the Book of Kells and Irish stone crosses.
Celtic Symbology
The costuming of Irish dancers features intricate Celtic designs belonging to the Insular Art tradition. Surviving examples of Insular art are mainly illuminated (highly decorated) manuscripts, metalwork and carvings in stone, especially stone crosses. Surfaces are decorated with intricate patterning. Many of the costume designs are drawn from specific works belong to this artistic movement including the Book of Kells, an Irish version of the Bible dating from the ninth century, and the Irish High Crosses, stone statues built in honor of a sponsor or patron saint, while others feature traditional Celtic knotwork.
JOHNNY (1990) (Choreographed by Mark Howard, Music by Mike Kirkpatrick, Vocals by Yvonne Bruner)

*Johnny* was created for, and premiered by, the Trinity Irish Dance Company on NBC's *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*, NBC Studios, Burbank, California, and March 15, 1991. This dance is a reel in 2/4 time, and is a mix of soft shoe and hard shoe. The soft shoe portions showcase the athleticism of Irish dance, and include leaping and complicated figure work. The hard shoe dance sequences are more energetic and rhythmic. The costuming the dancers wear during this piece were the first made for the company. They feature bare arms, a characteristic not seen in traditional costuming. The cuffs and collars of the dresses include Celtic designs taken from the Book of Kells. The Book of Kells is an ornately illustrated manuscript, produced by Celtic monks around AD 800 in the style known as Insular art. It is one of the more lavishly illuminated manuscripts to survive from the Middle Ages and has been described as the zenith of Western calligraphy and illumination. It contains the four gospels of the Bible in Latin, along with prefatory and explanatory matter decorated with numerous colorful illustrations and illuminations. Today it is on permanent display at the Trinity College Library in Dublin, Ireland.

BLACKTHORN (1992) (Choreographed by Mark Howard, Music by Stone and Ned Folkerth)

The original steps of *Blackthorn* represent the rhythmic soul that permeates all Irish dance. It is a traditional set that normally would be done in competition as a solo dance. Trinity has changed it to a group dance and has taken away the music which normally would accompany it in competition and replaced it with just drums. It is a treble jig hard shoe dance which shows off more of the tricky movements associated with this form of dance. While many other dances in the performance feature the live musicians supplementing a recorded soundtrack, *Blackthorn* is accompanied live solely by the musicians.


*Curran Event* was choreographed by Sean Curran from New York. As a child, he was an Irish dancer and has an extensive knowledge of its traditions. He later went onto perform in Stomp, and not long after he left the group, he created this piece. The influence of his time in Stomp is quite visible in *Curran event*, in that it features lots of body percussion and non-traditional elements including arm movement, slapping, clapping, and snapping, in addition to the more traditional Celtic fleet footwork. The dance has two distinct movements, one done in soft shoe, and the other in hard show. The former features jumps and more modern movements in that the hands are often mimicking the feet, which never happens in traditional dance. It is accompanied by music from the band Kila, and the lyrics you hear are sung in Gaelic. The latter half of the dance begins as a solo, and gradually builds up to include more and more dancers. It is in this half that the body percussion is most evident. There is no music, only the percussion created by the dancers themselves. The dance is performed in little kilts and half tops, and has a quite school-girlish feeling to it.
**Treble Jig (1995)** (Choreographed by Mark Howard, Music by Jimmy Moore)

Treble Jigs are played in the 6/8 time signature and performed in “jig shoes,” which were the precursor to American tap shoes. Historically, when the British tried to Anglicize Ireland by wiping out Gaelic traditions, Irish tunes were kept alive by teaching the youth to tap out the rhythms in the privacy of the home. Through adversity, a beautiful art form flourished. This piece starts off with two girls in a very traditional competition type solo dance. The piece then goes on to include all of the dancers each trying to one-up the others. It also features a flirtatious dance with the male members of the company. *Treble Jig* is accompanied live by the musicians without a soundtrack.

**TRINITY (2005)** (Choreographed by Mark Howard, Music by Different Drums of Ireland)

*Trinity* is the finale dance of the performance. It is very similar to productions like Riverdance in that it features a chorus line style formation. It then breaks apart into a sort of free-for-all in which each dancer or a pair of dancers is introduced to the audience by themselves through their own brief solo dance. Many of these short dances will incorporate more modern dance elements, and the piece as a whole celebrates the culture of Irish dance while acknowledging the influence of pop culture. Trinity Irish Dance Company thinks of themselves as a tri-fold of three ideas, passion, respect, and truth, through which they express themselves as artists and which they incorporate into all of their work, and this piece is a tribute to their mission.

**Musical Interludes**

During the Youth Performance, the Trinity Irish Dance Company Musicians will perform a song without the dancers, and will announce the selection from the stage. They will also perform an instrumental piece featuring solos on several of the traditional instruments they have with them. They will talk a bit about each instrument, introducing them to the students. One of the dancers will also come out in a solo dress and describe the importance of the costume, and how its color design is chosen.
Trinity Irish Dance Company

Members of Trinity Irish Dance Company. Photo by Lois Greenfield.
Biography of the Company

In 1979, at the young age of 17, Mark Howard started Trinity Academy of Irish Dance. Since that time, the Chicago/Milwaukee-based school has garnered a staggering 22 world titles for the United States at the World Championships of Irish Dance, and has grown from a dozen students practicing in a church basement to the largest Irish dance program in the world. In 1991, following the success of the academy and lamenting the fact that “competitive dance is dominated by traditionalists who believe that an art form shouldn’t move forward,” Mark Howard, in the role of Artistic Director, founded the Trinity Irish Dance Company. Before its creation, there were no Irish step dancers performing collectively outside of the competition circuit—the Company’s creation served as both an outlet for Howard’s pioneering choreography and as a post-competition performance opportunity, and marks the beginning of Irish dance’s reform from what was essentially a competitive sport into serious concert dance.

Howard’s progressive take on Irish dance is an amalgam of traditional Irish movement, modern dance, ballet, tap, flamenco, performance art, African and other World Beat rhythms, and is accompanied by a mix of Irish, rock, and multicultural music, and narrative choreography. Of this unique blend, Howard says, “This new art form could never have happened in Ireland. It’s a child of North America.” Mark Howard has taken the group outside of the framework of ethnicity, and constantly strives to expand the company’s range and repertoire into imaginative new directions. For this reason, Chicago’s Trinity Irish Dance Company is considered the birthplace of progressive Irish dance in America, and has led directly to such commercial successes as Riverdance and Lord of the Dance.

While some of his pieces retain the classic elements of Irish dance, less traditional choreography goes far beyond the expressionless faces and uniform dress code embedded in tradition. In Celtic Thunder (1988), the dancers perform dynamic, rhythmic routines while moving in intricate patterns whose complexity has been equated with the precision of a Marine drill team. Howard credits this dance as the piece that “changed the look and direction of Irish dance forever.” In another innovative turn, Turf (1993) features Irish dancers joined by African American tap dancers. Many of the exciting elements of both Riverdance and Lord of the Dance take root in these early pieces first performed by the Trinity Irish Dance Company.

Howard’s updated take on Irish dancing is not without its critics, and his work is often at odds with traditionalists; his aesthetic, while earning his troupe of dancers numerous world titles and critical acclaim, has also resulted in his teams having been disqualified more than any other. The rigid rules of competition and traditional dance do not allow for the innovations Howard is known for. Where tradition calls for Fiberglas hard shoes or soft shoe leather slippers, ramrod straight posture, immobile arms, and customary dress, his less traditional works are performed in unitards and bare feet, in dresses with bare arms, have arm movements choreographed with footwork, or mix hard and soft shoe, all considered competition no-nos.

The Company is made up of around 30 dancers between the ages of 18 and 28—many of whom have progressed through the ranks of the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance—and has performed on sold out tours throughout Europe and Asia, and in such prestigious U. S. venues as Washington’s Kennedy Center, New York’s Joyce.
and New Victory Theatres, and Los Angeles’ Royce Hall. The Trinity Irish Dancers have performed in several feature films by Disney, DreamWorks, Touchstone, and Universal, including Backdraft, under the direction of Ron Howard, and the Sam Mendes-directed Road to Perdition. Trinity has turned up on the small screen as well, appearing as featured guests on the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson and Jay Leno, Late Night with Conan O’Brien, Live with Regis, Good Morning America, and CBS this Morning, and in the ABC special Dignity of Children, hosted by Oprah Winfrey. In Emmy Award-winning appearances, the Company was showcased on the PBS Television Specials One Step Beyond and World Stage.

About the Artistic Director
Mark Howard is the founder and Artistic Director of both the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance and the Trinity Irish Dance Company. Born in Yorkshire, England, and raised in Chicago, Howard is a North American champion Irish dancer. He began his dancing career when he was nine at the Dennehy School of Irish Dance, and at the age of 17, launched the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance. He later went on to earn a marketing degree at Loyola University, but dance remains his passion and focus.

Howard created the Trinity Irish Dance Company at the age of 29, and his role as Artistic Director affords him the opportunity to continually choreograph new works for the company. He has further expanded his independent career to work in theater, television, concert and film. He has done extensive film work for Disney, Touchstone, Universal, and Dream Works, and has worked with such esteemed directors as Ron Howard, Sam Mendes. His latest foray into film saw him as the choreographer for Road to Perdition. His choreography has also been featured on the stages of various prestigious Chicago venues including the Goodman and Steppenwolf Theatres.

Mark Howard is a sought after instructor to the stars, having most recently served as Tom Hanks’ personal dance coach. He also boasts actresses Lara Flynn Boyle and Kate Hudson, among other celebrities, as former students.

In 1994 and 2001, Howard was named one of Irish American Magazine’s “Top 100 Irish-Americans” for his ground-breaking work in Irish dance. He has also received numerous Choreographers’ Fellowships awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Under Howard’s tutelage, the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance has won 22 World Championship titles for the United States. His progressive innovations in the field of Irish dance have significantly changed its direction and scope, reintroducing the form as the phenomenon that it is today.
About Irish Dance

Photo by Lois Greenfield.
Every culture expressed its identity and values through distinctive music and dance forms. In the United States, dance is as diverse and multi-cultural as the history of its original peoples and those who immigrated later. Consider Native American ceremonial dances like the Ghost Dance, the Grass Dance, and the Hoop Dance. Settlers from Europe brought court dances, like the minuet and the ballet, and folk and country dances, like the waltz, polka, clog dance, and reel. African-Americans contributed the minstrel, the cakewalk, and other “plantation dances,” and developed an early form of the tap dance, set to West African rhythms. Mexican-Americans combined indigenous and Spanish traditions to develop the folklorico style. And when the people of Ireland immigrated to the United States, they too brought cultural traditions to share and develop.

Traditional Irish dancing is an old art form with strong ties to the community, religious ceremonies, and rituals, and national pride. The Irish people created music and dances for weddings, fairs, saints’ days, annual festivals and harvests. In the late 19th-century, many Irish people immigrated to the United States and brought their music and dance to share with American audiences.

**History**

**Introduction**

Irish dance dates back to traditions in Ireland in the 1500’s and is closely tied to Irish independence and cultural identity. Through history, these ancient dances were never documented or recorded due to Ireland’s occupation by England, which tried to make Ireland more “English” by outlawing certain traditional practices. Many Irish cultural traditions were banned by the English authorities during the 400-year period that came to be known as the Penal Days.

Despite this ban on cultural traditions in Ireland, Irish dancing continued behind closed doors. Because their musical instruments had been confiscated by the authorities, Irish parents taught their children the dances by tapping out rhythms with their hands and feet and making music through “lilting” (or mouth music somewhat similar to “scat singing” in jazz). Irish dances came from Ireland’s family clans and, like tribal Native American dances in this country, were never formally choreographed or recorded.

The Penal Laws were finally lifted in the late 1800’s, inspiring Irish nationalism and the Great Gaelic Revival—the resurgence of interest in Irish language, literature, history, and folklore—and its accompanying **feis** (essentially a gathering that included various forms of competition). The **feis** was typically held in open fields and included contests in singing, playing music, baking, and, of course, Irish dancing.

**Ancient History**

The history begins with the Celtic peoples, also known as the Gaels. These peoples spread over Western Europe including France, Northern Spain, and the British Isles, spreading to Ireland in the 3rd century BC. They shared a common language (Gaelic) and tended to establish small kingdoms (150 were in Ireland). Roman and Germanic peoples later conquered the Gaels in Europe with the exception of Ireland where the Gaelic culture was preserved. (The Druids were priests and learned men in this culture.) Saint Patrick introduced mainstream Christianity into the
country in the 5th century AD.

Although little is known about the dancing in this period, the artwork survived and has influenced Irish dance costumes. The most impressive Celtic Christian art was produced from the late 7th to the early 8th century, both in Ireland and in Irish missions in Europe. Manuscripts of books of the Bible were embellished, or “illuminated,” with decorative borders and lettering of astonishing intricacy and inventiveness. Complex, twining geometric designs predominated. The masterpiece of this period is the *Book of Kells* (mid-8th Century), which is unsurpassed for its illumination. Other art of the period includes large stone crosses and carved ceremonial religious objects such as the Ardagh Chalice (early 9th Century).

Viking raiders destroyed most books from this period, thus there are few written records of any dances. However, it is certain that one aspect of the sophisticated Gaelic culture was music and dance. An interesting note is that the Viking, Erik the Red, took two Irishmen with him on his voyage discovering North America and they were the first explorers of the new land. However, he did not report any dancing upon the occasion of the discovery! The Viking raids of Ireland ended in 1014 after the victory of the Irish king Brian Boru at Clontarf. *Feisianna* (plural form of *feis*) date from this period. They were a combination trade fair, political gathering, and cultural event with music, sporting events, storytelling, and crafts. Over time, the cultural aspect came to dominate feisianna. These events continued through time to the present. While the politics are gone, they continue to have music, dance, crafts, and trade (the vendors!).

The Celtic tradition in Ireland declined rapidly during the 12th century. Increasing foreign influences weakened traditional arts, and the Anglo-Norman conquest of Ireland occurred in 1170. However, over the next two hundred years, the conquerors became closely associated with traditional Irish culture. To counteract this assimilation, the Anglo-Irish Parliament passed, in 1366, the Statute of Kilkenny, decreeing excommunication and heavy penalties against all those who followed the custom of, or allied with, the native Irish. It took another 128 years before they enforced the statute.

History records a variety of dances done by the Irish in the mid-1500s. These include *Rinne Fada* or *Fading* where two lines with partners faced each other, Irish Hey (possibly a round or figure dance), jigs (likely in a group), *Trenchmores* (described as a big free form country dance), and sword dances. It is not clear whose dances influenced whom among the Irish, English, and French, but it was characteristic that Irish dances had a faster tempo and included side steps. English suppression of Irish culture continued, exemplified by the banning of piping and the arrest of pipers. However, Queen Elizabeth I was “exceedingly pleased” with Irish tunes and country dances.

Power struggles between the Irish and English continued during the 1600s. The Penal Laws enacted in the late 1600s crushed Irish commerce and industries. The laws also banned the education of Catholic children leading to hidden (hedge) schools. Traditional Irish culture was practiced with some degree of secrecy. This period of severe repression lasted for more than a hundred years, explaining some
of the initial secrecy of teaching Irish step dancing. Country dancing continued, one description being that on Sundays “in every field a fiddle and the lasses footing it till they are all of a foam”; another being “the young folk dance till the cows come home.” Dancing continued during the 1700s, often during holidays, weddings, christenings, and wakes. However, the Church sometimes condemned dancing, “In the dance are seen frenzy and woe.”

A major influence on Irish dance and Irish culture was the advent of the Dance Masters around 1750, beginning a tradition that you could argue continues today. A dance master typically traveled within a county, stopping for about six weeks in a village, staying with a hospitable family (who were honored by their selection as host). They taught Irish dancing (male teachers) in kitchens, farm outbuildings, crossroads, or hedge schools. Students would first learn the jig and reel. Sometimes, the teacher had to tie a rope around a student’s leg to distinguish right foot from left. Besides dancing, they also appear to have given instruction in fencing and other skills. Some teachers had other skilled trades that were used on occasion by the villagers, helping to explain dance masters habit of traveling from town to town. Having an eminent dance master associated with your village was a cause for pride and boasting by the community.

Each dance master had a repertoire of dance steps and he created new steps over time. (Eight measures or bars of music are called a “step,” hence the term step dancing.) Sometimes the masters danced competitively at feisianna, the winner being the one who knew the most steps, not the one with the best execution. The loser of a competition might have to concede a town in his territory to the winner. These men were the creators of the set and ceili dances and they carefully guarded their art of step creation. Dance masters created the first schools of dancing, the best known being from Counties Kerry, Cork, and Limerick. One dance master described himself as “an artificial rhythmical walker” and “instructor of youth in the Terpsichorean art.” Villagers paid dance masters at the end of the third week of teaching at a “benefit night.” They paid the accompanying musician a week later. Sometimes, the dance master was both musician and dancer simultaneously! Apparently the level of pay for the dance masters was relatively high for Ireland and it included room and board.

The suppression of Catholics continued during this time, but ways were found to avoid control. One story is that Catholics posted a child as a lookout for meetings or Masses that they held in the cellars of pubs. The child danced a particular beat to warn those below of approaching soldiers.

During the 1800s, a popular event was a cake dance. A cake would be placed on a stand in the center of a field, it being the prize for the best dancer. The winner would, of course, “take the cake.” Attempts by the parish priests to suppress dancing were frequent, but appear to have been mostly ineffective.

**Modern History**
This period begins in 1893 when the Gaelic League was founded (*Conradh na Gaeilge*). This group encouraged the revival of Irish culture, a culture that the English had suppressed for centuries. In 1929, the Irish Dancing Commission was founded (*An Coimisiun le Rinci’ Gaelacha*) to establish rules regarding teaching,
judging, and competitions. It continues in that role. Prior to 1929, many local variations in dances, music, costumes and the rules of feisianna existed. Part of the impact of the Commission was standardization of competitions.

During the 20th Century, Irish dance has evolved in terms of locations, costumes, and dance technique. For example, during the period of the dance masters, stages were much smaller including table tops, half doors, and sometimes the “stage” was simply a crossroad. (An old poem called dancing “tripping the sod.”) Tests of dancing ability involved dancing on the top of a barrel or on a soaped table! As stages became larger, the dance changed in at least two ways. The movement of dancers across a stage increased greatly (a judge would now subtract points if a dancer did not “use the stage”), and dance steps that require substantial space became possible (e.g., “flying jumps”). The location of competitions also changed over time from barns or outdoors where flat bed trucks were (and still are) used as stages, to predominately indoors in hotels, schools, or fairgrounds. (Note that fairgrounds are particularly appropriate in a historical context of where ancient feisianna were located.)

Irish dance has evolved in other ways during the 20th Century. Instruction is beginning at a younger age. Who is instructed has also changed from mostly males to mostly females (the turning point was before 1930). Girls dancing solos in competition were rare before the 1920s. Dance styles have also changed; for example, arms and hands were not always held rigid during solo dances. Previously they were sometimes more relaxed and were even placed on hips. It seems that the influence of parish priests led to the lack of arm movement; some argue that stiff arms were less provocative, others argue that the Church was trying to increase dancers’ self control. Hand movements still occur in figure (group) dances.

The dance costume has changed greatly from traditional garb. In the 1800s, dance masters wore hats, swallowtail coats, knee breeches, white stockings, and black shoes with silver buckles probably similar to today’s hard shoes. (The expression “cover the buckle” seemed to mean crossing your feet so rapidly while dancing that the shine of the buckle covered the entire area.) After 1893 with the revival of Irish culture, the quest for a traditional Irish costume began. Pipers adopted the kilt which older male dancers later adopted in the 1910s and 1920s. Ironically, little evidence supports the argument that the kilt originated in Ireland; however, it is clearly Celtic. Today, male dancers wear either kilts or pants.

In the 1800s, it is likely that female dancers wore ordinary peasant dresses or perhaps their “Sunday best” and ribbons formed into flowers or crosses. After 1893, the typical dance costume consisted of a hooded cloak over a white dress with a sash. An alternative to the cloak was a shawl. By the 1930s the cloak was dropped and the shawl evolved into the current “shawl” worn on the back of costumes; this shawl linked to the traditional Irish “brath” which was rectangular and attached to the outfit by brooches or pins. Until the 1980s, a cord was often worn around the waist, dangling to the knees, ending with a tassel. Dancers also might wear a small coat or vest.

Colors were predominately green, white and saffron on early costumes; they avoided red because of the association with the English. However, due to the avail-
ability of local dyes in ancient Ireland, red likely was a traditional color. In recent time, all colors have come into use. Males’ costumes are more subdued. Embroidery was relatively minimal on costumes in the early 1900s. However, it has steadily increased in use and complexity. Designs were originally of traditional Irish origin, obtained from the Book of Kells, Irish stone crosses, and chalices. The interlocking and continuous lines in the pattern on the costume symbolize the continuity of life and mankind’s eternity. Designers are now introducing modern interpretations and patterns. Another relatively recent innovation is the use of silver and gold thread in the embroidery. Interestingly, there is a justification for this because women’s clothing in pre-Norman Ireland contained silver and gold thread embroidery.

Early descriptions of dancers sometimes note they were barefoot. Soft shoes were introduced around 1924 for girls dancing reels, jigs, and slip jigs. For a while, boys adopted their use also, but had dropped them by the 1970s. Hard shoes have also evolved in style and technology. Dancers have adopted fiberglass toe tips and hollow heels. This change in materials allows dancers’ “clicks” of their heels to become much louder, thus changing the emphasis and content of many dances. (Previously, nail heads were used and dancers inserted coins between sole and toe tip to increase loudness.) Bubble heels were invented around 1985 to augment clicking, but they are now prohibited at feisianna. (Feis rules also require “authentic Gaelic dress” but it is likely that neither current boys’ nor girls’ costumes would have been seen in Celtic Ireland.)

Emigration to the United States
This renewed emphasis on Irish dance would come in handy for many of the millions of Irish who immigrated to this country in the 19th century. As these Irish immigrants encountered discrimination in finding jobs (signs reading “No Irish Need Apply” were a common sight in some eastern cities), many resorted to careers in show business. On Broadway during the days of vaudeville, the interaction between African-American “boot dancers” and Irish “step dancers” created American tap dancing. In the early 1900’s, Irish show bands traveled the country and entertained their audiences with music and Irish dancers. With Irish dancing being presented as onstage entertainment for audiences, it began to move away from its roots in competitive contests. Vaudeville offered Irish dancers a new alternative to competition.

Ceilii (say “kay-lee”), or “figure dancing,” took root and flourished in Appalachia during the 1930’s, when the first off the great Irish dance masters came to American to teach. In the 1950’s, Irish dancing continued to make inroads as a performance medium, being featured on such popular TV programs as The Ed Sullivan Show. At the same time, however, Irish dancing began a slow return to its competitive roots with the proliferation of the feis. In 1969, the Irish Dance World Championships started in Dublin, and competitive Irish dancing continued to gain momentum.

As the students of the first generation of dance masters became established in American in the 1970’s, the first American Irish step dancing champions began to emerge, among them, Mark Howard, who would go on to form the Trinity Irish Dance Company and the change the art form forever.
Many people have been introduced to Irish dance through stage productions like Riverdance or Lord of the Dance, but are unaware that the demanding step dancing performance they are seeing is only one form of Irish dance. Irish dancing can be broadly separated into the performance dances and the social dances, the former including solo and set step dancing and the latter divided further into céilí (kay-lee) and set dancing.

**Performance Dances**

Central to the Irish dance tradition is the technique of “stepping,” which involves a concentration on foot movements close to the floor in which the tempo of the accompanying music is beaten out by the dancer. Each step is composed of a series of elements strung together to cover 8 bars of the music, with the entire piece consisting of 32 bars, and is performed first with the right foot and then the left (the foot performing the step at any given time is referred to as the “dancing foot”).

In Irish step dancing, the dancers hold the upper body very straight and the arms close to the sides. The emphasis is on the footwork, the speed of the quick changes of position, the height of the jumps, and the uniformity of the dancers. Dancers wear hard shoes (called jig shoes) when they wish to use their feet like an instrument to beat out the rhythms, and soft shoes (ghillies) for swift jumps and crossover steps.

The four types of Irish music and associated dances are the jig, reel, hornpipe, and the set dances. First, some basic music definitions are needed. The “time” of a tune is shown at the beginning of the music; for example, a jig is in 6/8 time. The second number is the basic unit for a beat (4 for quarter note, 8 for eighth note), and the first number is the number of beats per “measure” or “bar.” The “tempo” of the music determines the speed of the beat. In a fast tempo, beats occur rapidly. The hornpipe may have a slow or fast tempo. Beginning dancers at a feis may be asked whether they want the music to be slow or fast, often confusing them. (Richens Academy teaches a fast hornpipe to the advanced beginners. The steps are simple so they can dance them at a faster pace.) Metronomes measure tempos precisely; thus you can observe advanced dancers requesting their set dance in a particular tempo (e.g., Planxty Drury at 68). Slower tempos allow dancers to “pack” more movements into a particular dance. During the age of the dance masters, some would refuse to compete at a feis if the musician insisted on playing a tune at too fast of a tempo.

Just as costumes are evolving, dances are also evolving because of the development of new movements. Examples of recent innovations include the butterfly and toe stands. These developments are sometimes controversial because they conflict with maintaining the authentic or traditional aspect of step dancing. However, highly skilled dancers are always pushing the limits and innovating. Ghillies are worn when dancing the reel, slip jig, light jig, and single jig, which are thus known as “light shoe dances”; hard shoes are worn for the jig, hornpipe, treble reel, and solo set dances. The dances themselves are choreographed by the teachers and taught by imitation; there are identifiable and innovative movements used from year to year.
The Coimisiún’s (Irish dancing governing body) control has led to a uniformity of style among Irish step dancers worldwide, but to the loss of regional styles and regional step dances. This general format holds true whether the dance is accompanied by a jig, reel, or hornpipe. Three main regional styles of stepping are still discernible today among traditional dancers, and it is possible to identify a dance as being from the south (Munster), the west (Connacht), or the north (Ulster) of the country. There is no remaining evidence of a distinctly eastern style.

**The Munster Style**

The Munster style forms the basis of the style used by modern Irish dancing schools, though in a more developed form. It is also the origin of the stepping seen in *Riverdance* and other similar stage shows since the choreographers and dancers featured in these shows are the product of the modern dancing schools. This style has been formalized by An Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha. The southern tradition has a larger repertoire of forms and tempos than the other regions, and a skilled dancer in trained in this style is able to perform the hornpipe, the reel, and the jig, as well as the more intricate solo set dances.

The Munster style’s most readily identifiable feature is the basic position of the foot in performance. The dancer is poised on the ball of the foot with the heel being raised about two inches from the floor. The heel does not touch the floor except in the execution of certain movements; it is the mark of a band dancer in this style to allow the foot to step flat on the floor. The feet should be slightly pointed outwards.

**The Northern Style**

In Ulster, an integral part of the step-dancing tradition is the custom of two dancers performing opposite each other. Dancers of this style commonly dance a reel, and when dancing a hornpipe, will adjust the reel steps accordingly to suit the change in tempo. The jig has died out in the north as a popular solo dance measure, though it is used for many group dances and the sets native to the region.

The basic distinguishing element of the northern stepping technique is the use of a constant heel-toe balancing movement by the foot not engaged in performing the distinctive features of a particular step. It has been described as a persistent drumming action which provides both balance and a subtle percussive intricacy. An older tradition described as “clog-dancing” has persisted in many northern counties despite being condemned un-Irish by the Gaelic League. The northern tradition does not have any form of organized competition for traditional step dancers, and its performance only takes place as part of a social event or function. There are very few dancers left who can perform in this style, and even fewer young dancers picking up on its techniques.
The Sean-Nós Style of Connemara

Another distinctive regional style which has persisted into modern times has been dubbed the “sean-nós” (old-style) dancing in the Connemara Gaeltacht (Connamara is Connaught on the map, and Gaeltacht an Irish word for an Irish-speaking region and refers to any of the regions in Ireland where the Irish language is officially the major language, that is, the vernacular spoken at home). This area includes the Aran Islands off the coast of Galway and also a small but significant pocket in the Gaeltacht of Ráth Cairn, in County Meath, in the east of the country, which was settled by people from Connemara. In this style, the reel dominates the solo step dance, and is characterized by a more flat-footed position than found in the other styles. Another distinctive feature is a movement where the dancer uses the heel and the ball of the foot in a rapid rhythmical movement akin to movements seen in Spanish flamenco. Dancers performing in this tradition occasionally raise their arms to shoulder height or higher and swaying movements of the body to the left and right may also be used. All 19th century accounts of Irish dance indicate that vigorous arm movements were, at one time, an integral part of the male dance; arms were swung over the head and the fingers were clicked.

Solo Step Dancing

Jig

There are references to the jig in ancient Ireland. A number of variations of the jig are performed including the single (or soft), double, treble, and slip jig. The music is always in 6/8 time (the emphasis on beats in a jig is: ONE-two-three four-five-six). except for the slip jig which is in 9/8 time (ONE-two-three four-five-six seven-eight-nine).

The single jig is faster than the double jig with more aerial steps and is named for its single batter. Dancers perform single or soft jigs in soft shoes. The double jig is characterized by a distinctive “double batter” or shuffle which is the main step element in this dance. The phrase “rashers and sausages” is often used as a mnemonic for this rhythm. The dance is performed in place, though formerly, in some areas of Munster, solo jig dancers separated each step with a 16 bar promenade. The treble jig which has a slower tempo, but dancers triple beats in hard shoes.

The hop, or slip, jig is a similar solo step dance in 9/8 time and has a characteristic light and airy step. The slip jig (soft shoes) is the most graceful of Irish dances and features light hopping, sliding, skipping and pointing. Only women dance the slip jig. It is a fast dance with steps very similar to those of the single jig, but between steps the dancers travel around the floor using a characteristic slipping and hopping step.

When set dances or figure dances for several couples are danced to music in jig time, they are also called jigs.
**Reel**

The reel originated around 1750 in Scotland and the Irish dance masters brought it to full development. The music is in either 2/4 or 4/4 time and it is danced at a relatively fast tempo (ONE-two-three-four). Today, both males and females perform all reels, though historically some reels (the treble reel, for example) were performed only by males. For women, it is a light, rapid soft shoe dance that allows for plenty of leaping and demands an energetic performance from the dancer. Men often dance the reel in hard shoes.

The single reel, usually written in 2/4 time, is fast with simpler steps, and is used to teach beginning dancers. The double reel, usually just referred to as the reel, is slower to allow for more complex stepping. It is usually written in 4/4 time, though it has been said that in reality, it is more like 8/8 time. The solo reel usually consist of a step for 8 bars made up of various combinations of stepping elements followed by a promenade for 8 bars of simple traveling steps in a circle. This basic sequence is continued for any number of steps, usually up to 6. The Irish reel is distinguished by complex figurations and styling and may be either a solo or a set dance to reel music. Popular reels include the Irish Sixteenhand Reel.

All reels have the same structure, consisting largely of quaver movement with an accent on the first and third beats of the bar. A reel is distinguished from a hornpipe by consisting primarily of even beats. Most reels have two parts (A and B) each of which is repeated (AABB). Each part (either A or B) has eight bars, which again are divided into four and then into two. These are called phrases. The structure obeys to a scheme of question-answer where A is the “question” and B is the “answer” to A. The group of thirty-two bars (four times eight) is itself repeated three or four times before a second reel is introduced. The grouping of two tunes or more in this manner is typical in all dance tunes. Today many Irish reels are supplemented with new compositions and by tunes from other traditions which are easily adapted as reels. It is the most popular tune-type within the Irish dance music tradition.

**Hornpipe**

The hornpipe is a folk dance, and the main southern step dance. It began around 1760, evolving from English stage acts. It was originally danced exclusively by males in hard shoes, but now, both men and women dance it. It is reported that the ladies of Cork were the first to brazenly perform the hornpipe in the male style. The hornpipe is in 4/4 time, reminiscent of a slow reel with accents on the first and third beat (ONE-and-a two-and-a three-and-a four-and-a). A notable feature is the frequent use of a rocking motion with the ankles. As an Irish solo dance, it is slower than the other solo measures, allowing a greater complexity of steps. Hornpipes are sometimes danced with clogs, especially in parts of Northern Ireland.
**Solo Set Dance**

The use of the term set dance in this category of solo dance is often open to some misinterpretation since it also describes the group dances based on the old quadrilles (discussed below). In this context, it refers to specially composed step dances which the dancing masters “set” to specific tunes. These could be rhythmical adaptations of song melodies, popular songs of the day, existing jigs, slip jigs, or hornpipes, or specially extended versions of these. Both males and females dance sets in hard shoes. Dancers refer to the first part of these dances as “the step,” or “lead around,” and the second extended and more complex step configuration as “the set.” Some individual dances portray certain themes or tell stories. The actual jig, reel or hornpipe do not portray a theme or story, but they do have a certain style of them.

An example of a solo set dance is *Kilkenny Races*, during which the dancer portrays a horse and races. Others include *Jockey to the Fair, The Job of Journeywork, The Blackbird*, and *Piper Through the Meadow Strain*, the latter which tells the story of a gentleman who is in the fields playing his flute.

**Group Set Dance**

Another type of dance is the “group set dance.” They are danced in reel, hornpipe, or jig time and are derived from French quadrilles. These group dances differ from ceili dances in that they are less sophisticated.

**Social Dances**

**Set Dancing**

Set dances are folk dances of Ireland based on French quadrilles. In this context, set dance derives from the French “suite de quadrilles” which became “set of quadrilles” or simply, “set.” The quadrille was a lively dance with four couples arranged in the shape of a square, with each couple facing the center of that square. These dances were brought to Ireland in the 19th century by soldiers returning home from European wars and taught by the early dancing masters who modified and elaborated them, while adopting them to Irish traditional music.

Set dancing is a partner dance performed by couples arranged into formations (sets), and usually requires up to eight people to make up a set. Each set is divided into a collection of five or six “figures,” and there are, by some accounts, approximately 36 different set dances, and by others, as many as 100. The set dances include jigs, reels, hornpipes, and sometimes polkas, and are usually danced flat on the feet. They avoid the leaps and traveling movements characteristic of the céili dances and in various parts of set dancing you tap your feet to the time more than you would in céili dancing. Unlike the ceili dances, which have a nearly universal uniformity across the country, set dances retain and feature strong regional variations in the style of the dance. Because set dancing predated ceili dancing, set dancing has survived best in those parts of the country which have held most strongly onto their traditions.
Céili Dancing

Céili dancing is mostly comprised of line dances and circle dances, and are native to Ireland. The name “céili dance” was invented in the late 19th century by the Gaelic League to distinguish non-quadrille dances from the quadrille-based set dances, which were thought to be a foreign influence in Ireland. It had been decided that the sets and waltzes of foreign origin should be replaced by Irish dances, and the céili dances were considered more traditionally Irish by some. These Irish dances were invented by the dancing masters who had combined steps from the quadrilles with Irish stepping.

There is a distinction between the noun céili, and the adjective. A céili is a social gathering featuring Irish music and dance, whereas céili dancing is a specific type of Irish dance. Some céilidh (the plural of céili) will only have céili dancing, some will only have set dancing, and some will be a mixture of forms. Before discos and nightclubs, there were céilidh in most town and village halls, and they are still common today. Originally these events facilitated courting and prospects of marriage for young people, and they are still an important and popular social outlet in rural parts of Ireland and Scotland, especially in the Gaelic-speaking west coast regions. It is common for some clubs and institutions such as sports clubs, schools and universities and even employers to arrange céilidh on a regular or at least annual basis.

Céili dances tend to involve more people than in set dancing, and most may be performed with an unlimited number of couples. This form of dancing can take several characteristic formations including the circular round dance with couples proceeding around in a circle, the longways dance which features a double file line with men and women in straight lines facing each other, and the progressive longways dance, in which continuous interchange brings a new leading couple to the head of the set with each repetition of the pattern of figures. Céili dancing can be quite complicated, and in some cases is “called” such that the upcoming steps are announced during the dance for the benefit of newcomers. Most dances can be performed to any jig or reel, while others require a combination of jigs, reels, hornpipes, waltzes, polkas, etc.

Whereas the set dances show a great breadth of regional variation, the céili dances have been codified in the Ár Rinnicidhe Fóirne, a canon of acceptably Irish dances published as a series of dance handbooks by the Gaelic League.

They appear to have evolved with the help of the Irish dance masters, many from County Kerry. Nationalism, combined with the Handbook of Irish Dances published in 1902, led to standardization of ceili dances. Recording the descriptions of these dances occurred through the 1930s. For example, the Sweets of May and A Trip to the Cottage were discovered in South Armagh, being known only to a group of elderly men and women. Luckily, many ceili dances were recorded before being lost in history.
Set versus Ceili Dancing
While there seems to be a recurring need within Ireland to distinguish between ceili and set dancing, a reflection of the rifts in thought about what is truely Irish and what is not, the movements found in the ceili dances are very similar to those of the set dances. In fact, the movements are more similar than they are dissimilar. The difference between the two types of dance is more one of attitude than structure. When both are presented in a competitive atmosphere, the similarities are highlighted even more. It is almost impossible to arrive at a definition that separates the ceili and set dances. This is almost certainly because they both originated from the French Set of Quadrilles. The differences between the two reflects the greater input by the dancing masters into the ceili dances; those dances that were taught strictly by the dancing master became those that we refer to as the ceili dances, and those that were simply learned by observation or informal instruction in the houses were those that we refer to as the sets.
Footwear
Beginners’ Shoes
Beginners may often start with black ballet slippers (girls or boys) or black jazz shoes (boys). While they don’t shout “I’m an Irish dancer!” like ghillies may, these shoes are more inexpensive than regular Irish dancing shoes and are most appropriate for new and quickly-growing dancers.

Ghillies: Softshoes for Girls
Dancers wear soft shoes (ghillies) for swift jumps and crossover steps. Ghillies are of Scottish origin, and were adopted by Irish dancers for their “authentic” Gaelic feel. Lore says that the low-cut design was originally intended for Scottish boots while walking in bogs; the design allowed water to leave the shoe, instead of being caught in a boot and freezing the feet!

Only girls (or the occasional beginner boy, rare in America) wear ghillies. Usually the lace loops are squared off instead of rounded, and they are cut in a way that the sock is shown as far as comfort would allow, called a low-toe ghillie. For dancers, this design - especially with a white sock against the black shoe - helps to draw as much attention to the feet as possible. Many dancers tie the laces around their arch, though this can cause problems if they’re too tight. It is suggested to tie them and then tuck them into the shoe itself. Neatness is key, and a dancer does not want the laces flapping around.

The average ghillie will have a tanned leather bottom with one solid sole, though black suede soles are fast becoming as popular.

Anatomy of a Ghillie
Heel Loop: Leather loop at the heel, which helps keep the back of the shoe from slipping off.

Side Loops: Also help keep the shoe up. Can be leather or elastic.

Loops: It is generally accepted that these loops are for decoration. This design is believed to be Scottish in origin, and was most likely adopted for it’s Celtic look without being specifically Irish, much like the kilt. They are cut low into the foot to show up against the white sock of the dancer, showing off the footwork. It is believed that the Scots created this style of shoe for walking through marshes: other shoes would quickly be filled with marsh water, but this style allowed the water to flow back out.

Toe Loop: The nicest and neatest way of starting the lace looping at the toe.

Laces: Used to keep the shoe on. Some dancer replace these with thin elastic, which makes getting the shoe on and off faster.

Sole: Also made of leather, like the shoe. It is usually tan but can also be black. It may also be made of suede. It can come in single or split-sole.

Pleating: The easiest way to tuck in the amount of leather needed to create the shoe.
Reel Shoes: Softshoes for Boys
Reel shoes are boys’ softshoes, which look like jazz oxfords with a noisy, hard-shoe-like heel. Girls never wear these shoes. Beginners usually get a soft jazz-like shoe with a rubber heel, but dancers often quickly progress to the fiberglass heels. Some organizations discourage the use of reel shoes because boys and girls compete together.

Anatomy of a Reel Shoe
**Strap:** Keeps the shoe securely on your foot.

**Laces:** Tie the shoe to your foot.

**Heel Piece:** Made of fiberglass, makes noise. Screws hold them on to the shoe.

**Sole:** Leather or suede. Is flexible in varying degrees.
Hardshoes

Hardshoes, also called jig, heavy, or hornpipe shoes, are the second type of shoe. Dancers wear hard shoes when they wish to use their feet like and instrument to beat out the rhythms. Many people will ask you if they’re like clogging or tap shoes. Though they may make noise, they are most certainly not the same! Hardshoes have straps and laces like your usual leather dance shoes, but check out those “taps”! The tips and heels of hardshoes (not commonly referred to as taps) were made out of fiberglass or wood, and are now made out of various stronger composite materials.

Imagine a side view of this shoe. Starting at the heel, which is often around 1 inch (3 cm), your foot is flat. Then it will curve downwards, and then curve back up to the tips of your toes. The “valley” between these two curves will settle at about the ball of your foot.

Now imagine it straight on, staring at the toe; it is pretty even from your heel to the ball of your foot, but then pulls up a bit around your big toe. This is important, as it encourages turnout of the feet. In fact, until they get completely used to the shoes, many dances feel like they are walking around like a duck!

There are quite a few different types of buckles. Wearing buckles is up to the dancer; most dancers don’t wear them in competition, but they’re popular for shows. The basic shapes are rectangle and shamrock. They can come in gold or in silver, with black in the middle to blend in with hardshoes. Silver is the most popular color. For those that do not want black in the middle, there are buckles with colored middles, such as blue, red, or purple, and there are also rhinestone buckles in a variety of shapes. To attach the buckle to a hardshoe, the shoe is unlaced, and the lace is threaded through the back of the buckle. The shoes are then re-laced.

Anatomy of a Hardshoe

**Strap:** Keeps the shoe securely on your foot.

**Buckle:** Adds shine, an extra to draw attention to your feet.

**Laces:** Tie the shoe to your foot.

**Heel Piece:** Made of fiberglass, makes noise. Screws hold them on to the shoe.

**Sole:** Leather or suede. Is flexible in varying degrees.

**Toe Piece:** Made of fiberglass; primarily piece that is danced upon to make noise.
Dance Sneakers
Dance sneakers are becoming increasingly popular in Irish dancing. Some versions even combine a dance sneaker with hardshoe tips and heels.

Socks & Tights
The socks Irish dancers wear are often called poodle socks, and have a special weave of fibers and elastic so that they'll stay up easier. These are the type of socks you see on girls (pictured at right). The boys will get various colors and styles according to their school, what's available, and/or what their solo costume looks like. More often than not, the boys simply wear knee-high dress socks. To stop their socks from falling down while dancing, some dancers use a body glue, commonly referred to as “sock glue.”

Opaque black dance tights are often worn by older dancers in competition, and performing dancers.

Costumes
The costumes of today's dancers reflect the clothing of Ireland from the eighth century. The dresses worn by women are copies of the traditional Irish peasant dress and they are adorned with hand-embroidered Celtic designs based on the Book of Kells and Irish stone crosses. Copies of the famous Tara Brooch are worn on the shoulder holding the flowing shawl which falls down over the back (see the next section beginning on page 40 for detailed descriptions of Celtic Design).

Each school of dancing has its own distinct costumes and an expert can identify which school a dancer attends from simply examining the color and design. For group dances, all dancers wear the standard school costume. Adult female dancers wear a skirt and men wear a jacket and trousers. Male dancers at all levels have a choice of a kilt or trousers and a shirt. When a female dancer reaches a high standard of skill and displays perfection in competitions, she may wear a solo dress with her own unique choice of color and design. The solo dress is only worn during competitions, and is a sign that a dancer has achieved a high level of skill in Irish step dancing. Solo dance dresses are very expensive and are made by professional dressmakers who specialize in dancing costumes. Today there is a move for dancers to wear a simpler form of dress and return to the plain style of dress worn by peasants two hundred years ago.

The male's costume is less embellished but no less steeped in history - they wear a plain kilt or pants and jacket and a brat, a folded cloak hanging from the shoulder. Brat means “cloak” or “mantle” in Irish. The cloak or brat was a symbol of rebellion during the suppression since it enabled the rebels to endure the worst weather while holding out in the mountains. There is evidence that the kilt was worn as far back as the fifteenth century.

Female dancers also wear their hair in “feis curls.” The curly hair is accomplished either through a long curling process, or by wearing a wig.
The costuming of Irish dancers features intricate Celtic designs belonging to the Insular Art tradition. Many of the designs are drawn from specific works belonging to this artistic movement including the Book of Kells and the Irish High Crosses, while others feature traditional Celtic knotwork.

**Insular Art**

Insular art, also known as the Hiberno-Saxon style, is the style of art produced in the post-Roman history of the British Isles, and the term is also used in relation to the script used at the time. The period in which they were produced is also called the Insular period in art. The term derives from *insula*, the Latin term for “island”; in this period Britain and Ireland shared a largely common style different to that of the rest of Europe. Arts historians usually group insular art as part of the Migration Period art movement.

Most insular art originates from the Irish monasticism of the Celtic church, or metalwork for the secular elite, and the period begins around 600 AD, merging in England into Anglo-Saxon art around 900, while in Ireland the style continues until about 1200, when it merges into Romanesque art. Ireland, Scotland and the kingdom of Northumbria in Northern England are the most important centers, but examples were produced in Southern England and in Continental Europe, especially Gaul (modern France), in centres founded by the Celtic missionaries. The influence of Insular art affected all subsequent European medieval art, especially in the decorative elements of Romanesque and Gothic manuscripts.

Surviving examples of Insular art are mainly illuminated manuscripts, metalwork and carvings in stone, especially stone crosses. Surfaces are highly decorated with intricate patterning, with no attempt to give an impression of depth, volume or recession. The best examples include the Book of Kells, Lindisfarne Gospels, Book of Durrow, brooches such as the Tara Brooch and the Ruthwell Cross. Carpet pages are a characteristic feature of Insular manuscripts, although historiated initials (an Insular invention), canon tables and figurative miniatures, especially Evangelist portraits, are also common. Carpet pages are an early Medieval form of illuminated manuscript ornamentation that typically comes at the beginning of each of the four Gospels in the New Testament, especially in books in the Insular style. Carpet pages are wholly devoted to ornamentation with brilliant colors, active lines, and complex patterns.

**The Book of Kells**

The *Book of Kells* is an ornately illustrated manuscript, produced by Celtic monks around AD 800 in the style known as Insular art. An illuminated manuscript is a manuscript in which the text is supplemented by the addition of decoration, such as decorated initials, borders and miniature illustrations.

*The Book of Kells* It is one of the more lavishly illuminated manuscripts to survive from the Middle Ages and has been described as the zenith of Western calligraphy and illumination. It contains the four gospels of the Bible in Latin, along with prefatory and explanatory matter decorated with numerous colourful illustrations and illuminations. Today it is on permanent display at the Trinity College Library in Dublin, Ireland.
Irish High Crosses

Large stone Celtic crosses, usually erected outside monasteries or churches, first appeared in the 7th century in Ireland, and were later seen in Scotland and Wales. A High Cross is a standing cross with a circle, made of stone and often richly ornamented; they belong to the Insular Art style. The ring initially served to strengthen the head and the arms of the High Cross, but it soon became a decorative feature as well.

The High Crosses were status symbols, either for a monastery or for a sponsor or patron. For example, by some accounts, the Celtic Cross is a symbol of the unity of the people under one religion by St. Patrick. To assist the transition from paganism to Christianity, St. Patrick is rumored to draw a circle representing the pagan god of the Moon around the Christian cross. This symbolizes unity among the people.

The early 8th century crosses had only geometric motifs, but from the 9th and 10th century, biblical scenes were carved on the crosses. There are no crosses from after the 12th century.

Celtic Knots

Celtic knots are a variety of (mostly endless) knots and stylized graphical representations of knots used for decoration, adopted by the ancient Celts. Though Celtic knots were being created in pre-Christian times, these knots are most known for their use in the ornamentation of Christian monuments and manuscripts like the 8th century Book of Kells.

Not much history of the knots is available before the beginning of the Christian influence on the Celts in about A.D. 450. There is much evidence for the use of geometric patterns as ornamentation particularly in jewelry before that time. Some historians have theorized that early Celtic religion prevented their depicting creatures realistically, similar, then, to the Islamic prohibition, which gave rise to the development of Islamic calligraphy. That as opposed to Chinese and Japanese calligraphy, which seemed to arise simply from an aesthetic sense and needed no such prohibition to encourage its development.

The same pre-Christian designs found their way into early Christian manuscripts and artwork with the addition of depictions from life, such as animals, plants and even humans. In the beginning the patterns were intricately interwoven cords, called plaits, which can also be found in other areas of Europe, like Italy in 6th century. A fragment of a Gospel Book, now in the Durham Cathedral library and created in northern Britain in the 7th century, contains the earliest example of true knotted designs in the Celtic manner.

Examples of plaitwork (a woven, unbroken cord design) predate knotwork designs in several cultures around the world, but the broken and reconnected plaitwork that is characteristic of true knotwork began in Northern Italy and Southern Gaul and spread to Ireland by the 7th century. The style is most commonly associated with the Celtic lands but it was also practiced extensively in England and was exported to Europe by Irish and Northumbrian monastic activities on the continent. In modern times Celtic Art is popularly thought of in terms of national identity and therefore specifically Irish, Scottish or Welsh. To properly understand the true histo-
ry of the style it is necessary to rein in patriotic passions and accept that Insular Art was an international style for several centuries after it first emerged.

**Tara Brooch**
The Tara Brooch is considered one of the most important extant artifacts of early Christian-era Irish Celtic art, and is housed and displayed in the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin.

Made in about 700 AD, the seven-inch long brooch is composed primarily of white brass and is embellished with intricate abstract decoration (termed “Celtic knot-work”) both front and back. The beads contain images of over 20 wolves’ heads and dragons’ faces.

The design, the techniques of workmanship (including filigree and inlaying) and the gold, silver, copper, amber and glass are all of high quality, and exemplify the advanced state of goldsmithing in Ireland in the seventh century. The brooch is made in the pseudo-penannular style, meaning it wasn’t meant to be a brooch to hold clothing, but to be decorative. It contains no Christian motifs, making it pagan, but it also contains no pagan religious symbols - whoever had it made was a wealthy patron who wanted a personal expression of power.

Although the brooch is named after the Hill of Tara, seat of the mythological High Kings of Ireland, the Tara Brooch in fact has no known connection to either the Hill of Tara or the High Kings of Ireland, and was discovered in County Meath in Laytown along the seashore. It was sold to an antiques dealer who saw its value and who renamed it the “Tara Brooch” to make it more appealing.
Irish Instruments

There are a number of instruments traditionally used in Irish music to accompany Irish dancing including the accordion, guitar, fiddle, and flute. Below is list of lesser known Irish instruments.

**Bodhran**

The bodhran, (pronounced “bow-ron”) comes from the Irish verb bodhr, to deafen, and means literally “the deafener.” The bodhran is a round drum of the frame drum family, with wooden frame and an animal skin head. The skin is usually goat but other skins can be used, such as deer, calf and dog. The frame drum can be found in many ancient cultures, from the Persians to the Native Americans, and it is widely found in the Middle East and Africa. These drums were believed to have spiritual properties, and were used extensively by shaman, medicine men, and witch-doctors in tribal cultures.

The frame drum is played in many ways, mostly by hand or with a single headed stick. In Irish music, the use of the double-headed stick, called a tipper, is most prevalent. This technique, which involves striking the drum in an up-and-down fashion, enables the player to provide a very fast, highly ornamented, and continuous rhythm which is particularly suitable to Irish traditional music and dance. One of the benefits of playing the drum in this manner is that it allows the musician to play rolls with one hand, as both ends of the stick are used in the playing technique, so that fairly complex rhythms can be provided. Another benefit is that the other hand can be used to mute the skin and change the tone and pitch of the drum, allowing a wide variety of sounds to be produced.

**Lambeg**

The lambeg is a descendent of the European military drum. There are different theories as to how this drum came to Norther Ireland: in one, the drum arrived with the Scottish planters in the early 1600’s, and in another, it came with the armies of William of Orange in the late 1600’s.

The drum is approximately three feet in diameter, and about two feet wide. It is constructed of very fine goatskin on each side in order to get as identical a sound from each head. (Only female goatskins are used as it is thought that only these skins are fine enough and unblemished enough to give the best sound). The skins are attached to hoops, called flesh hoops, and these fit over the shell or barrel of the drum. Two outer hoops are then fitted on top of the flesh hoops and are roped tightly together across the drum to provide tension. Due to the size and tension these drums require, it takes at least two men to tighten them and up to two weeks to get the drum ready for competition.
The drum is carried like a bass drum in a marching band. Indeed, the lambeg started off as a bass drum until, around 1896, someone employed canes to play the drum and to produce the unique sound it offers. It is thought that these canes were imported to Northern Ireland to be used by jockeys. When played with canes, the drum can be tuned very high in pitch and the sound will become extremely loud. Given this volume, the drum is designed to be played outdoors and can be heard over cast distances. One account claims that a lambeg was heard about six miles away without amplification!

Due to the history and political situation in Northern Ireland, the lambeg drum has become closely associated with the Protestant/Unionist community, while the bodhran has become associated with the Catholic/Nationalist community. This segregation is not complete as nationalists have used the lambeg and Protestants do play and make bodhrans, so there is a degree of blurring; still, the drums are perceived as belonging to one community or the other, and have rarely been played to the same beat at the same time.

The Uilleann or elbow pipes

_Uilleann pipes_ (ill-in) are the characteristic national bagpipe of Ireland. The uilleann pipes bag is inflated by means of a small set of bellows strapped around the waist and the right arm. The bellows not only relieve the player from the effort needed to blow into a bag to maintain pressure, they also allow relatively dry air to power the reeds, reducing the adverse affects of moisture on tuning and longevity.

The Uilleann pipes are distinguished from many other forms of bagpipes by their sweet tone and wide range of notes. They have a different harmonic structure, and are quieter than many other bagpipes; they are usually played indoors, and are almost always played sitting down.

Scottish Small Pipes

The Scottish smallpipe is a bellows-blown bagpipe developed from the Northumbrian smallpipes by Colin Ross and others, to be playable according to the Great Highland Bagpipe fingering system. It is perhaps the youngest bagpipe with any popularity, having only existed in its modern form since the early 1980s.

Highland Bagpipes

The Great Highland Bagpipe is probably the best-known variety of bagpipe. Abbreviated GHB, and commonly referred to simply as “the pipes”, they have historically taken numerous forms in both Ireland and Scotland. The Great Highland Bagpipe is classified as a woodwind instrument, like the bassoon, oboe or clarinet, although its design is decidedly different from any other instrument. Although it is classified as a double-reed instrument, the reeds are all closed inside the wooden stocks, instead of being played directly by mouth as other woodwinds are. The GHB actually has four reeds; the chanter reed, two tenor drone reeds, and one bass drone reed.
The GHB is widely used by both soloists and pipe bands (civilian and military), and is now played in countries around the world, particularly those with large Scottish and Irish emigrant populations, namely Canada, United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. It has also been adopted by many countries that were formerly part of the British Empire, such as India (where it replaced the local bagpipes, called moshak and shruti), Pakistan, Nepal (famous for their Gurka soldiers), Arabic countries such as Egypt and Oman, and Uganda (where Idi Amin forbade the export of African Blackwood, so as to encourage local bagpipe construction, during the 1970s).

**Tin Whistle**
The tin whistle, also called the tinwhistle, whistle, pennywhistle, or Irish whistle, is a simple six-holed woodwind instrument. The Irish words for the instrument are *feadóg* ("whistle" or "flute") or *feadóg stáin* ("tin whistle"); *feadóg stáin* is the plural. It can be described as an end blown fipple flute, putting it in the same category as the *flageolet*, recorder, Native American flute, and many other woodwind instruments found in traditional music.

Traditional music from Ireland and Scotland is by far the most common music to play on the tin whistle, and comprises the vast majority of published scores suitable for whistle players. Musicians who play Irish and Scottish music on the tin whistle perform both solo and as members of bands. While the tin whistle is very common in Irish music to the point that it could be called characteristic of the genre and fairly common in Scottish music, it is not a “required” instrument in either one.

**Irish Flute**
The Irish flute is a colloquial name for a wooden flute used in the playing of Irish traditional music. Some musicians consider the term “Irish flute” to be a misnomer, as the instrument is just a development of the older, simple system flutes, and is used in a wide variety of music, including Scottish music, Breton music, and others.

Irish flutes were originally old English simple system flutes that were discarded by concert musicians during the advent of the modern, Boehm system, Western concert flute in the late 1800s. These “obsolete” flutes were picked up at low cost by Irish traditional musicians. Today, Irish flutes are being made expressly for the playing of Irish traditional music by many makers. These modern Irish flutes often have few, if any keys, which is one difference between them and their predecessors, which had anywhere from 5-10 keys in addition to the standard six open holes.

There are two main styles of Irish flute, the Pratten and the Rudall & Rose. The Pratten has wider bore dimensions and provides a louder sound, while the Rudall & Rose has a darker, pure tone and is slightly thinner than the Pratten style flute. Some flutes have an extra two holes on the end, which are meant to stabilize the tone and are not meant to be played.
Competition - “Feile”

An organized step dance competition is referred to as a *feis* (plural *feiseanna*), which means “festival” in Irish. Traditionally, feseanna feature competitions in music and crafts in addition to dance; the word *féile* is a more correct term for the dance competition, but the two terms may be used interchangeably. *Féile* tends to now refer to a dance competition that also includes some cultural aspect, whether music, baking, or craft.

In March 1931 the Irish Dancing Commission (An Coimisiún le Rinci Gaelacha) was established under the auspices of the Gaelic League to administer stepdance competitions, training, and standards. Qualifying examinations for teachers and judges were developed. Three booklets produced in 1939, 1943, and 1969 remain the key textbooks for all Irish step-dance teachers and judges.

An independent group, the Organization for Irish Dance (An Comhghail la Rinci Gaelacha), emerged in 1969. Both organizations now have their own registered teachers and judges and hold competitions exclusively for their own members. Today registered schools of Irish step dance exist not only in Ireland but also in England, Scotland, Wales, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Progressive competitions are held at local, regional, national, and international levels. They are divided by dance type, age group, and standard. The principal types are the reel, jig, and hornpipe.

Dance competitions are divided by age and level of expertise. The levels of Irish Dance competitions have two distinct sections- non-championships and championships. In non-championship levels, each dance acts as a separate part and moves up at its own pace. Non-championship levels begin with the level Beginner 1- for the beginner dancer. This only contains soft shoe dances. Then, there is Beginner 2, where the hard shoe dances start. Beyond that, there is Novice, then Prizewinner. A dancer does not move out of Prizewinner until all the dances are placed in a certain range to move on to championships. This range is decided by the dancer’s school.

Championships is much different. There are two levels- Preliminary Championships and Open Championships. In any level of championships, a dancer dances two or three rounds- a soft shoe round (for girls reel or slip jig, boys reel), a hard shoe round (treble jig or hornpipe), and occasionally a non-traditional set dance (this varies between competitions). A dancer will remain in Preliminary Championships until he or she has placed 1st twice in the same year, then will move on to Open Championships. This is the highest level for Irish Dance competitions.

An annual regional Championship competition is known as an *oireachtas* (plural *oireachtasai*) which literally means “gathering” in Irish. In North America, Oireachtasai are qualifying events for the World Irish Dance Championship competition (Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne). Each dancer must compete in the Oireachtas of his or her geographical region. There are seven competition regions in North America: New England, Eastern (Mid-Atlantic), Mid-America (Midwest), Southern, Western United States, Eastern Canada, and Western Canada. These regions are overseen by the Irish Dance Teachers’ Association of North America (IDTANA), which is under the auspices of An Coimisiún le Rinci Gaelacha (CLRG), the international Irish dance commission. Each region has its own officers, who contribute...
to organizing the Oireachtas. Usually each region’s Oireachtas moves annually to different cities around the region, and area schools will serve as “hosts.” Teachers and parent volunteers from host schools will typically set up and tear down stages, register dancers and man the stages, run the tabulation and results rooms, and do other various tasks to keep the competition running smoothly. Depending on the size of the region, Oireachtas events may last one to four days. The competitions are usually held in November or December, and qualify dancers for the Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne of the following year (usually held during Holy Week).

Dancers competing at the Oireachtas in solo events generally must achieve a certain level of competency to be eligible for the competition, but nowhere is a measure of competency for the Oireachtas made explicit. Rather, the decision of a dancer’s readiness for the Oireachtas is necessarily made by the dancer’s instructor (a TCRG), who conducts all registration for the competition.

The solo competitions at the Oireachtas are divided by sex and age. While the youngest age group is U8 (that is, the child was under the age of 8 on January 1 of the calendar year), dancers cannot qualify for the World Championship until they reach the U10 age group. In many of the girls’ divisions, age groups are further split into “A” and “B” groups. This split is at the discretion of the chairpersons, and is generally done by birthday.

There are three rounds in the Oireachtas solo competitions. There is a light shoe round, a hard shoe round, and a callback round. The order of the light shoe and hard shoe rounds are variable, depending on the competition. For the light shoe round, boys invariably dance 48-bars of a reel, but girls’ competitions may require either a reel or a slip jig. In the case of a slip jig, only 40 bars are danced. The requirement of reel or slip-jig depends on the age group; usually it alternates each year. The possible dances for the hard shoe round for both girls’ and boys’ competitions are treble jig and hornpipe. Once again, the required hard shoe dance for each year is determined by age group. For girls, reel and hornpipe generally coincide in any given year, and hence slip jig and treble jig coincide. For treble jig, the dancer is required to perform 48 bars; for hornpipe, the standard is 40 bars. Rounds for most age groups are performed two dancers at a time, but now it is customary for younger age groups to dance three at a time in the larger regions. Each round has a panel of three judges (ADCRGs). The panels rotate between rounds, so each competitor receiving a recall is scored by a total of nine adjudicators. After all the dancers in the competition have performed their first two rounds, the scores are tabulated. Approximately half the competition will receive a “recall” to dance their third round. The third round is a non-traditional set dance (for dancers in U8 and U9 a traditional set is required in lieu of a non-traditional set). The set dances are performed one at a time.

After all three rounds are completed, the scores are tabulated. Usually the results are announced in a big ceremony at the end of the day’s events. Qualification for the World Championships is decided as follows: The top three dancers from each competition qualify for the World Championships, and one for every 10 competitors who danced in the competition. In addition, any World or Nationals medal holder is automatically qualified for the World Championships, so the age group receives one additional qualifying spot for every medal holder.
While the majority of the competitions in the Oireachtas are solo events, schools can also bring teams to compete in eight-hand dance, four-hand dance, figure choreography, and dance drama competitions. Competition at the Oireachtas is sufficient to qualify the team to compete at the World Championships.

Dancers from each age group may qualify for the World Championships. Qualifying for the World Championships, Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne, (roughly translated to Irish Dance Championship of the World) varies slightly due to the competition or region. In the United States, dancers may qualify at either a Regional Oireactha, or the North American Championships, which includes the U.S., Canada and Mexico. The World Championships have in years past have only been held in Ireland, Northern Ireland, or Scotland. However, in 2009 it is planned that for the first time they will be held in the United States, in Philadelphia.
Ireland
Irish Civil War

Ireland is the third largest island in Europe. Politically, it is separated into The Republic of Ireland (also know simply as Ireland, the Republic, the South, or more derogatorily, Southern Ireland or the Free State), a sovereign state with its capital in Dublin, and Northern Ireland (also known as Ulster, or the Six Counties, a reference to the six counties of Ulster—the northernmost province of the island of Ireland—which make up Northern Ireland) which is a part of the United Kingdom.

The Act of Union 1800
The Act of Union 1800 merged the Kingdom of Ireland and the Kingdom of Great Britain (itself a merger of the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland under the Act of Union 1707) to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland on 1 January 1801. Prior to this act Ireland had been in personal union with England since 1541, when the Protestant Ascendancy dominating Irish Parliament passed the Crown of Ireland Act 1542, proclaiming King Henry VIII of England to be King of Ireland. Both Ireland and England had been in personal union with Scotland since the Union of the Crowns in 1603.

Separatism and the Anglo-Irish War
From Union in 1801 until 6 December 1922 the whole of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1914, the UK Parliament enacted a Third Irish Home Rule Bill but suspended its effect until after what was confidently expected to be a brief Great War (WW1).

During the Easter Rising in Dublin, Ireland in 1916 some republican leaders contemplated giving the throne of an independent Ireland to Prince Joachim of Prussia last son of the German Kaiser. The Easter Rising (Irish: ‘Éirí Amach na Cásca’) was a rebellion staged in Ireland in Easter Week, 1916. The rising was an attempt by militant Irish republicans to win independence from Britain by force of arms. It was the most significant uprising in Ireland since the rebellion of 1798. The Rising, which was largely organised by the Irish Republican Brotherhood, lasted from Easter Monday April 24 to April 30, 1916. Members of the Irish Volunteers, led by school teacher and barrister Patrick Pearse, joined by the smaller Irish Citizen Army of James Connolly, seized key locations in Dublin and proclaimed an Irish Republic independent of Britain. The Rising was suppressed after six days of fighting, and its leaders were court-martialled and executed. Despite its military failure, it can be judged as being a significant stepping-stone in the eventual creation of the Irish Republic.

In the late 1910s, after the execution of the leaders of the Easter Rising by the British government, and the perceived failure of the moderate home rule movement, militant nationalists in the form of the Sinn Féin party and its paramilitary wing, the Irish Volunteers, began to win popular support. In the 1918 general election Sinn Féin won the vast majority of seats, many of which were uncontested. Sinn Féin’s elected candidates refused to attend the UK Parliament at Westminster and instead assembled in Dublin as a new revolutionary parliament called “Dáil Éireann”. They declared the existence of a new state called the “Irish Republic” and established a system of government to rival the institutions of the United Kingdom.
The first meeting of the Dáil coincided with an unauthorized shooting of two RIC men in Tipperary, now regarded as the outbreak of the Anglo-Irish War. From 1919 to 1921 the Irish Volunteers (now renamed as the Irish Republican Army, being deemed by the Dáil to be the army of the new Irish Republic) engaged in guerrilla warfare against the British army and paramilitary police unit known as the Black and Tans and Auxiliaries. Both sides engaged in brutal acts; the Black and Tans deliberately burned entire towns and tortured civilians.

The IRA attacked Loyalists who collaborated with the Crown forces, as well as burning historic homes in retaliation for the torching of homes of suspected IRA members. (A few historians describe this as “ethnic cleansing of Protestant communities,” but most challenge the validity of that interpretation, as the IRA sought to publicly humiliate, exile or kill anyone who collaborated with the British, regardless of their religion. Nevertheless, between 1911 and 1926, the Free State lost 34 percent of its Protestant population.)

While there were many reasons for this, secession from the United Kingdom was a factor in Protestant emigration. Northern Ireland was created by the Government of Ireland Act, 1920. This was one part of an attempt to satisfy nationalists by establishing in Ireland two semi-autonomous states: Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland, both of which were to remain part of the United Kingdom. However, while Northern Ireland became a political reality, the political institutions of Southern Ireland were boycotted by nationalists and so never became fully functional. Eventually a cease-fire was called and negotiations between the antagonists began.

Discussions between the British and Irish sides produced the Anglo-Irish Treaty, concluded in December 1921. The treaty created a new system of Irish self government, known as “dominion status”, with a new state, to be called the Irish Free State. The new Free State was in theory to cover the entire island, subject to the proviso that Northern Ireland could opt out and choose to remain part of the United Kingdom. However, while Northern Ireland became a political reality, the political institutions of Southern Ireland were boycotted by nationalists and so never became fully functional. Eventually a cease-fire was called and negotiations between the antagonists began.

The Dáil narrowly passed the Anglo-Irish Treaty in December 1921. Under the leadership of Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith it set about establishing the Irish Free State, a national, fully re-organised army from the irregular IRA and a new police force, the Civic Guard (soon renamed the Garda Síochána) which replaced one of Ireland’s two police forces, the Royal Irish Constabulary. The second, the Dublin Metropolitan Police merged some years later with the Garda.

However a minority led by Eamon de Valera opposed the treaty, on the grounds that it did not create a fully independent state, or a republic, that it imposed an oath of fidelity to the British monarch on Irish parliamentarians and that it provided for the partition of the island. De Valera led his supporters out of the Dáil and a bloody civil war, between pro- and anti-treaty sides, followed; only coming to an end in 1923. The civil war cost more lives than the Anglo-Irish War that preceded it and left divisions that are still felt in Irish politics today.
The Irish Free State from 1922 to the Present

The Irish Free State (Irish: Saorstát Éireann) (1922–1937) was the name of the state comprising the 26 of Ireland’s 32 counties that were separated from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland under the Irish Free State Agreement (or Anglo-Irish Treaty) signed by British and Irish Republic representatives in London on December 6, 1921. The Irish Free State came into being on December 6, 1922, replacing two co-existing but nominally rival states: the de jure Southern Ireland, which had been created by the Government of Ireland Act 1920 and which from January 1922 had been governed by a Provisional Government under Michael Collins; and the de facto Irish Republic under the President of Dáil Éireann, Arthur Griffith, which had been created by Dáil Éireann in 1919. (In August 1922, both states in effect merged with the deaths of their leaders; both posts came to be held simultaneously by W.T. Cosgrave.)

After Collins’ assassination in August 1922 and Griffith’s natural death shortly before, W.T. Cosgrave assumed control of both the Irish Republic’s cabinet and the Provisional Government and both administrations disappeared simultaneously shortly afterwards, replaced by the institutions of the Irish Free State on 6 December 1922. The Free State was a constitutional monarchy over which the British monarch reigned (from 1927 with the title “King of Ireland”). The Representative of the Crown was known as the Governor-General. The Free State had a bicameral parliament and a cabinet, called the “Executive Council” answerable to the lower house of parliament, the Free State Dáil. The head of government was called the President of the Executive Council.

In 1937, Eamon de Valera replaced the 1922 constitution of Michael Collins with his own, renamed the Irish Free State to Éire, and created a new “president of Ireland” in place of the Governor-General of the Irish Free State. His constitution, reflecting the 1930s preoccupation with faith and fatherland, claimed jurisdiction over all of Ireland while recognising the reality of the British presence in the northeast. It also provided for a special position for the Roman Catholic Church, while also recognising the existence and rights of other faiths, specifically the minority Anglican Church of Ireland and the Jewish Congregation in Ireland. (This article was repealed in 1972, and Articles 2 and 3 were reworded in 1999.)

It was left to the initiative of de Valera’s successors in government (1948). John A. Costello of the (pro-treaty) Fine Gael party to achieve the country’s formal transformation into the Republic of Ireland. A small but significant minority of Irish people, usually attached to parties like Sinn Féin and the smaller Republican Sinn Féin, denied the right of the twenty-six county state to use the name “republic,” referring to the twenty-six county state as the “Free State,” its citizens “Free Staters” and its government the “Free State” or “Dublin” Government. Though with Sinn Féin’s entry in the Republic’s Dáil (where they won five seats out of 166 in the 2002 general election) and the Northern Ireland Executive (where they had two ministries), the odds are that the number of those who refuse to accept the legitimacy of the Irish Free State/Éire/Republic of Ireland, which is already very small, will decline further.
Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland was created as a political entity in 1921. Once the bedrock of Irish resistance to the advance of the English state in Ireland, the Plantation of Ulster by Scottish and English colonists resulted in it following a different economic, religious and cultural trajectory to the rest of the island.

Northern Ireland was formed from six of the nine counties of Ulster and, together with Great Britain, forms the present United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This came about through the Government of Ireland Act, 1920 that also granted Home Rule to the rest of Ireland as Southern Ireland. In 1922, the rest of Ireland became independent and became known as the Irish Free State.

Northern Ireland today remains a divided society with a legacy of civil conflict, at times made obvious through territorial markings such as painted kerbstones and the flying of the Irish or British national flags.

Early 20th century

From the late 19th century, the majority of people living on the Island of Ireland wanted the British government to give some sort of self-rule to Ireland. The Irish Nationalist Party regularly held the balance of power in the British House of Commons in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a position from which it sought to gain Home Rule, which would have given Ireland autonomy in internal affairs, without breaking up the United Kingdom. Two bills granting home rule to Ireland were passed by the Commons in the 1886 and 1893, but rejected by the House of Lords. With the passing of the Parliament Act by the Liberal Party government in 1911 (which reduced the powers of the Lords from striking down Parliamentary Bills to delaying their implementation for two years) it was apparent that home rule would probably come into force in the next five years. The Home Rule Party had been campaigning for this for almost fifty years.

However, a significant minority were vehemently opposed to the idea and wished to retain the Union in its existing form. Irish Unionists had been agitating successfully against Home Rule since the 1880s, and on September 28, 1912, the leader of the northern unionists, James Craig, introduced the Ulster Covenant in Belfast, pledging to exclude Ulster from home rule. The Ulster Covenant was signed by 450,000 men, some in their own blood. Whilst precipitating a split with the Unionist community in the south and west (including a particularly sizable community in Dublin), it gave the northern Unionists a feasible goal to aim for.

By the early 20th Century, Belfast (the largest city in Ulster) had become the largest city in Ireland. Its industrial economy, with strong engineering and shipbuilding sectors, was closely integrated with that of Britain. Belfast was a substantially Protestant town with a Catholic minority of less than 30%, concentrated in the west of the city.
A third Home Rule Bill was introduced by the Liberal minority government in 1912. However, the Conservative Party was sympathetic to the Unionist case, and the political voice of Unionism was strong in Parliament. After heavy amendment by the House of Lords, the Commons agreed in 1914 to allow four counties of Ulster to vote themselves out of its provisions and then only for six years. Throughout 1913 and 1914, paramilitary “volunteer armies” were recruited and armed, firstly the unionist Ulster Volunteer Force, and in response, the nationalist Irish Volunteers. But events in Europe were to take precedence: in what was to be the opening shot of World War I, Gavrilo Princip assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in Sarajevo. Home rule was delayed for the duration of what was expected to be a short war and unionist and nationalist leaders agreed to encourage their volunteers to join the British army.

During the war, tensions continued to mount in Ireland. A small group of Nationalists, led by Thomas Clarke and James Connolly and others attempted a rebellion in Dublin. After summary trials, the British government had the leaders executed for treason. The government blamed the small Sinn Féin party, which had had little to do with it. The execution of the leaders of the rebellion turned out to be a propaganda coup of militant Republicanism, and Sinn Féin’s previously negligible popular support grew. The surviving leaders of the Irish Volunteers infiltrated the party and assumed leadership in 1917 (The Irish Volunteers themselves would later become the Irish Republican Army in 1919).

Republicans gained further support when the British government attempted to introduce conscription to Ireland in 1918. Sinn Féin was at the forefront of organising the campaign against conscription.

When the veterans of World War One, on both sides of the political divide, returned from the front in 1918 and 1919, they came back as battle-hardened soldiers rather than rag-tag yeomanry they had emerged from at the start of the War. In the general election of 1918, The Irish Parliamentary Party lost almost all of its seats to Sinn Féin. Unionists won 23 of 30 seats in the future Northern Ireland, and five of the six IPP members returned in Ireland were elected in Ulster as a result of local voting pacts with Sinn Féin.

Guerrilla warfare raged across Ireland in the aftermath of the election. Although lower in intensity in the north than in the south, it was complicated by involving not only the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the British Army but the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) as well. The Irish Nationalist Party retained much more support in the north than in the rest of Ireland.

The fourth and final Home Rule Bill (the Government of Ireland Act 1920) partitioned the island into Northern Ireland (six northeastern counties) and “Southern Ireland” (the remaining twenty six) (the partition of Ireland having been governed by the religious majorities within the each northern counties of Ulster - a process which itself caused great controversy and acrimony. For example, Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan, having greater Catholic populations, were to be placed under the control of the Irish Free State). Some Unionists such as Sir Edward Carson opposed partition bitterly, seeing it as a betrayal of Unionism as a pan-Irish political entity.
Northern Ireland received self-government within the United Kingdom, with London generally leaving the province to its own devices. The first years of the new state were marked by bitter violence, particularly in Belfast. The IRA was determined to oppose the partition of Ireland and the Unionist authorities created the (mainly ex-UVF) Ulster Special Constabulary to aid the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and introduced draconian emergency powers to put down the IRA. Many died, mainly Catholics, in political violence, which gradually petered out after the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1922 and through 1923.

The continuing violence created a climate of “pogrom” in the new region, and there was migration across the new border. As well as movement of Protestants from the Free State into Northern Ireland, some Catholics fled south, leaving some of those who remained feeling isolated. Despite the mixed religious affiliation of the old Royal Irish Constabulary and the transfer of many Catholic RIC police officers to the newly formed (RUC), northern Catholics did not join the new force in great numbers. Many nationalists then came to view the new police force as sectarian, adding to their sense of alienation from the state.

1925 to 1965
Under successive Unionist Prime Ministers from Sir James Craig (later Lord Craigavon) onwards, the unionist establishment practiced what is generally considered a policy of discrimination against the nationalist/Catholic minority.

A pattern of discrimination has most firmly and inarguably been established in the case of local government, where gerrymandered ward boundaries rigged local government elections to ensure unionist control of local councils with nationalist majorities. In a number of cases, most prominently those of the Corporation of Londonderry, Omagh Urban District, and Fermanagh County Council, ward boundaries were drawn to place as many Catholics as possible into wards with overwhelming nationalist majorities while other wards were created where unionists had small but secure majorities, maximising unionist representation. This process was greatly facilitated by the use of bloc voting to elect local councillors in most areas outside Belfast.

Voting arrangements which gave commercial companies votes and restricted the vote to property owners, primary tenants and their spouses also helped achieve similar ends. Disputes over local government gerrymandering were at the heart of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. In addition, there was widespread discrimination in employment, particularly at senior levels of the public sector and in certain sectors of the economy, such as shipbuilding and heavy engineering. Emigration to seek employment was significantly more prevalent among the Catholic population. As a result, Northern Ireland’s demography shifted further in favour of Protestants leaving their ascendancy seemingly impregnable by the late 1950s.

Perhaps most fatally, the abolition of Proportional Representation in 1929 meant that the structure of party politics gave the Ulster Unionist Party a continual sizable majority in the Northern Ireland Parliament, leading to fifty years of one-party rule. While Nationalist parties continued to retain the same number of seats that they had under Proportional Representation, the Northern Ireland Labour Party and various smaller leftist Unionist groups were smothered, meaning that it proved impossible for any group to sustain a challenge to the Ulster Unionist Party from within the Unionist section of the population.
In 1935, the worst violence since partition convulsed Belfast. After an Orange Order parade decided to return to the city center through a Catholic area instead of its usual route, the resulting violence left nine people dead. Over 2,000 Catholics were forced to leave their homes.

Though disputed for decades, many leaders of unionism now admit that Northern Ireland government in the period 1922-1972 was discriminatory, although prominent Democratic Unionist Party figures continue to deny it. One unionist leader, Nobel Peace Prize joint-winner, former UUP leader and First Minister of Northern Ireland David Trimble, openly described Northern Ireland as having been a “cold house for Catholics.”

Despite this, Northern Ireland was relatively peaceful for most of the following the period from 1924 until the late 1960s, except for some brief flurries of IRA activity and the (Luftwaffe) Belfast blitz during the Second World War and the so-called ‘Border Campaign’ from 1956 to 1962, with little support among the wider Catholic community - thanks, in part, to the economic prosperity of Northern Ireland, and the welfare benefits available there. However, many Catholics were resentful towards the state, and nationalistic politics was sullen and defeatist. Meanwhile, the period saw an almost complete synthesis between the Ulster Unionist Party and the loyalist Orange Order, with even Catholic Unionists being excluded from any position of political or civil authority outside of a handful of Nationalist-controlled councils.

1966 to 1998

In the 1960s, moderate Unionist prime minister Terence O’Neill (later Lord O’Neill of the Maine) tried to reform the system, but encountered strong opposition from both fundamentalist Protestant leaders like Ian Paisley and within his own party. The increasing pressures from Nationalists for reform and from extreme Loyalists for “No Surrender” led to the appearance of the civil rights movement, under figures such as Austin Currie and joint-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, John Hume. It had some moderate Protestant support and membership, and a considerable dose of student radicalism after Northern Ireland was swept up in the world-wide student revolts of 1968. Clashes between marchers and the Royal Ulster Constabulary led to increased communal strife, with elements both among the police and student radicals actively seeking to up the temperature, culminating in a violent attack by a unionist mob (which included police reservists) on a march, at Burntollet, outside Derry on 4 January 1969 as the police looked on. Wholescale violence erupted after an Apprentice Boys march was forced through the nationalist Bogside area of Derry on 12 August 1969 by the RUC, which led to large scale disorder known as the Battle of the Bogside. Rioting continued until the 14th of August, and in that time 1,091 canisters, each containing 12.5g of CS gas and 14 canisters containing 50g of CS gas, were released into the densely populated residential area by the RUC. Even more severe rioting broke out in Belfast and elsewhere in response to events in Derry (see Northern Ireland riots of August 1969). The following thirty years of civil strife came to be known as the Troubles.

The British army were deployed by the UK Home Secretary James Callaghan two days later on 14 August 1969. Two weeks later, control of security in Northern Ireland was passed from the Stormont government to General Ian Freeland. At first the soldiers received a warm welcome from Nationalists, who hoped they would protect them from Loyalist attack (which the IRA, at that point a Marxist organisa-
tion, had for ideological reasons declined to do). However, tensions rose throughout the following years, with an important milestone in the worsening relationship between the army and nationalists being the Falls Curfew of 3 July 1970 when 3,000 British troops imposed a three day curfew on the Lower Falls area.

After the introduction of internment without trial for suspected IRA men on 9 August 1971, even the most moderate Nationalists reacted by completely withdrawing their co-operation with the state. The SDLP members of the Parliament of Northern Ireland withdrew from that body on 15 August and a widespread campaign of civil disobedience began. Tensions were ratcheted to a higher level after the killing of fourteen unarmed civilians in Derry by the Parachute Regiment on 30 January 1972, an event dubbed Bloody Sunday.

Throughout this period, the modern constellation of paramilitary organisations began to form. After Bloody Sunday, their full fury was unleashed, and 1972 was the most violent year of the conflict. The appearance in 1970 of the Provisional IRA, a breakaway from the increasingly Marxist Official IRA, and a campaign of violence by loyalist paramilitary groups like the Ulster Defence Association and others brought Northern Ireland to the brink of civil war. On 30 March 1972, the British government, unwilling to grant the unionist Northern Ireland government more authoritarian special powers, and now convinced of its inability to restore order, pushed through emergency legislation that prorogued the Northern Ireland Parliament and introduced direct rule from London.

However, the British government held talks with various parties, including the IRA, during 1972 and 1973. On 9 December 1973, after talks in Sunningdale, Berkshire, the Ulster Unionist Party, SDLP and Alliance Party of Northern Ireland reached the Sunningdale Agreement on a cross-community government for Northern Ireland, which took office on 1 January 1974. The Sunningdale Agreement was an attempt to end “the Troubles” in Northern Ireland by forcing unionists to share power with nationalists. The Agreement had three parts — an elected Northern Ireland Assembly, a power-sharing cross-community Northern Ireland Executive and a cross-border Council of Ireland. Unionist opposition, Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) violence and finally a loyalist general strike caused the collapse of the Agreement in May 1974.

The IRA was unimpressed, increasing the tempo of their violence, while unionists were outraged at the participation of nationalists in the government of Northern Ireland and at the cross-border Council of Ireland. Although the pro-Sunningdale parties had a clear majority in the new Northern Ireland Assembly, the failure of the pro-Agreement parties to co-ordinate their efforts in the General Election of 29 February, combined with an IRA-sponsored boycott by hardline republicans, allowed anti-Sunningdale Unionists to take 51.1% of the vote and 11 of Northern Ireland’s 12 seats in the UK House of Commons.

Emboldened by this, a coalition of anti-Agreement Unionist politicians and paramilitaries encouraged a general strike on 15 May. The strikers brought Northern Ireland to a standstill by shutting down power stations, and after Prime Minister Harold Wilson refused to send in troops to take over from the strikers, the power-sharing executive collapsed on 28 May.
Some British politicians, notably former British Labour minister Tony Benn, advocated British withdrawal from Ireland, but many opposed this policy, and called their prediction of the possible results of British withdrawal the Doomsday Scenario, anticipating widespread communal strife. The worst fear envisaged a civil war which would engulf not just Northern Ireland, but also the Republic of Ireland and Scotland, both of which had major links with either or both communities.

Later, the feared possible impact of British Withdrawal was the Balkanisation (Balkanisation is a geopolitical term originally used to describe the process of fragmentation or division of a region into smaller regions that are often hostile or non-cooperative with each other) of Northern Ireland after the violent break-up of Yugoslavia and the chaos that ensued. The level of violence declined from its early 1970s peak from 1972 onwards, stabilising at 50 to 100 deaths a year. The IRA, using weapons and explosives obtained from the United States and Libya, bombed England and various British army bases in Europe, as well as conducting ongoing attacks within Northern Ireland. These attacks were not only on “military” targets but also on Protestant-frequented businesses, unaffiliated civilian commercial properties, and various city centres. Arguably the signature attack would involve cars packed with high explosives being driven directly to key areas for maximum effect. At the same time, Loyalist paramilitaries largely (but not exclusively) focused their campaign within Northern Ireland, ignoring the uninvolved military of the [Republic of Ireland], and instead claiming a (very) few Republican paramilitary casualties. They also targeted Catholics working in Protestant areas, and (in a parallel to the IRA tactic of car-bombing) attacked Catholic-frequented pubs using automatic fire weapons. Such attacks were euphemistically known as “spray jobs”. Both groups would also carry out extensive “punishment” attacks against members of their own communities (for a variety of perceived, alleged, or suspected “crimes”, regardless of the reality of the situation).

Various fitful political talks took place from then until the early 1990s, backed by schemes such as Rolling Devolution (Devolution or home rule is the statutory granting of powers from the central government of a state to government at national, regional or local level), and 1975 saw a brief IRA ceasefire. The two events of real significance during this period, however, were the Hunger Strikes and the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The Anglo-Irish Agreement was an agreement between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland which aimed to bring an end to the Troubles in Northern Ireland. The treaty gave the Irish Government an advisory role in Northern Ireland’s government while confirming that Northern Ireland would remain part of the UK unless a majority of its citizens agreed to join the Republic. It also set out conditions for the establishment of a devolved consensus government in the region.

Despite the failure of the Hunger Strike, the republican movement gained its first taste of electoral politics with modest electoral success on both sides of the border, including the election of Bobby Sands to the House of Commons. This convinced republicans to adopt the armalite and ballot box strategy and gradually take a more political approach. While the Anglo-Irish Agreement failed to bring an end to political violence in Northern Ireland, it did improve cooperation between the British and Irish governments, which was key to the creation of the Belfast Agreement a decade later.

At a strategic level the agreement demonstrated that the British recognised as legitimate the wishes of the Republic to have a direct interest in the affairs of
Northern Ireland. It also demonstrated to paramilitaries their ultimate political impotence vis a vis sovereign states. Unlike the Sunningdale Agreement the Anglo-Irish Agreement withstood a much more concerted campaign of violence and intimidation, as well as political hostility, from the loyalists. Republicans were left in the position of rejecting the only significant all-Ireland structures created since partition. By the 1990s, the failure of the IRA campaign to win mass public support or achieve its aim of British withdrawal, and in particular the public relations disaster of Enniskillen (when there were 11 fatalities among families attending a Remembrance Day ceremony), along with the 1983 replacement of the traditional republican leadership of Ruairí Ó Brádaigh by Gerry Adams, saw a move away from armed conflict to political engagement. This change from paramilitary to political means was part of a broader Northern Ireland peace process, which followed the appearance of new leaders in London (John Major) and Dublin (Albert Reynolds).

Increased government focus on the problems of Northern Ireland led, in 1993, to the two prime ministers signing the Downing Street Declaration (The Downing Street Declaration was a joint declaration issued on December 15, 1993 by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, John Major and Albert Reynolds, the Taoiseach (prime minister) of the Republic of Ireland. It affirmed the right of the people of Northern Ireland to self-determination, and that the province would be transferred to the Republic of Ireland from the United Kingdom if and only if a majority of its population was in favour of such a move. It included for the first time in the history of Anglo-Irish relationships, as part of the prospective of the so called Irish dimension, the principle that the people of the island of Ireland as a whole has the right, without any outsider interference, to solve the issues between North and South by mutual consent.

At the same time Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Féin, and John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, engaged in talks. A new leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, David Trimble, initially perceived as a hardliner, brought his party into all-party negotiations that in 1998 produced the Belfast Agreement (“Good Friday Agreement”), signed by eight parties on 10 April 1998, although not involving Ian Paisley’s Democratic Unionist Party or the UK Unionist Party. A majority of both communities in Northern Ireland approved this Agreement, as did the people of the Republic of Ireland, both by referendum on 22 May 1998. The Republic amended its constitution, Bunreacht na hÉireann, to replace a claim it made to the territory of Northern Ireland with an affirmation of the right of all the people of Ireland to be part of the Irish nation and a declaration of an aspiration towards a united Ireland (see the Nineteenth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland).

**Since the Good Friday Agreement**

Under the Good Friday Agreement, properly known as the Belfast Agreement, voters elected a new Northern Ireland Assembly to form a parliament. Every party that reaches a specific level of support gains the right to name a members of its party to government and claim one or more ministries. Ulster Unionist party leader David Trimble became First Minister of Northern Ireland. The Deputy Leader of the SDLP, Seamus Mallon, became Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, though his party’s new leader, Mark Durkan, subsequently replaced him. The Ulster Unionists, Social Democratic and Labour Party, Sinn Féin and the Democratic Unionist Party each had ministers by right in the power-sharing assembly.
The Assembly and its Executive operated on a stop-start basis, with repeated disagreements about whether the IRA was fulfilling its commitments to disarm, and also allegations from the Police Service of Northern Ireland’s Special Branch that there was an IRA spy-ring operating in the heart of the civil service. It has since emerged that the spy-ring was run by MI5 (see Denis Donaldson). Northern Ireland is now, once more, run by the Direct Rule Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Peter Hain, and a British ministerial team answerable to him. Hain is answerable only to the Cabinet.

The events of September 11th 2001 caused many erstwhile American sympathisers of the IRA cause to re-evaluate their beliefs. A withdrawal of support (moral and financial) from sympathizers in the US was compounded when Gerry Adams chose to visit or support the anti-American regimes in Cuba and Colombia.

The changing British position to Northern Ireland was represented by the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Parliament Buildings in Stormont, where she met nationalist ministers from the SDLP as well as unionist ministers and spoke of the right of people who perceive themselves as Irish to be treated as equal citizens along with those who regard themselves as British. Similarly, on visits to Northern Ireland, the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, met with unionist ministers and with the Lord Lieutenant of each county - the official representatives of the Queen.

However, the Assembly elections of November 30, 2003 saw Sinn Féin and the DUP emerge as the largest parties in each community, which was perceived as making a restoration of the devolved institutions more difficult to achieve. However, serious talks between the political parties and the British and Irish governments saw steady, if stuttering, progress throughout 2004, with the DUP in particular surprising many observers with its newly discovered pragmatism. However, an arms-for-government deal between Sinn Féin and the DUP broke down in December 2004 due to a row over whether photographic evidence of IRA decommissioning was necessary, and the IRA refusal to countenance the provision of such evidence.

The 2005 British General Election saw further polarisation, with the DUP making sweeping gains, although Sinn Féin did not make the breakthrough many had predicted. In particular, the failure of Sinn Féin to gain the SDLP leader Mark Durkan’s Foyle seat marked a significant rebuff for the republican party. The UUP only took one seat, with the leader David Trimble losing his and subsequently resigning as leader.

On July 28, 2005, the IRA made a public statement ordering an end to the armed campaign and instructing its members to dump arms and to pursue purely political programmes. While the British and Irish governments warmly welcomed the statement, political reaction in Northern Ireland itself demonstrated a tendency to suspicion engendered by years of political and social conflict.

On October 13, 2006 an agreement was proposed after three days of multiparty talks at St. Andrews in Scotland, which all parties including the DUP, supported. Under the St. Andrew’s Agreement, Sinn Féin will fully endorse the police in Northern Ireland, and the DUP will share power with Sinn Féin.
Quick Facts: Ireland

Note: These facts pertain to the southernmost 5/6 of the island of Ireland known as the Republic of Ireland, and exclude Northern Ireland, the northern 1/6 of the island which is part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Location
Western Europe, occupying five-sixths of the island of Ireland in the North Atlantic Ocean, west of Great Britain

Area
Total: 27,147 sq miles (slightly larger than West Virginia)
Land: 26,610 sq miles
Water: 537 sq miles

Land Boundries
Border countries: United Kingdom 224 miles

Coastline
900 miles

Climate
Temperate maritime; modified by North Atlantic Current; mild winters, cool summers; consistently humid; overcast about half the time.

Terrain
Mostly level to rolling interior plain surrounded by rugged hills and low mountains; sea cliffs on west coast

Elevation Extremes
Lowest point: Atlantic Ocean 0 feet
highest point: Carrauntoohil 3,415 feet

Natural Resources
Natural gas, peat, copper, lead, zinc, silver, barite, gypsum, limestone, dolomite

Land Use
Arable land: 16.82%
Permanent crops: 0.03%
Other: 83.15% (2005)

Current Environmental Issues
Water pollution, especially of lakes, from agricultural runoff

Geography Note
Strategic location on major air and sea routes between North America and northern Europe; over 40% of the population resides within 100 km of Dublin

Population
4,062,235 (July 2006 est.)
**Age Structure**

0-14 years: 20.9% (male 437,903/female 409,774)
15-64 years: 67.6% (male 1,373,771/female 1,370,452)
65 years and over: 11.6% (male 207,859/female 262,476) (2006 est.)

**Birth Rate**

14.45 births/1,000 population (2006 est.)

**Death Rate**

7.82 deaths/1,000 population (2006 est.)

**Infant Mortality Rate**

Total: 5.31 deaths/1,000 live births
Male: 5.82 deaths/1,000 live births
Female: 4.76 deaths/1,000 live births (2006 est.)

**Life Expectancy at Birth**

Total population: 77.73 years
Male: 75.11 years
Female: 80.52 years (2006 est.)

**HIV/AIDS-Prevalence Rate**

0.1% (2001 est.)

**Nationality**

Noun: Irishman(men), Irishwoman(women), Irish (collective plural)
Adjective: Irish

**Ethnic Groups**

Celtic, English

**Religions**

Roman Catholic 88.4%, Church of Ireland 3%, other Christian 1.6%, other 1.5%, unspecified 2%, none 3.5% (2002 census)

**Language**

English (official) is the language generally used, Irish (official) (Gaelic or Gaeilge) spoken mainly in areas located along the western seaboard

**Literacy**

Definition: age 15 and over can read and write
Total population: 99%
Male: 99%
Female: 99% (2003 est.)

**Country Name**

Conventional long form: none
Conventional short form: Ireland
Local long form: none
Local short form: Eire
Government Type
Republic, parliamentary democracy

Capital
Dublin

Independence
December 6, 1921 (from UK by treaty)

National Holiday
Saint Patrick’s Day, March 17

Suffrage
18 years of age; universal

Flag Description
The state flag of the Republic of Ireland is the Irish Tricolour. Three equal vertical bands of green (hoist side), white, and orange; similar to the flag of Cote d’Ivoire, which is shorter and has the colors reversed - orange (hoist side), white, and green; also similar to the flag of Italy, which is shorter and has colors of green (hoist side), white, and red; The color green is said to stand for Roman Catholics, orange for Protestants , and white for the desired peace between them.

Economy Overview
Ireland is a small, modern, trade-dependent economy with growth averaging 6% in 1995-2006. Agriculture, once the most important sector, is now dwarfed by industry and services. Industry accounts for 46% of GDP, about 80% of exports, and 29% of the labor force. Although exports remain the primary engine for Ireland’s growth, the economy has also benefited from a rise in consumer spending, construction, and business investment. Per capita GDP is 10% above that of the four big European economies and the second highest in the EU behind Luxembourg. Over the past decade, the Irish Government has implemented a series of national economic programs designed to curb price and wage inflation, reduce government spending, increase labor force skills, and promote foreign investment. Ireland joined in circulating the euro on 1 January 2002 along with 11 other EU nations.

Labor Force-By Occupation
Agriculture: 8%
Industry: 29%
Services: 64% (2002 est.)

Unemployment Rate
4.3% (2006 est.)

Population Below Poverty Level
10% (1997 est.)

Agriculture Products
Turnips, barley, potatoes, sugar beets, wheat; beef, dairy products
**Industries**
Steel, lead, zinc, silver, aluminum, barite, and gypsum mining processing; food products, brewing, textiles, clothing; chemicals, pharmaceuticals; machinery, rail transportation equipment, passenger and commercial vehicles, ship construction and refurbishment; glass and crystal; software, tourism.

**Currency**
Euro (EUR)
Note: on 1 January 1999, the European Monetary Union introduced the euro as a common currency to be used by financial institutions of member countries; on 1 January 2002, the euro became the sole currency for everyday transactions within the member countries

**Exchange Rates**
Euros per US dollar - 0.79987 (2006), 0.8041 (2005), 0.8054 (2004), 0.886 (2003), 1.0626 (2002)

**Military Branches**
Irish Defense Forces (Oglaigh na h-Eireann): Army (includes Naval Service and Air Corps) (2006)

**Military Service Age and Obligation**
17 years of age for voluntary military service; enlistees under the age of 17 can be recruited for specialist positions (2001).

**International Issues**
Ireland, Iceland, and the UK dispute Denmark’s claim that the Faroe Islands’ continental shelf extends beyond 200 nautical miles (230 miles).
Lesson Plans
Curriculum Connections

Introduction

The following lessons and activities offer suggestions intended to be used in preparation for the UMS Youth Performance. These lessons are meant to be both fun and educational, and should be used to create anticipation for the performance. Use them as a guide to further exploration of the art form. Teachers may pick and choose from the cross-disciplinary activities and can coordinate with other subject area teachers. You may wish to use several activities, a single plan, or pursue a single activity in greater depth, depending on your subject area, the skill level or maturity of your students and the intended learner outcomes.

Learner Outcomes

- Each student will develop a feeling of self-worth, pride in work, respect, appreciation and understanding of other people and cultures, and a desire for learning now and in the future in a multicultural, gender-fair, and ability-sensitive environment.

- Each student will develop appropriately to that individual’s potential, skill in reading, writing, mathematics, speaking, listening, problem solving, and examining and utilizing information using multicultural, gender-fair and ability-sensitive materials.

- Each student will become literate through the acquisition and use of knowledge appropriate to that individual’s potential, through a comprehensive, coordinated curriculum, including computer literacy in a multicultural, gender-fair, and ability-sensitive environment.
ARTS EDUCATION

Standard 1: Performing All students will apply skills and knowledge to perform in the arts.
Standard 2: Creating All students will apply skills and knowledge to create in the arts.
Standard 3: Analyzing in Context All students will analyze, describe, and evaluate works of art.
Standard 4: Arts in Context All students will understand, analyze and describe the arts in their historical, social, and cultural contexts.
Standard 5: Connecting to other Arts, other Disciplines, and Life All students will recognize, analyze and describe connections among the arts; between the arts and other disciplines; between the arts and everyday life.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Standard 3: Meaning and Communication All students will focus on meaning and communication as they listen, speak, view, read, and write in personal, social, occupational, and civic contexts.
Standard 6: Voice All students will learn to communicate information accurately and effectively and demonstrate their expressive abilities by creating oral, written and visual texts that enlighten and engage an audience.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Standard I-1: Time and Chronology All students will sequence chronologically eras of American history and key events within these eras in order to examine relationships and to explain cause and effect.
Standard I-3: Analyzing and Interpreting the Past All students will reconstruct the past by comparing interpretations written by others from a variety of perspectives and creating narratives from evidence.
Standard II-1: People, Places, and Cultures All students will describe, compare and explain the locations and characteristics of places, cultures and settlements.
Standard VII-1: Responsible Personal Conduct All students will consider the effects of an individual’s actions on other people, how one acts in accordance with the rule of law and how one acts in a virtuous and ethically responsible way as a member of society.

MATH

Standard I-1: Patterns Students recognize similarities and generalize patterns, use patterns to create models and make predictions, describe the nature of patterns and relationships and construct representations of mathematical relationships.
Standard I-2: Variability and Change Students describe the relationships among variables, predict what will happen to one variable as another variable is changed, analyze natural variation and sources of variability and compare patterns of change.
Standard III-3: Inference and Prediction Students draw defensible inferences about unknown outcomes, make predictions and identify the degree of confidence they have in their predictions.

SCIENCE

Standard I-1: Constructing New Scientific Knowledge All students will ask questions that help them learn about the world; design and conduct investigations using appropriate methodology and technology; learn from books and other sources of information; communicate their findings using appropriate technology; and reconstruct previously learned knowledge.
Standard IV-4: Waves and Vibrations All students will describe sounds and sound waves; explain shadows, color, and other light phenomena; measure and describe vibrations and waves; and explain how waves and vibrations transfer energy.

UMS can help you meet Michigan’s Curricular Standards!

The activities in this study guide, combined with the live performance, are aligned with Michigan Standards and Benchmarks.

For a complete list of Standards and Benchmarks, visit the Michigan Department of Education online:
www.michigan.gov/mde
CAREER & EMPLOYABILITY

Standard 1: Applied Academic Skills  All students will apply basic communication skills, apply scientific and social studies concepts, perform mathematical processes and apply technology in work-related situations.

Standard 2: Career Planning  All students will acquire, organize, interpret and evaluate information from career awareness and exploration activities, career assessment and work-based experiences to identify and to pursue their career goals.

Standard 3: Developing and Presenting Information  All students will demonstrate the ability to combine ideas or information in new ways, make connections between seemingly unrelated ideas and organize and present information in formats such as symbols, pictures, schematics, charts, and graphs.

Standard 4: Problem Solving  All students will make decisions and solve problems by specifying goals, identifying resources and constraints, generating alternatives, considering impacts, choosing appropriate alternatives, implementing plans of action and evaluating results.

Standard 5: Personal Management  All students will display personal qualities such as responsibility, self-management, self-confidence, ethical behavior and respect for self and others.

Standard 7: Teamwork  All students will work cooperatively with people of diverse backgrounds and abilities, identify with the group’s goals and values, learn to exercise leadership, teach others new skills, serve clients or customers and contribute to a group process with ideas, suggestions and efforts.

TECHNOLOGY

Standard 2: Using Information Technologies  All students will use technologies to input, retrieve, organize, manipulate, evaluate and communicate information.

Standard 3: Applying Appropriate Technologies  All students will apply appropriate technologies to critical thinking, creative expression and decision-making skills.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Standard 2: Using Strategies  All students will use a variety of strategies to communicate in a non-English language.

Standard 8: Global Community  All students will define and characterize the global community.

Standard 9: Diversity  All students will identify diverse languages and cultures throughout the world.
Before the game begins, fill in each box with one of the vocabulary words or phrases below. Your teacher will call out the definition for one of the words below. If you’ve got the matching word on your board, cover the space with your chip. When you’ve got a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal row of five chips, call out WORD-O!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>Feis</th>
<th>Bodhran</th>
<th>Tin Whistle</th>
<th>Irish Flute</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jig</td>
<td>Reel</td>
<td>Hornpipe</td>
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<td>Reel Shoe</td>
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<td>Insular Art</td>
<td>Celtic Cross</td>
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<td>Set Dance</td>
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</table>
Lesson 1: Understanding Irish Music

Objective
1. To enable the students to enjoy and understand traditional Irish instruments and music.
2. To develop and appreciation of Irish music and cultural heritage.
3. To provide the teacher with a traditional music resource.

Standards
Arts Education:
   3: Analyzing in Context
   4: Arts in Context

Materials
CD accompanying this study guide (track listing on page 72), a CD player, and pages 37-39 of this guide.

Activity
I. The Fiddle
The fiddle is an instrument with four strings, G, D, A and E. The sound is created by moving, or scraping a bow across the strings. The bow is a stick with hair attached. The musician then puts rosin on the bow to make it resonate on the strings.

CD: Listen to track 1 on the cd, Carraroe / Out on the Ocean for an example of the fiddle. If you listen closely to this song, you can hear another instrument. What is it? (guitar)

II. The Irish Flute
The keyed flute is commonly used in traditional music. It can be divided into three parts and put into a small case for carrying. It has silver keys. It is played by blowing over the top of the hole in the mouthpiece, the same way you might blow over a bottle to create a sound.

Both keyed and keyless flutes are used in traditional music. The keyed flutes may have up to eight keys and the keyless flutes have six holes. The flutes are usually made from African Blackwood and silver. The wood gives them a softer tone than the metal flutes used in classical music.

The instrument can be broken into three pieces. By moving the pieces closer together or farther apart the flute player can tune it.

The Flute or Concert Flute in Irish traditional music is generally a wooden flute played with the simple fingering system (as in the tin whistle) and is normally in the key of D. Sometimes the silver flute is played. The concert flute is a very popular instrument in traditional music.

CD: Listen to track 2, The Mill Pond / The Battering Ram, an example of the irish flute. Do you hear the drum in the background? This is another Irish instrument called the bodhran.

III. The Bodhran (see page 37)
Bodhran (bow-ren) comes from the word “bodhar,” “to deafen,” in Irish.
The bodhran is a circular drum usually made with a goatskin stretched over the wooden frame. It is played with a single double headed stick (called a tipper) or by the back of the fingers. In more recent times the left hand is used to change the tension on the skin and so change the pitch of the note.

**CD:** Listen to track 3, Hammy’s Jigs: The Woodcock / The Kerfunten, a tune accompanied by the bodhran (the drum does not start until about 30 seconds into the song). What is the other instrument that you hear at the beginning of the song? (flute). At 1:31 into the song, another instrument starts in. What is it? (fiddle). You may go back to track 2 to hear more of the bodhran.

**IV. The Uilleann Pipes**

The *Uilleann* (ili-in) *Pipes* are Irish bagpipes, and are very popular in traditional music in Ireland. They are called Uilleann Pipes because you have to use your elbow (Uilleann in Irish) to play them.

The most obvious difference between them and the *Great Highland bagpipes* of Scotland is that the *uilleann pipes* are not blown with the mouth; air is pumped into the bag by means of a bellows attached to the human elbow. Also, uilleann pipes are not as loud. However, there are other special features of uilleann pipes.

Although *uilleann pipes* have been around since the early 1600’s, their revival in modern times began in the 1960’s with a musical group called The Chieftains. More recently, the *uilleann pipes* have been widely seen in the Riverdance band, and this has excited a great deal of interest.

It should be understood that *uilleann pipes* are much more difficult to play than standard Scottish pipes, and they are also a great deal more expensive.

There are three parts to a full set of *uilleann pipes*:

**1. Bellows, Bag and Chanter (sometimes called a Starter or Practice Set)**

The *bellows* is often employed as a substitute or regulator for air pressure provided by the human lungs; in the case of the Uilleann pipes, the player does not blow into the instrument at all--the bellows substitutes for the lungs. The player uses his elbow to force air out of the bellows which then vibrates against reeds within the chanter, drones, and regulators.

The *chanter* is the part of the bagpipe upon which the player creates the melody. It consists of a number of finger-holes, and in its simpler forms looks similar to a recorder. It has a range of two full octaves and it has a double reed.

Sometimes this basic set is used to play melody, in the same way that a clarinet or oboe might be used. You start playing this starter set right at the beginning.
2. The Drones.
A *drone* is a continuous note or chord, and in the *uilleann pipes*, the part of the instrument that produces the *drone* is also called a *drone*. There are three *drones*: tenor, baritone and bass, each with a single reed. A *uilleann pipe* player often plays the starter set for about a year before adding *drones*. The *drones* have keys on them and act as harmony. The player presses the keys with the side of his/her hand to make the sound on the *drones*.

3. The Regulators.
The *regulators* are closed pipes, similar to the *chanter*. A *regulator* uses keys to accompany the melody of the *chanter*, and play specific chords. The *regulators* are the hardest part of *uilleann pipes*; if you are a beginner, you can put off buying the *regulators* for a long time (and these are the most expensive part of the set). Indeed, many players never get to adding the *regulators* at all.

This means that a full set of *uilleann pipes* plays the tune, has *drones* playing, and also accompanies itself with other notes on the *regulators* all at the same time. The piper pumps air from the *bellow* into a *bag* under the right elbow from a *bellow* attached by a strap to the right elbow. At the same time, the piper plays notes on the *chanter* with both hands by covering and uncovering the holes on it, and pressing on the *bag* with the right arm. Added to the mix, the piper is also leaning his wrist on the keys of the *regulators*. To the uninitiated, it must seem that an uilleann piper has to have three hands to do it all, or preferably four; the good players make this all look very easy.

The *Uilleann pipes* have a more mellow tone than the Bagpipes, as they were more for playing indoors. You must play them sitting down unlike whereas you can march with bagpipes.

**CD:** Listen to track 4, *The First House In Connaught / The Copper Plate Reel*, an example of the *uilleann Pipes*.

V. The Harp
The harp is very much the symbol of Ireland as it appears on its coins, *Garda* (national police) uniforms etc. It dates back many centuries in Ireland.

The harper was a very important person in Irish history The harps were highly decorated in the past with jewels and ornamentation. There was little harp playing in Ireland after the beginning of the 1800’s. The traditional style of playing is rare and has been replaced, for the most part, with fingertip playing.

The harp was traditionally held against the left shoulder, the left hand playing the upper strings and the right hand, the lower strings. Today, harps are held against the right shoulder and the hands playing positions are reversed.

**CD:** Listen to track 5, *Eleanor Plunkett*, which begins with a solo harp part. Listen for the fingertip plucking. At about 33 seconds in, another instrument comes in. What is it? (fiddle). At about 1:30 in, a third instrument picks up. What is it? (flute).
VI. The Accordian
The button accordion is often played in traditional music. It usually has two rows of buttons on the right side and 8 bass buttons on the left. It was first invented in the early nineteenth century and became widely used in traditional music in the 1920's and 1930's.

When a button is pressed, air is blown across a set of paired metal reeds, causing them to vibrate and produce a particular note. The bellows are pulled out and pushed in by the arms, so it also became known as the "squeeze box." Usually on a button accordion you get a different note when you pull (draw) out or push in (press) the bellows while pressing the same key. There are also 8 bass keys to be played with the left hand but they are not always used.

Traditional music is not played as frequently on the piano accordion. This has keys similar to a piano and press and draw produces the same note. It may have 80 bass keys for the left hand. It is more popular in Northern Ireland and Scotland and in the past was commonly used in céilí bands.

The melodeon is a simple accordion. Many of them have ten buttons, giving it twenty notes altogether. It also has two bass keys on the left side, which give the chords. It became popular in the 19th century for set dancing instead of the uilleann pipes.

CD: Listen to track 6, Humours of Lissadell / Music in the Glen / Johnson's (Reels), for an example of the accordian. What instrument that we have not talked about can you hear accompanying the accordian? (piano)

VII. The Concertina
The concertina is a small, hexagonal accordion. The concertina was patented in England in 1829. There are keys on either end of the bellows (usually two rows of five keys on either end). There is a strap each side to hold your hand in place and you then press the keys and pull the bellows out and push them in to make the notes.

It sounds a little like a harmonica as it uses one reed per note. It became popular because, unlike the pipes and fiddle, it remained in tune and was good for playing for dancers. County Clare is the main centre of concertina playing in Ireland, where it is particularly common among women players. In each area in Clare the concertina players have their own style of playing.

CD: Listen to track 7, Within a Mile of Dublin / Seany Dorris’ Reel / P.J.’s Pecurious Pachelbel Special (Reels), for an example of the concertina. What instrument do you hear in the background? (guitar)

VIII. The Banjo
The banjo most commonly used to play Irish Traditional Music is called a Tenor Banjo. It has four strings and G, D, A, E the same as the fiddle but is tuned an octave lower. It has frets marked up along the shaft to tell you where to put your fingers. The shaft of the banjo is short and the strings are plucked using a plectrum.
There is also a five string banjo that has a fifth string coming half way down the shaft. The shaft of this banjo is longer and it is usually picked with the fingers and not a plectrum.

**CD:** Listen to track 8, *The High Reel*, for an example of the banjo. Listen for the finger plucking. What other traditional Irish instrument that you have learned about is played by finger plucking? (Harp) What instrument is accompanying the banjo? (guitar).

**IX. Practice in Identifying Multiple Instruments**

In this last activity, arrange your students into the following instrument groups: banjo, flute, accordian, fiddle.

**CD:** Play track 9, *Paddy Fahy’s / Whistle and I’ll Come to You / Woods of Old Limerick*, and when each group hear’s their instrument, have them stand up. When they no longer hear their instrument, have them sit down.

As an alternative, you may play the track and just have the students identify which instruments are present. From the beginning of the song until one minute in, there are flute, banjo, and accordian. At one minute until 2:30, there are fiddle and banjo, and from 2:30 until the end of the song, there are fiddle, banjo, and flute.
Lesson 2: Understanding Irish Music

Objective
1. To enable the students to enjoy and understand traditional Irish music.
2. To develop and appreciation of Irish music and cultural heritage.
3. To provide the teacher with a traditional music resource.

Standards
Arts Education:
3: Analyzing in Context
4: Arts in Context

Materials
CD accompanying this study guide (track listing on page 72) and a CD player.

Activity
I. What is a Reel?
This is the most common type of tune played. It is danced at a relatively fast tempo, in fact, it is the fastest tune, of all Irish traditional music. It has two or four beats in each bar (2/4 or 4/4 time) and the emphasis is usually on the first and third beat in the bar. The rhythm goes like:

Cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar

Usually the reel has two parts. The first part is played twice and then the second part is played twice and then it is all repeated again. If the first part is A and the second part B then it would be AABB and repeated AABB again. Musicians group two or three tunes together and move from one into the other without stopping.

The reel originated around 1750 in Scotland and the Irish dance masters brought it to full development. Today, both males and females perform all reels, though historically some reels (the treble reel, for example) were performed only by males. For women, it is a light, rapid soft shoe dance that allows for plenty of leaping and demands an energetic performance from the dancer. Men often dance the reel in hard shoes.

The single reel, usually written in 2/4 time, is fast with simpler steps, and is used to teach beginning dancers. The double reel, usually just referred to as the reel, is slower to allow for more complex stepping. It is usually written in 4/4 time, though it has been said that in reality, it is more like 8/8 time. The solo reel usually consist of a step for 8 bars made up of various combinations of stepping elements followed by a promenade for 8 bars of simple traveling steps in a circle. This basic sequence is continued for any number of steps, usually up to 6. The Irish reel is distinguished by complex figurations and styling and may be either a solo or a set dance to reel music. Popular reels include the Irish Sixteenhand Reel.

CD: Listen to track 10 on the CD, titled Colonel McBain, Grogan’s Favourite, The Sailor on the Rock (Reels). This is an example of three reels strung together. Listen for
and pick out the reel rhythm by having students say “cat-er-pill-ar.” (“cat” and “pill” should land on the emphasized fiddle and flute notes, the first and third beats. These are the points where you might feel a natural tendency to rock or bob your head). Have the students notice the fast tempo. What instruments do you hear? (flute, fiddle, guitar)

II. What is a Jig?
The Double Jig is the most common tune played in Irish Traditional Music after the reel. It is in 6/8 time. The rhythm sounds like:

Bu-tter-fly, Bu-tter-fly, Bu-tter-fly, Bu-tter-fly, Bu-tter-fly, Bu-tter-fly, Bu-tter-fly

Jigs usually have two parts. The first part is usually played twice and then the second part is played twice. If the first part is A and the second part B then it is AABB and then AABB again.

There are references to the jig in ancient Ireland. A number of variations of the jig are performed including the single (or soft), double, treble, and slip jig. The music is always in 6/8 time (the emphasis on beats in a jig is: ONE-two-three four-five-six). except for the slip jig which is in 9/8 time (ONE-two-three four-five-six seven-eight-nine).

The single jig is faster than the double jig with more aerial steps and is named for its single batter. Dancers perform single or soft jigs in soft shoes. The double jig is characterized by a distinctive “double batter” or shuffle which is the main step element in this dance. The phrase “rashers and sausages” is often used as a mnemonic for this rhythm. The dance is performed in place, though formerly, in some areas of Munster, solo jig dancers separated each step with a 16 bar promenade. The treble jig which has a slower tempo, but dancers triple beats in hard shoes.

The hop, or slip, jig is a similar solo step dance in 9/8 time and has a characteristic light and airy step. The slip jig (soft shoes) is the most graceful of Irish dances and features light hopping, sliding, skipping and pointing. Only women dance the slip jig. It is a fast dance with steps very similar to those of the single jig, but between steps the dancers travel around the floor using a characteristic slipping and hopping step.

CD: Listen to track 2, Jigs: Cape Breton Jigs / McGurk’s. These are two jigs strung together. Find the jig rhythm by having the students say “bu-tter-fly.” (“bu” should land on the first and 4th beats, and should fall on the heavier guitar strums). What instruments do you hear? (guitar and flute)
III. What is a Hornpipe?
The hornpipe has four beats in the bar, the same as a reel. The first and third beat in each bar are emphasized, also similar to the reel. The easiest way to differentiate between a hornpipe and reel is that the hornpipe has a “hoppier” rhythm whereas the reel is more fluid. The “hoppier” rhythm of the hornpipe is because it has a slower tempo which allows for more complexity of steps; a dancer can fit more distinct moves within the same amount of music. The hornpipe rhythm can also be modeled by:

**Cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar, cat-er-pill-ar**

The hornpipe is very popular for Irish dancing but is not as popular with the musicians; it is the main southern step dance. It began around 1760, evolving from English stage acts. It was originally danced exclusively by males in hard shoes, but now, both men and women dance it. It is reported that the ladies of Cork were the first to brazenly perform the hornpipe in the male style. The hornpipe is in 4/4 time, reminiscent of a slow reel with accents on the first and third beat (ONE-and-a two-and-a three-and-a four-and-a). A notable feature is the frequent use of a rocking motion with the ankles. As an Irish solo dance, it is slower than the other solo measures, allowing a greater complexity of steps. Hornpipes are sometimes danced with clogs, especially in parts of Northern Ireland.

**CD:** Listen to track 3 on the cd, *The Tailor’s Twist / The Biddleston Hornpipe (Hornpipes)*. These are two hornpipes strung together. First listen for the “cat-er-pill-ar” rhythm (“cat” and “pill” should land when the emphasized piano chords are played, the first and third beats, the points where you might feel a natural tendency to rock or bob your head). Have the students notice how the tempo is slower (they are saying “cat-er-pill-ar” slower.” Feel how the music is “hoppier” then a reel. It might be helpful to switch between the two tracks so students can hear and feel the differences. What instruments do you hear in track 10? (accordion, piano)

IV. Identifying Reels, Jigs, and Hornpipes
In this last activity, re-visit some of the tracks you listened to in Lesson 1, as well as listen for the first time to a few new tracks. Have your students identify whether the tune is a reel, jig, or hornpipe by listening to the tempo and picking out the rhythm. Have them explain their reasoning. Is the tune fast? Is it “hoppier” or more smooth? Is the rhythm saying “cat-er-pill-ar” or “butt-er-fly?” Many of the songs on the CD contain the type of tune it is within their titles so be careful not to give away the answers!

Tracks 6, 7, 8, 10, and 14 are all reels. For track 14, what instruments do you hear? (banjo, guitar)

Tracks 9, an 13 are both jigs. Identify instruments in track 13 (accordion, piano)

Track 15 is a hornpipe. What instruments are in this song? (fiddle, piano)
CD Track Listing and Artist Information

1. **Carraroe / Out on the Ocean** by Martin Hayes & Dennis Cahill off the album *Live in Seattle*

2. **The Mill Pond / The Battering Ram** by Kevin Crawford off the album ‘D’ *Flute Album*

3. **Hammy’s Jigs: The Woodcock / The Kerfunten** by Deanta off the album *Ready for the Storm*

4. **The First House In Connaught / The Copper Plate Reel** by Saemus Ennis off the album *Two Centuries of Celtic Music*

5. **Eleanor Plunkett** by Deanta off the album *Ready for the Storm*

6. **Humours of Lissadell / Music in the Glen / Johnson’s (Reels)** by Joe Derrane off the album *Return to Inis Mor*

7. **Within a Mile of Dublin / Seany Dorris’ Reel / P.J.’s Pecurious Pachelbel Special (Reels)** by John Williams off the album *Steam*

8. **The High Reel** by The Dubliners off the album *The Dubliners: The Transatlantic Anthology*

9. **Paddy Fahy’s / Whistle and I’ll Come to You / Woods of Old Limerick** by Moving Cloud off the album *Foxglove*

10. **Colonel McBain, Grogan’s Favourite, The Sailor on the Rock (Reels)** by Moving Cloud off the album *Moving Cloud*

11. **Jigs: Cape Breton Jigs / McGurk’s** by Matt Molloy and Friends off the album *Music At Matt Molloy’s*

12. **The Tailor’s Twist / The Biddleston Hornpipe (Hornpipes)** by Joe Derrane off the album *Return to Inis Mor*

13. **The King Jig / Return to Inis Mor (Jigs)** by Joe Derrane off the album *Return to Inis Mor*

14. **Medley: The Maid Behind the Bar / Toss the Feathers** by The Dubliners off the album *Foggy Dew*

15. **Seanbhean Bhocht/Sweeney’s (Hornpipes)** by Moving Cloud off the album *Moving Cloud*
Lesson 3: History of Ireland

Objective
• Students will use various resources to find and compile information.
• Students will recognize geographical and historical features of Ireland.
• Students will demonstrate an understanding of Irish culture and people.

Standards
• Strand V. Content Standard 1: All students will acquire information from books, maps, newspapers, data sets and other sources, organize and present the information in maps, graphs, charts, timelines, and interpret the meaning and significance of information, and use a variety of electronic technologies to assist in accessing and managing information.
  Later Elementary: 1. Locate information about local, state, and national communities using a variety of sources, electronic technologies, and direct observations.
• Strand II. Content Standard 1: All students will describe, compare, and explain the locations and characteristics of places, cultures, and settlements.
  Later Elementary: 3. Locate and describe the major places, cultures, and communities of the nation and compare their characteristics.

Grade Levels
5th-6th

Materials
• Internet Access
• Encyclopedias and/or Reference Books
• Construction Paper
• Scissors
• Glue
• Markers/Colored Pencils

Activity
Procedure:

1. Ask students for prior knowledge of Ireland such as location, people, or traditions.
2. Explain to the students that they will be creating a brochure/travel guide about the country of Ireland. It may be helpful to show students various brochures or travel guides.
3. Divide students into groups of three and four.
4. Pass out copies of “A Trip to Ireland…”
5. Read over “A Trip to Ireland…” and discuss the requirements as a class.
6. Allow students twenty-five minutes to research Ireland and gather information via Internet and reference books. Tell students they should divide the work evenly amongst group members.
7. Once students have gathered most information, pass out construction paper, glue, scissors, markers and colored pencils.
8. Allow students time to create their brochures. Brochures should include any necessary information and pictures.
9. Once completed, have students share their brochures with classmates.
A Trip to Ireland...

You will be creating a brochure designed to entice foreigners to visit the far away land of Ireland. Think about what information you would want to know if you were traveling to this country. In order to complete this assignment, the following items should be included:

1. A map of Ireland
2. A picture of the flag of Ireland
3. Primary language spoken in Ireland
4. Main religions practiced
5. Currency (money) used in Ireland
6. Geographical landscape of Ireland
7. Approximate Population
8. Include an appropriate symbol to represent the country (a four leaf clover or leprechaun, for example)
9. Two places of interest

The following Internet resources may be helpful:

http://www.worldalmanacforkids.com/explore/nations/ireland.html
http://www.dltk-kids.com/world/ireland/about.htm
Lesson 4: Anti-Irish Racism in America

Objective
1. Show students the Anti-Irish sentiment of the American press and citizens.
2. Teach students how the American public perceived the Irish immigrants in their society.
3. Show students how to analyze political cartoons.

Standards
Social Studies I.2, I.3

Grade Level
High School

Materials
Cartoon analysis worksheet.

Activities
Have the students organized in small groups of 4-5. Hand out the cartoon analysis worksheet to the groups. Have the groups discuss the worksheet amongst themselves for 10 minutes, and then discuss the worksheet as a class for another 10 minutes.
Cartoon Analysis

Analyze the cartoon below in a small group and discuss the following:

- What Irish stereotypes are depicted in the cartoon?
- What does the cartoon say about religious/ethnic tensions in the city at the time?
- Does the cartoon depict Irish immigrants in a positive light?
- What do you think are some possible reasons Irish immigrants experienced
Lesson 5: Irish Currency and Conversion

Objective

• Students will be able to identify the different coins and notes of Ireland.
• Students will be able to compare the republic of Ireland money to the Northern Ireland money.
• Students will be able to convert the republic of Ireland money to U.S money.

Standards
II.3.6, III.1.4, III.3.3, IV.1.2, IV.1.4, IV.2.2, IV.3.2, IV.3.5

Grade Level
7th-9th

Materials
• Students will need a copy of two-pages of notes.
• Students will need a copy of two-pages of questions.
• Students will need their notebook.

Activity
• A teacher will ask students if any of them been to Ireland, if so what they think about Ireland? If they know anything about Irelands money?
• Pass out the packet of papers.
• Discuss the different money between Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and the United States money.
  1. Northern Ireland uses Pound Sterling.
  2. The Republic of Ireland uses Euros.
• Then focus on the exchange rate between Euros and United States dollars of $1= .80 Euro. This exchange rate may change. General equation on handouts.
  1. How to convert Dollars to Euros
     Example: Convert $15 to Euros
     $1/.80 Euros = x/$15
     x=.80 Euros *15
     11.98 Euros
  2. How to convert Euros to Dollars
     Example: Convert 15 Euros to Dollars
     1 Euro/$1.25= x/ 15 Euros
     x=$1.25*15
     $18.80
• Go over examples given.
• Have students complete the given worksheet to test their understanding.
• Correct as a group and tie up all ends of questions.

Resource: http://www.12travel.com
Currencies of Ireland

Northern Ireland Currency is called **Pound Sterling (£)**.

**Examples of Notes:**

- 5£
- 10£
- 20£
- 50£

**Examples of Coins:**

- 1 pence
- 2 pence
- 5 pence
- 10 pence
- 20 pence
- 50 pence
Republic of Ireland Currency is called the **Euro**.

**Examples of Notes:**

- 5 Euro
- 10 Euro
- 20 Euro
- 50 Euro
- 100 Euro
- 200 Euro
- 500 Euro

**Examples of Coins:**

- 1 Cents
- 2 Cents
- 5 Cents
- 10 Cents
- 20 Cents
- 50 Cents
Conversion Equations

HOW TO CONVERT DOLLARS TO EUROS BY USING AN EQUATION:

\[
\frac{1}{0.8} \text{ Euro} = \frac{X}{(\text{AMOUNT TO BE CONVERTED})}
\]

EXAMPLES OF CONVERTING UNITED STATES MONEY TO IRELAND’S MONEY:

- $15.00 American  \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{12.00 Euro}
- $25.00 American  \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{20.00 Euro}
- $35.25 American  \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{28.20 Euro}
- $60.00 American  \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{48.00 Euro}
- $125.15 American \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{100.12 Euro}

HOW TO CONVERT EUROS TO DOLLARS BY USING AN EQUATION:

\[
\frac{1}{1.25} = \frac{X}{(\text{AMOUNT TO BE CONVERT})}
\]

EXAMPLES OF CONVERTING IRELAND’S MONEY TO UNITED STATES MONEY:

- 15.00 Euro  \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{$18.75 American}
- 25.00 Euro  \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{$31.25 American}
- 35.25 Euro  \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{$44.06 American}
- 60.00 Euro  \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{$75.00 American}
- 125.15 Euro  \quad \text{EQUALS} \quad \text{$156.44 American}
Currency Questions

Please use the conversion equation.

1) Johnny has $5.50 U.S, how much would Johnny have in Euros?

2) Maria goes to Dublin (the capital of Ireland), and she buys an umbrella at 36 Euros, how much would Maria have to spend in U.S currency?

3) Danny is a retail shop owner in Sligo (a city in Ireland). He wants to know the differences in U.S and Euro rates of the following items:

   - A shirt that is 23.25 Euros. U.S:
   - A pair of shoes that are 55.75 Euros. U.S:
   - A purse that is 315.75 Euros. U.S:
   - A pair of sunglasses that are 112.50 Euros. U.S:

4) Alex is a big Celtic Football fan (An Irish soccer team) and wants to go to one of the games. He lives in Colorado and needs an Airline flight, a 2 night Hotel stay, and a ticket to the game. He went on-line to look at the prices and found these prices: $ 415.50 for the flight, $155.00 for the 2 night Hotel stay, and $67.75 for the ticket. How much will his trip cost in Euros?

5) Mr. Rooney, the Mayor of the city of Cork (A city in Ireland) is called up by Mr. Smith, the mayor of Bostin. Mr. Smith would like to know if Mr. Rooney would like to come to Boston and put together the annual St. Patrick’s parade. Mr. Smith gives a budget of $213,517.35 to Mr. Rooney. How much will the parade cost in Euros?

Why do you think the parade cost so much less in Euros as opposed to U.S?
Lesson 6: Performance Follow-up and Reflection

Objective
For students to reflect upon their experience observing the Trinity Irish Dance Company performance.

Standards
Arts Education 3: Analyzing in Context
English Language Arts 2: Meaning/Communication; 4: Language; 6: Voice
Social Studies II-1: People, Places, and Cultures

Opening Discussion
Talking with your teacher, friends, and family about a performance after attending the theater is part of the experience. When you share what you saw and felt, you learn more about the performance. You can now compare ideas and ask questions and find out how to learn even more. Here are some questions to think about:

Activity
Here are some questions to think about:

1. How would you describe Irish dancing to a friend?
2. How would you describe Irish music to a friend? Describe any non-traditional (unique) sounds that you heard.
3. What feelings did you have while you watched the dances and listened to the music?
4. What did you like best and why? Was the program different from what you expected? How?
5. Did you have a favorite dance selection? A least favorite? Explain.
6. Do you parents or grandparents celebrate holidays with special music and dance traditions? What are they?
7. Discuss how traditional Irish dance became a U.S. art form
8. Did you recognize cultural influences other than Irish in any of the dances?
Lesson 7: Word Search

All of the words in the left column relate to the Trinity Irish Dance Company Youth Performance.

- **Trinity Irish Dance**: The name of the group performing at the Youth Performance.
- **Mark Howard**: The founder and artistic director of Trinity Irish Dance Company.
- **Quadrille**: The European dance which Ceili and set dancing are based on.
- **Ghilles**: Dancers wear ghillies (soft shoes) for swift jumps and crossover steps.
- **Jig Shoes**: Dancers wear jig shoes (hard shoes) when they wish to use their feet like an instrument to beat out the rhythms.
- **Book of Kells**: Irish Bible from the ninth century from which many Irish dancing costumes take their designs.
- **Tara Brooch**: Eight Century Celtic Brooch. Irish dancers wear a copy of it on their costume.
- **Power Center**: The theater where you will see the Youth Performance of Trinity Irish Dance.
- **Hornpipe**: The hornpipe is a step dance in 4/4 time, performed in hardshoes.
- **Solo Set Dance**: Specially composed step dances which the dancing masters “set” to specific tunes.
- **Solo Dress**: The solo dress is only worn during competitions, and is a sign that a dancer has achieved a high level of skill in Irish step dancing.
- **Feis**: An Irish dance competition.
- **Gaelic League**: An organization founded in Dublin in 1893 for the purpose of keeping the Irish language spoken in Ireland.
Trinity Irish Dance. Photo by Lois Greenfield

Resources
Dear Parents and Guardians,

We will be taking a field trip to see a University Musical Society (UMS) Youth Performance of Trinity Irish Dance Company on Friday, September 20 from (please circle one) •10am-11am •12pm-1pm at the Power Center in Ann Arbor.

We will travel (please circle one) •by car •by school bus •by private bus •by foot
Leaving school at approximately ______am and returning at approximately ______pm.

The UMS Youth Performance Series brings the world’s finest performers in music, dance, theater, opera, and world cultures to Ann Arbor. This performance features Trinity Irish Dance Company.

We (circle one) •need •do not need additional chaperones for this event. (See below to sign up as a chaperone.)

Please (circle one) •send •do not send lunch along with your child on this day.

If your child requires medication to be taken while we are on the trip, please contact us to make arrangements.

If you would like more information about this Youth Performance, please visit the Education section of www.ums.org/education. Copies of the Teacher Resource Guide for this performance are available for you to download.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to call me at ____________________________ or send email to _____________________________________________.

Please return this form to the teacher no later than _____________________________.

Sincerely,

My son/daughter, _________________________________, has permission to attend the UMS Youth Performance on Friday, April 20, 2007. I understand that transportation will be by ____________.

I am interested in chaperoning if needed (circle one). •yes •no

Parent/Guardian Signature________________________________________  Date_____________________

Relationship to student _____________________________________________

Daytime phone number__________________________________________

Emergency contact person________________________________________

Emergency contact phone number_______________________________
Internet Resources

Arts Resources

www.ums.org/education
The official website of UMS. Visit the Education section (www.ums.org/education) for study guides, information about community and family events and more information about the UMS Youth Education Program.

www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org
The nation’s most comprehensive web site for arts education, including lesson plans, arts education news, grant information, etc.

Trinity Irish Dance Company

http://www.trinitydancers.com/- The official website of Trinity Irish Dance Company. Includes company biographies, a history of the company, news and press about the company, as well as pictures from their time on the road.

http://www.trinity-dancers.com/- The official website of Trinity Irish Dance Academy. Includes information about the company, lessons, and news.

Ireland and Irish Dance


http://svr1.cg971.fr/lameca/dossiers/gwoka/index_eng.html - Provides information about regional drumming and rhythms from the Caribbean.

http://www.clrg.ie/english/home.php - Irish Dancing Commission


http://heinzmanschool.com/- Website for the Heinzman School of Irish Dance based in Livonia, Michigan.

http://www.diochra.com/- Website covering all aspects of Irish Dance and its history.

http://www.swingcitydance.com/- Official website of local Ann Arbor Dance Studio, Swing City Dance Studio.

Although UMS previewed each web site, we recommend that teachers check all web sites before introducing them to students, as content may have changed since this guide was published.
Recommended Reading

**PRIMARY & ELEMENTARY GRADES**


Harvey, Miles. *Look What Came From Ireland (Look What Came From...)* (PFranklin Watts, 2003).


Sasek, M. *This Is Ireland* (Universe, 2005).


**UPPER MIDDLE & SECONDARY GRADES**


Community Resources

University Musical Society
University of Michigan
Burton Memorial Tower
881 N. University Ave
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1101
734.615.0122
umsyouth@umich.edu
www.ums.org/education

Heinzman School of Irish Dance
9015 Iowa St.
Livonia, MI 48150
734-762-0997
heinzmanschool@yahoo.com
http://heinzmanschool.com/

Gaelic League and Irish American Club of Detroit
2068 Michigan Ave.
Detroit, MI 48216
313-964-8700 or 313-963-8895
JJDIRISH@aol.com
http://www.gaelicleagueofdetroit.org/

Swing City Dance Studio
1960 S. Industrial E & F
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 668-7782
sfilipiak@earthlink.net
http://www.swingcitydance.com/

www.detroitirish.com

These groups and organizations can help you to learn more about this topic.
Evening and Family Performance Info

Trinity Irish Dance Company

Full Length Evening Performances:
Friday, April 20, 8 PM
Saturday, April 21, 8 PM

One Hour Family Performance:
Saturday, April 21, 1 PM

Power Center

Chicago’s Trinity Irish Dance Company was the birthplace of progressive Irish dance in America. Trinity dancers range in age from 18 to 28, and their years of rigorous training are evident in every perfectly paced spin, leap, and click, making them a lethal powerhouse of speed and sound. The company dazzles audiences with the hard-driving percussive power, lightning-fast agility, aerial grace, and awe-inspiring precision of its dancers. It is a dance legacy that is rooted in tradition, yet forward-looking. Artistic director Mark Howard has taken the group outside of the framework of ethnicity, expanding the company’s range and repertoire in imaginative new directions, always performed to live music.

TEEN Ticket

In response to the needs of our teen audience members, the University Musical Society has implemented the TEEN Ticket. All teens can attend UMS events at a significant discount. Tickets are available for $10 the day of the performance at the Michigan League Ticket Office, or for 50% off the published price at the venue 90 minutes before the performance begins. One ticket per student ID.
Upcoming Teacher Workshops

Open to all educators, student teachers, and community members, our workshops provide concrete methods for enhancing student learning in, through, and about the arts. Refreshments are served at all workshops.

Los Folkloristas: The Music of Mexico and the Americas
Led by Los Folkloristas
Tuesday, April 24, 4:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Teaching and Learning Center, WISD
1819 South Wagner Road, Ann Arbor
Recommended: Educators of Grades K–12
Fee: $30

From the Rio Bravo River to Cape Horn, the musical traditions and styles of Mexico, Central America, and South America are vast and diverse. For 40 years, the members of Los Folkloristas have traveled this terrain to research traditional music of Latin America; they have been to small communities working with village elders and large towns working with learned practitioners. Now they travel to Ann Arbor to share with educators their first-hand experiences, as well as their profound knowledge of the music and cultures of the region. Teachers will truly begin to understand and explore the music of Mexico and the Americas as Los Folkloristas play some of the 100 rare and standard instruments in their collection.

Registration
To register for all workshops, please call (734) 615.0122 or email umsyouth@umich.edu.

All teachers must register and pay for workshops in advance. If paying with check, a credit card number must be submitted upon registration to reserve spot until payment is received.

Teachers bringing students to the Los Folkloristas youth performance receive a $10 discount on the April 24 workshop.

Teachers will be charged for the workshops for which they are registered regardless of whether they actually attend. Teachers can cancel registration up to five business days in advance.

***For Ann Arbor Public School Teachers – AAPS will reimburse teachers who sign up for each workshop, subject to availability. Teachers who miss the workshop may not apply for reimbursement.

***For Washtenaw Intermediate School District Teachers – WISD will reimburse the first five teachers who sign up for each workshop. Teachers who miss the workshop may not apply for reimbursement.
Send Us Your Feedback!

UMS wants to know what teachers and students think about this Youth Performance. We hope you’ll send us your thoughts, drawings, letters or reviews.

UMS Youth Education Program
Burton Memorial Tower • 881 N. University Ave. • Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1011
(734) 615-0122 phone • (734) 998-7526 fax • umsyouth@umich.edu
www.ums.org/education