

APPENDIX C

Reading Comprehension Test

So, you are thinking about visiting Ireland, are you? Well, what do you know about these people who live on the little green island on the edge of the continent? Like many other people, the Irish are sometimes best defined as what they are not. Take for example, the Canadians, who always say, "We're not **Yank!**", or the New Zealanders who tell you, "We're not bloody Aussies, mate!". Well, the Irish are famous for saying, "We're not bleeding British!", or, along with their Celtic cousins in Scotland and Wales, "We're not English". So what exactly are the Irish, apart from not being British or English? Read on and find out!

Two Kinds of Irish

Irish people can be categorised into two main categories: those from Dublin, the "Jackeens"; and those who are from anywhere else in the country, the "Culchies".

Jackeens (Dubliners)

The term Jackeen comes from the nineteenth-century. One day Queen Victoria visited Ireland and the people of Dublin went on the streets to cheer and wave the Union Jack (the British Flag). The country people (the Culchies) were really angry that the Dubliners had shown so much respect to a "foreign queen", and have never forgotten **it** since – the Irish in general never forgot things like that. From that day on, they referred to Dubliners as Jackeens, from the word "Union *Jack*".

Typical modern-days Jackeens wear tracksuits and baseball caps. Jackeens tend to think of themselves as really clever, funny and cultured. And they consider the Culchies to be uncultured and a bit to fond of their sheep.

Culchies (Not Dubliners)

Culchies, on the other hand, believe themselves to be decent, hard-working folk. They are generally very friendly and more welcoming than the Jackeens. A stereotypical Culchie wears dirty jeans, **muddy boots and can often be seen with a piece of straw or a matchstick in his mouth**. Culchies see the Jackeens as dangerous and dishonest. Unfortunately, both sides are right to some extent in their view of the others.

Chat

In other cases, you may like to chat to the locals. If so, you are going to need some topics of conversation. In Ireland, even more so than in other countries, *the favorite* topic of conversation is the weather.

Basically, the weather in Ireland is so unpredictable that there's always something to talk about. For example, it can be sunny, rainy, sunny and raining again in a few hours, without any warning. In fact, there is a saying in Ireland, that if you don't like the weather, just wait for 10 minutes.

Complaints

And the complaints about the weather are non-stop. In March and April, when it's really wet and windy, you will hear things like: "Jaysus! Will the weather ever get better?" And in September, after non-stop rain for three months, they whinge: "Sure we didn't really have a summer at all!" So if you want to start a conversation with anyone, just say, "Isn't the weather terrible?" and you will be **yapping away** in no time.

Where to Meet the Irish

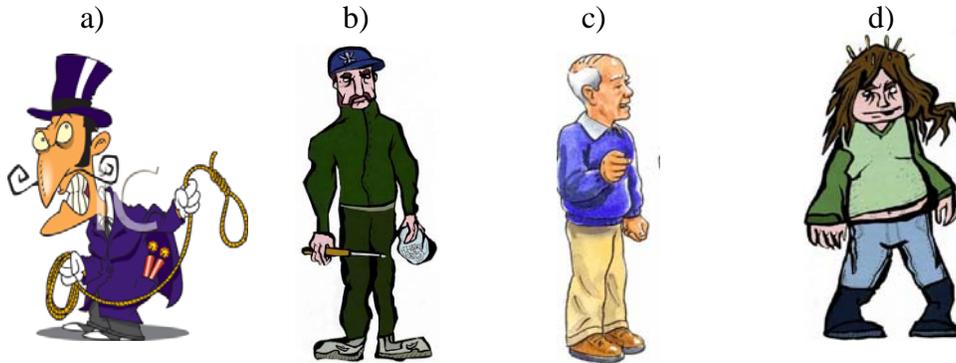
No matter where they are from, most Irish people have one thing in common: They love to drink! Most of their culture is centred round the pub, whether it be down the road in town or five miles away across a bog.

Unfortunately, pubs in Ireland are legally obliged to open and close at certain times. Because of this, Irish people tend to go out early (around 8pm) and drink fast and furiously without stopping to have a meal or even a snack. By 11pm, when pubs traditionally stop serving, they are completely drunk. Closing time has recently been extended to 12 and 12.30am, giving drinkers an extra hour. It's a bit tough to handle the drinking pace at first, but don't worry-practice makes perfect, and you'll soon be sinking pints of the black stuff like the best of them. Then you will also have no trouble with the favourite Irish pub pastimes: talking nonsense and trying to snog someone.

According to the given passage, choose the best answer for each of the following questions and mark X under the letter a, b, c, or d on your answer sheet.

1. What is this passage about?
 - a) Major types of the Irish.
 - b) Dos and don'ts in Ireland.
 - c) Fun activities in Ireland.
 - d) Ways of life of Irish people.
2. Which of the following topics is **not** discussed in the passage?
 - a) Geographical settings of Ireland.
 - b) Unpredictable weather in Ireland.
 - c) Two major categories of the Irish.
 - d) Pubs and drinking habits of the Irish.
3. From the first paragraph, we can conclude that _____ .
 - a) people from Ireland, Wales and Scotland do not consider themselves English speakers
 - b) the Irish, Canadian and New Zealanders are not liked by people from nearby countries
 - c) each nation has its identity and does not want to be confused with its bordering countries
 - d) people from some countries in the world want tourists to think of them as what they are not

4. According to the passage, which of the following is a typical modern-days Jackeen?



5. In Ireland, the weather is the favorite topic of conversation because _____ .
 - a) the locals enjoy discussing about terrible weather in March and April
 - b) if you do not like the weather in Ireland, you can wait for only 10 minutes
 - c) there are so many seasons that the Irish endlessly complain about the weather
 - d) the weather there is so unpredictable that it always has something to talk about
6. The Irish tend to drink without stopping to have a meal because _____ .
 - a) Irish pubs have limited opening hours
 - b) they must be drunk before midnight
 - c) Irish pubs do not serve good food
 - d) they have to go out rather early

7. What does 'Yank' in the first paragraph refer to?
- a) The Canadian
 - b) The New Zealanders
 - c) The American
 - d) The Aussies
8. Which of the following can replace 'yapping away' in "...and you will be yapping away in no time."?
- a) escaping
 - b) shouting
 - c) chatting
 - d) annoying
9. What does 'it' in "...and have never forgotten it since." refer to?
- a) The Jackeens viewed that the Culchies were uncultured.
 - b) Dubliners showed much respect to the English Queen.
 - c) The country people were very angry at the Queen.
 - d) Queen Victoria of England officially visited Ireland.
10. The way the writer states that a typical Culchie usually wears "muddy boots and can often be seen with a piece of straw or a matchstick in his mouth" can be inferred that the Culchies _____.
- a) reside in the countryside
 - b) are uncultured and poor
 - c) have affection for sheep
 - d) wear dirty cheap clothes