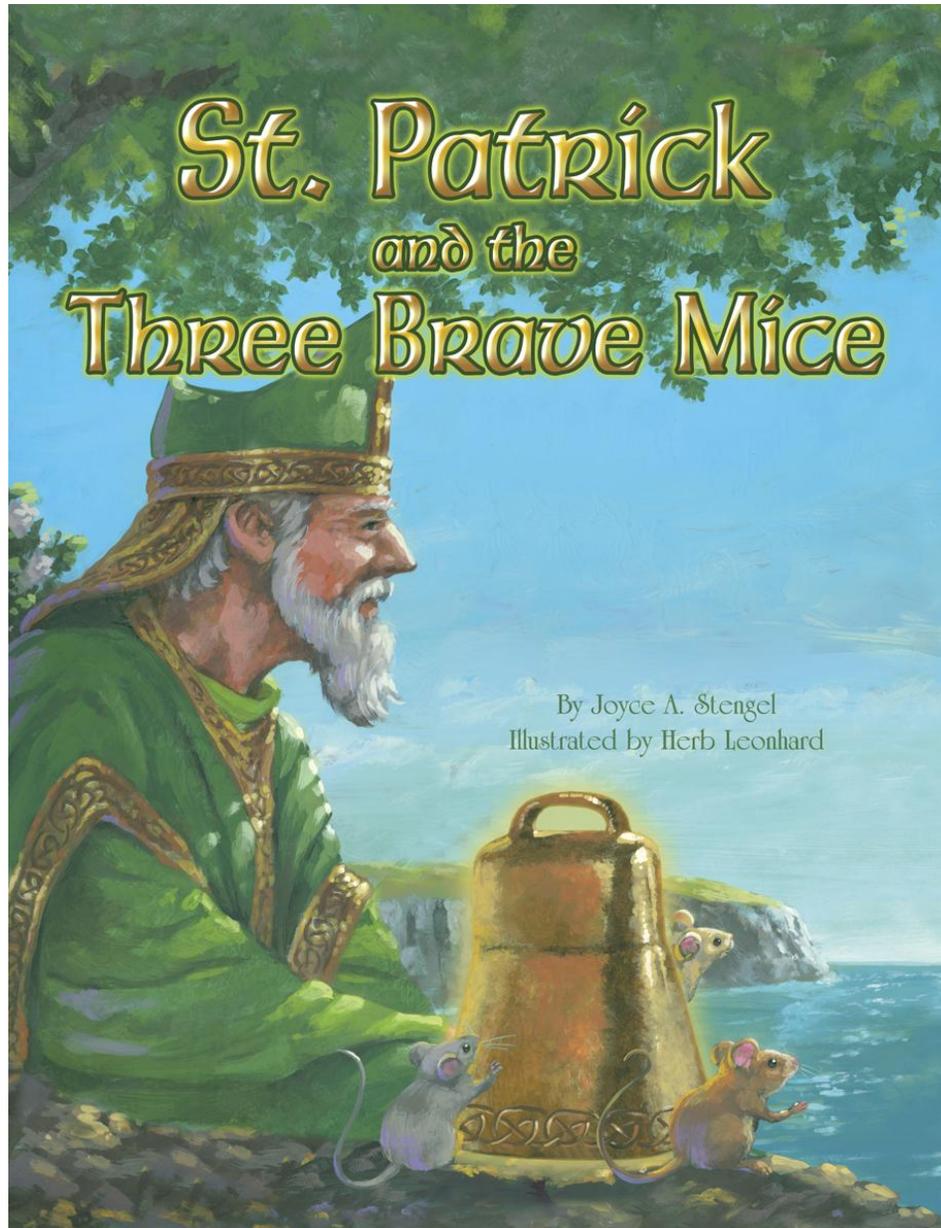




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Educator's Guide for



St. Patrick and the Three Brave Mice

By Joyce A. Stengel
Illustrated by Herb Leonhard

St. Patrick and the Three Brave Mice

By Joyce Stengel, Illustrated by Herb Leonhard

Guide created by Joyce Stengel
Educator's Guide

Adaptable for pre-k through 4th grades

Discussion Questions – Culture – Symbols – History - Language Arts – Art - Science
Readers Theatre

St. Patrick and the Three Brave Mice
by Joyce A. Stengel

Pre-Reading Discussion

Show the book cover. Read the title out loud.

What does the illustration tell you the book is about?

What does the title tell you the book is about?

What do you call the person who writes a book?

A: An author. The author of this book is Joyce A. Stengel.

What do you call the person who draws the pictures?

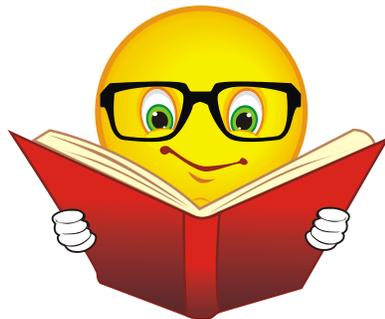
A: An illustrator. The illustrator of this book is Herb Leonhard.

What do you think St. Patrick is like from looking at his picture?

Read book and show pictures.

Discuss page-by-page on the second reading.

1. What does the first page tell you? What does St. Patrick use to drive out the snakes?
2. What is Snake hunting for?
3. Why does Tulla mouse leave the nest? What do you think is going to happen?
4. When Tulla looks down at the sleeping man, she sees a bell glowing. Why does the bell glow? What does the bell tell Tulla about the man?
5. Why is Tulla afraid of Snake?
6. Look closely at Snake's tongue. How is it different from a person's tongue?
A: It's a forked tongue - split in two.
7. Why does a snake have a forked tongue?
A: Its tongue collects information that tells it what animal is nearby.
8. Why does Snake stuff grass in the bell?
9. Why does Tulla go back to the nest and wake her brothers?
10. Could she have carried out her plan by herself? Why not?
11. What did Tulla, Ryan and Brian learn from following Tulla's plan?
12. What does the last illustration show? How do you think the other mice will feel about Tulla, Ryan and Brian now that the last snake is gone from Ireland?
13. What did you like best about the book?
14. Who is your favorite character? Why?



SUBJECT TIE-INS

Culture--Holiday

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated with Irish music, Irish step dancing, parades, wearing green, the shamrock, leprechauns, and leprechauns' gold at the end of a rainbow, and now Tulla mouse, and her brothers, Brian and Ryan, as they help St. Patrick drive the last snake from Ireland.

Discuss how students celebrate St. Patrick's Day.



Symbols

Look at the title page.

1. What is the meaning of the Celtic symbol?

A: There are different interpretations of the Celtic cross. One is that it indicates Irish/Scottish identity. Another is religious, that it represents the endlessness of God's love.

2. What has the illustrator added to the cross?

A: The shamrock, a three-leaf clover, to represent St. Patrick who spread the word of Christianity. The three leaves represent the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He also includes three mice and a snake.

3. Why did he add these things?

A: To represent each of the characters in the book.

4. Study symbols of Ireland.

History:

Discuss St. Patrick. Who was he? When did he live? How did he tell the Irish people about Christianity? Some of the bells (called cloggas) that St. Patrick rang as he spread the word of Christianity throughout Ireland are on display in the national Museum of Ireland.

Language Arts

1. The story of St. Patrick driving the snakes from Ireland is called a legend. How is a legend different from a story based on fact? What are some other legends?

2. Character development: What do you know about Tulla? Is she smart? Is she brave? How can you tell?

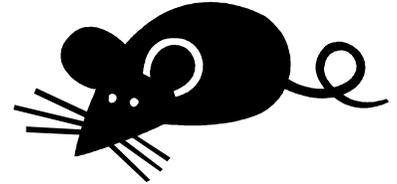
3. What do you know about Ryan and Brian? Are they willing to help Tulla? Why do they tell her to go away at the beginning? Why do they tell her she's the "smallest," the "lightest," and the "quietest" when one of them has to tie the rope to the bell?

Art

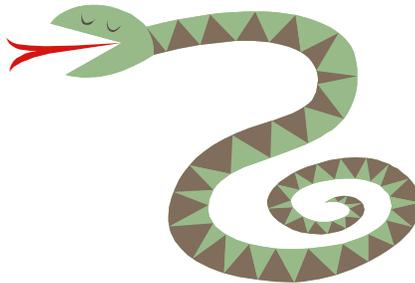
Explain that artists have different ways of making pictures. Herb Leonhard starts by taking photos that he uses as a base for his pictures. He then uses the computer to create a template (a pattern) the same size as the board he paints the picture on. After that, he scans the picture into the computer, where he applies finishing details.

Science

1. Mice. Mice are mammals, warm-blooded animals. How do they build their nests? Where do they live? What do they eat? What animals beside snakes are their enemies?



2. Snakes. Snakes are cold-blooded animals. Where do they live? What do they eat? What are their natural enemies? Are there any snakes in Ireland?



Readers' Theatre

Go to <http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/Tips2.html> for tips on staging and <http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/Tips3.html> for tips on reading.

1. Read *St. Patrick and the Three Brave Mice*
2. Discuss the story and pictures
3. Do Readers' Theatre—

Readers' Theatre Treatment
for
St. Patrick and the Three Brave Mice
by
Joyce A. Stengel

Adapted for readers' theatre by the author, from her picture book published by Pelican Publishing Company, Inc., Gretna, Louisiana 2009

Preview: When St. Patrick has driven all but one crafty snake out of Ireland, the mice--Ryan, Brian, and Tulla--devise a risky plan of their own to outwit the wily reptile.

Genre: Fiction.

Readers: 7

Culture: Ireland--Legend.

Ages: 4-10

Theme: Courage

Roles:

Characters:

Narrator One,
Narrator Two
Narrator Three

Tulla
Ryan
Brian
Snake (holding toy snake)
St. Patrick (makes snoring sounds and rings bell)

Narrator One: Many years ago, St. Patrick traveled the roads and byways of Ireland driving out the snakes with a bell.

Narrator Two: But one crafty, clever snake escaped.

Narrator Three: This snake slithered through meadow and forest.

Narrator One: He hunted for tasty mouse meals.

Narrator Two: One night, three little mice, Ryan, Brian, and Tulla, cuddled in their nest.

Narrator Three: Ryan and Brian soon fell asleep.

Narrator One: But Tulla was restless.

Narrator Two: When the moon rose high, Tulla scrambled from the nest.

Narrator Three: Light as a whisper, she skittered up her favorite hill.

Narrator One: She snuggled into a leaf and gazed up at the stars and the moon.

Narrator Two: Then she heard a loud snore.

St. Patrick: Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz. (a bell by his side)

Narrator Three: She looked down the hill.

Narrator One: A man slept under a tree.

Narrator Two: A bell glowed at his side.

Narrator Three: Tulla's whiskers twitched.

Tulla: "Could that be St. Patrick and his miraculous bell?" (wonderment in her voice)

Narrator One: Snake slithered from the forest.

Narrator Two: He looked around and hissed,

Snake: "Hsssss. I'm hungry. Where's a little mouse?" (scary sounding)

Narrator Three: Tulla hid behind a mushroom and peeked out.

Narrator One: When Snake saw St. Patrick, he cried,

Snake: "Oh no! There's St. Patrick with his wicked bell. But I know how to escape him."

Narrator Two: Snake took a mouthful of grass.

Narrator Three: He slithered to the bell and poked the grass around the clapper.

Narrator Three: They braided a rope.

Tulla: “Now one of us must tie this rope to the bell’s handle.”

Ryan: “You are the smallest.”

Brian: “And the lightest.”

Ryan & Brian: “And the quietest.”

Narrator One: Trembling, Tulla grabbed the rope with her teeth.

Narrator Two: She dragged it towards the bell.

Narrator Three: She started to loop the end of the rope through the bell’s handle.

Narrator One: Snake’s tongue darted out.

Snake: (darts tongue out)

Narrator Two: Tulla didn’t move.

Narrator Three: Not a whisker.

Narrator One: Snake settled back to sleep.

Narrator Two: Tulla tied the rope.

Narrator Three: The three mice tugged the bell back to St. Patrick.

Narrator One: Blade by blade, they removed the grass.

Narrator Two: Tulla was about to snatch the very last blade when Brian squeaked,

Brian: “Snake is coming!” (in a squeaky scared voice)

Narrator Three: Quick as a wink, Tulla clutched the bell’s clapper and shouted,

Tulla: “Stand the bell up!”

Snake: “I’ve got to stop them!”

Narrator One: Snake slithered closer.

Narrator Two: Ryan and Brian pushed the bell upright.

Snake: “Hsssssss. You can’t outsmart me.”

Narrator Three: Tulla swung on the clapper.

Narrators One, Two and Three: “BONG!”

Narrator One: St. Patrick sprang to his feet.

Narrator Two: Tulla scampered out as he snatched up the bell.

Narrator Three: Then St. Patrick rang his bell.

St. Patrick: “BONG! BONG! BONG!”

Narrator One: And drove that crafty, clever Snake to the sea.

Narrator Two: Ryan, Brian, and Tulla cheered as Snake slithered into the water and disappeared from Ireland forever.

Ryan, Brian, and Tulla: “Hip, hip, hurray!”

Narrator Three: And that is the tale of the three brave mice who helped St. Patrick drive the last snake from Ireland.

All Performers except Snake: “Hip! Hip! Hurray!”

ST. PATRICK AND THE THREE BRAVE MICE

By Joyce A. Stengel
Illustrated by Herb Leonhard

ACCELERATED READER PROGRAM SELECTION

“A courageous heroine and a good measure of suspense”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“It’s an engaging story, and kids may benefit from learning how cleverness, courage, and teamwork can empower even the smallest among us.”

—*Journal Inquirer*

“Joyce Stengel’s writing career has been touched by the luck o’ the Irish.”

—*The Hour*

St. Patrick settles in for a much-needed nap after driving the evil snakes from Ireland; however, one clever snake escaped the ring of his miraculous bell. Just in time to witness the sneaky snake stealing the bell from St. Patrick’s side, Tulla mouse knows something must be done. Realizing she cannot accomplish such an important task on her own, she calls upon the help of her friends, Ryan and Brian.

The three mice work quickly to devise a plan to return St. Patrick’s bell, but they know it will not be easy. Despite the fact these mice are no match for the snake in size and wit, their desire to right a wrong encourages them to work together. After putting their plan into action, the three mice are successful in returning the bell to St. Patrick, and all rejoice when Ireland is finally free of every snake.

Playful language accompanied by Celtic-inspired illustrations makes this hopeful tale of three brave mice a great lesson of teamwork and the ability of good to triumph evil.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joyce A. Stengel worked as a registered nurse for twenty years before she followed her passion of writing and received a B.A. in English from the University of Hartford in 1980, followed by a M.F.A. from Central Connecticut State University in 1988. She has since published five books, three of which were selected as an Aladdin Scholastic Book Fair Choice.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Herb Leonhard has worked as a freelance illustrator and graphic designer for more than two decades, specializing in children’s book illustrations. Through his advertising work, he has won numerous awards. Leonhard has also designed various promotional materials in support of local and national charities.

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By Joyce A. Stengel

Illustrated by Herb Leonhard

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JUVENILE FICTION / Holidays and Celebrations / Other, Non-Religious

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