

UNITED IN DIVERSITY



The Week
of
the Republic of Ireland

19th October 2015 – 23rd October 2015



On Monday, October 19th two 6th class pupils, **Valentina Alinčić** and **Roberta Vučinić** opened the Week of the Republic of Ireland in both English and Croatian language. Why in both languages? Because the pupils from the lower classes don't understand that much of English. As well as some teachers. So they did the opening speech bilingually and everyone could understand everything.



With the last words of the opening speech the national anthem ***The Soldier's Song*** started. They heard it for the first time ever...and it was in Irish, not English!

Sinne Fianna Fáil,
atá faoigheall ag Éirinn,
Buíon dár slua
thar toinn do ráinig chughainn,
Faoi mhóid bheith saor
Seantír ár sinsear feasta,
Ní fhágfar faoin tíorán ná faoin tráill.
Anocht a théam sa bhearna baoil,
Le gean ar Ghaeil, chun báis nó saoil,
Le gunna scréach faoi lámhach na bpiléar,
Seo libh canaig amhrán na bhfiann.

Soldiers are we,
whose lives are pledged to Ireland,
Some have come
from a land beyond the wave,
Sworn to be free,
no more our ancient sireland,
Shall shelter the despot or the slave.
Tonight we man the "bearna baoil",
In Erin's cause, come woe or weal,
'Mid cannon's roar and rifles' peal,
We'll chant a soldier's song.

The guided tour was led by a 6th class pupil **Vanja Vučinić** dresses like a little leprechaun, a tiny and witty (a bit naughty as well) creature from the Irish legends.



Not to get lost on the way...they just needed to follow the leprechaun.



There was a welcome desk with a Welcome sign in Irish as well as **Oscar Wilde** as a true representative of the Irish literature and a great figure to welcome all the visitors. There was a pot with shamrock decorated with the name of the country as well as a little leprechaun with his own pot of gold. **The shamrock** was an obvious choice since it's the symbol of Ireland. We couldn't find a stag as the Irish national animal, but we managed to find a fawn whom we named Liam (which means a strong-willed warrior or a protector). Although **Liam** is still a fawn, one day he'll grow up and become a beautiful Irish stag!



The next in line to represent the magical Ireland was a little fairy named **Órla** (which means a golden princess) with a pint of Guinness for the visitors. Why Guinness? Ireland is notorious for its dark beer.

*Have you tried it? If you did, let us know how it tastes. We aren't allowed to drink.
You know...being children and all that.*



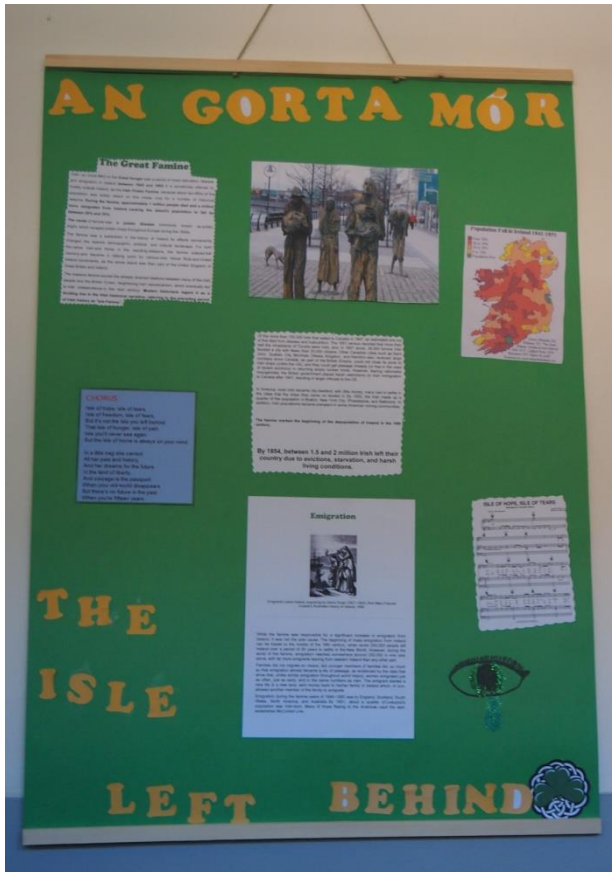
As every country has got a flag, so does Ireland and its flag is called the **Tricolor**. Why? Because it consists of three colours. Take a look at the photo to see which three.



After meeting Oscar, Liam and Órla, it was time to start our journey through Ireland. The first stop was its geography. So the pupils got the opportunity to find out that Dublin is its capital while there are other great cities such as Cork, Limerick, Galway and Sligo. They found out how similar Ireland is to our homeland and which two languages are spoken there. They were suggested to take lots of euros to buy their English teacher something nice if/when they go to Ireland.



The poster that followed presented the saddest event in the Irish history – the Great Famine. Pupils were shocked when they found out how many Irishmen had lost their lives due to the mass starvation and how many had to leave their isle. And it all began with the potato blight. The Emerald Isle became the isle left behind... What an impact it had on the Irish history is best seen from the fact that the period before the Famine is referred to as *the pre-Famine period*.



The pupils got to know how the Irish government functions. They learnt that the Republic of Ireland is a republic whose government is headed by the prime minister called the Taoiseach while the deputy prime minister is called the Tánaiste. There are also Seanad Éireann or the upper house of the Parliament called Oireachtas as well as Dáil Éireann or the lower house. They „met“ the Irish president Michael D. Higgins who has been elected for the period of seven years and can be elected for only two terms.

Another novelty for them was that the coat of arms is a golden harp with silver strings on a blue background.



Since we believe that the true power lies in women the following two posters were dedicated to the greatest women that have ever lived. And they lived in Ireland.

There's Queen Maeve who started the Cattle Raid of Cooley just to steal a bull. However, the bull belonged to her ex husband, King Ulster.

Grace O'Malley was known as the pirate queen or the sea queen. Her rebellious act of not kneeling before the Queen of England is legendary.

Catherine Hayes, often referred to as the „Madonna of her days“ was the most famous Irish soprano.

Betsy Grey was and still is a folk hero in both Ireland and the northern Ireland.

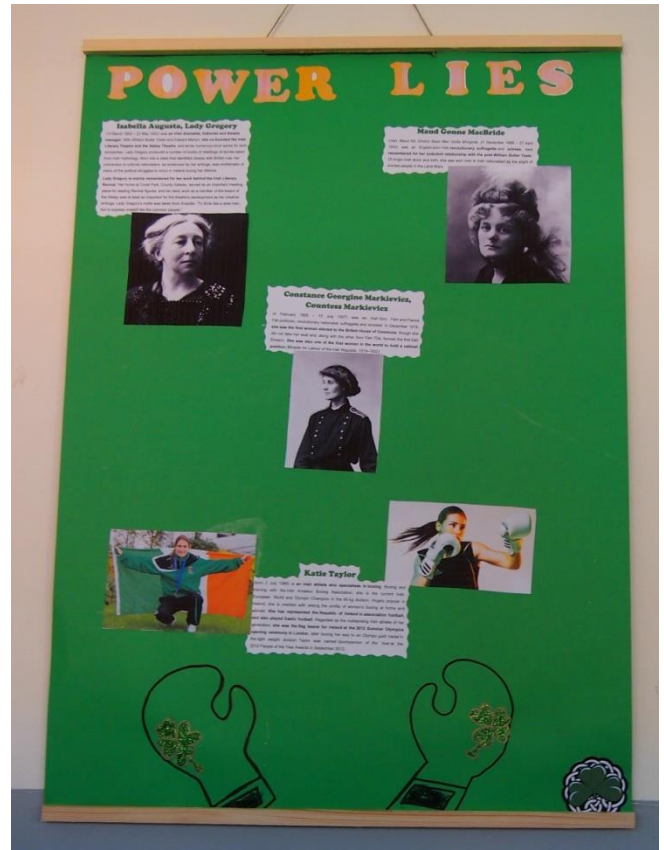
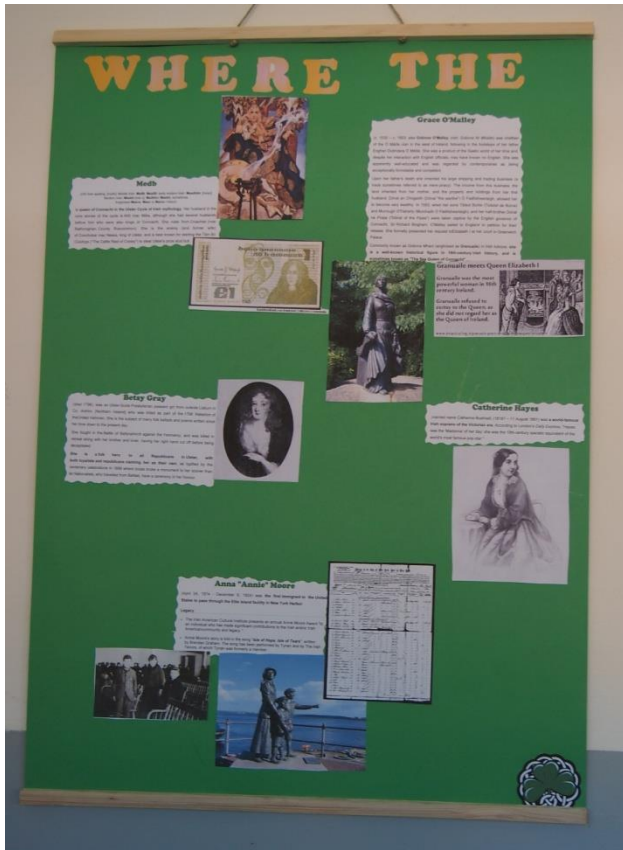
We should also mention Annie Moore since she is the first immigrant to the USA.

Lady Gregory co-founded two theatres while Maud Gonne is a woman responsible for Yeats' most beautiful verses (he proposed, she said no, he was hurt, she not so much...he wrote the most beautiful verses in his pain...for which he wasn't much thankful to Mrs Gonne...but we are because his poetry is definitely worth reading!).

Lady Markievicz was one of the first women in the whole world to hold a cabinet position.

And finally, the 21st century national hero is a young boxer Katie Taylor. You must have heard of her...because she's the Irish, European, World and Olympic champion in 60 kg division! Go, Katie!

So, as we have already said...The true power lies here, among all these great ladies.



If you ever decide to study in Ireland, the top 5 universities are Trinity College, Dublin City University, University College Dublin, University College Cork and University in Limerick. The first three are all situated in the capital – Dublin.

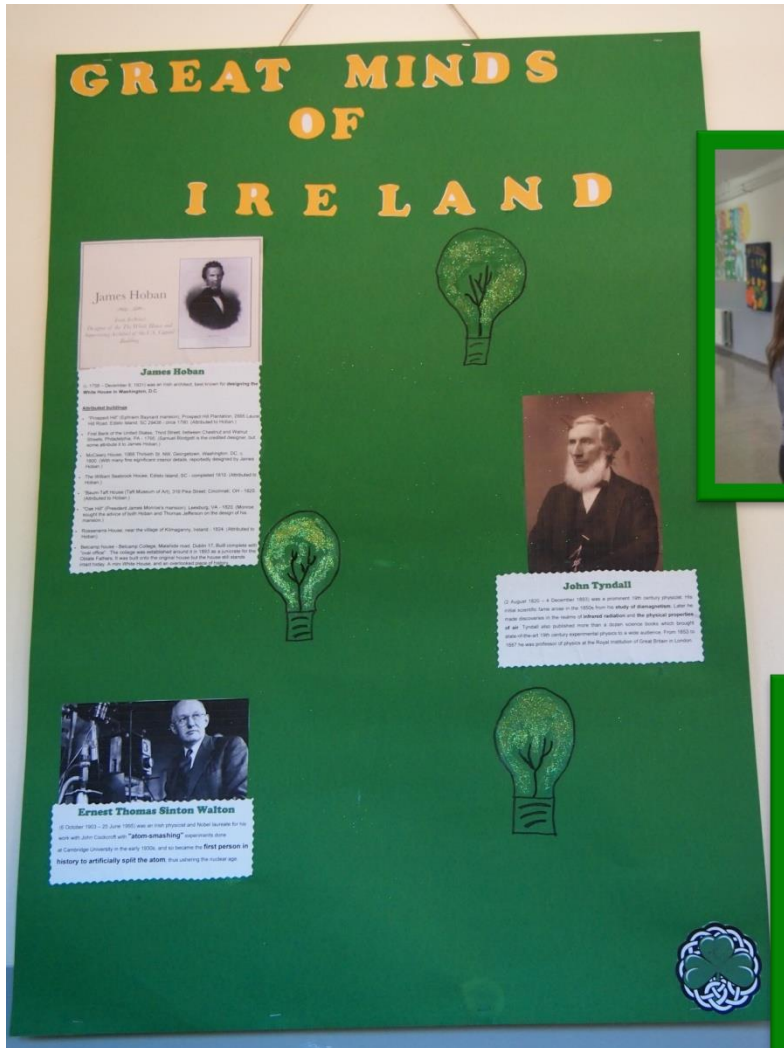


There are men in Ireland as well. We opted for three:

James Hoban or the Irishman who designed the White House in Washington, DC

John Tyndall or the Irishman who studied the infra-red radiation and the physical properties of air

and, Ernest Walton, a Nobel Prize winner and the Irishman who artificially split the atom



There are so many sights worth seeing in Dublin that we simply had to make not one but – three posters. And even that wasn't enough to include all Dublin's landmarks. Children liked the National Leprechaun Museum very much because it's about leprechauns and all things inside are extremely big so visitors are actually as tinny as leprechauns.

They were fascinated with Merrion Square after finding out how many famous Irish writers had lived there. Near that location, there's Oscar Wilde's statue that some of the pupils immediately recognised. Good for them!

There was Saint Patrick's Cathedral on one of the posters and they were very proud of themselves to remember that there are two cathedrals of the same name, one in the USA and the other one in Australia.

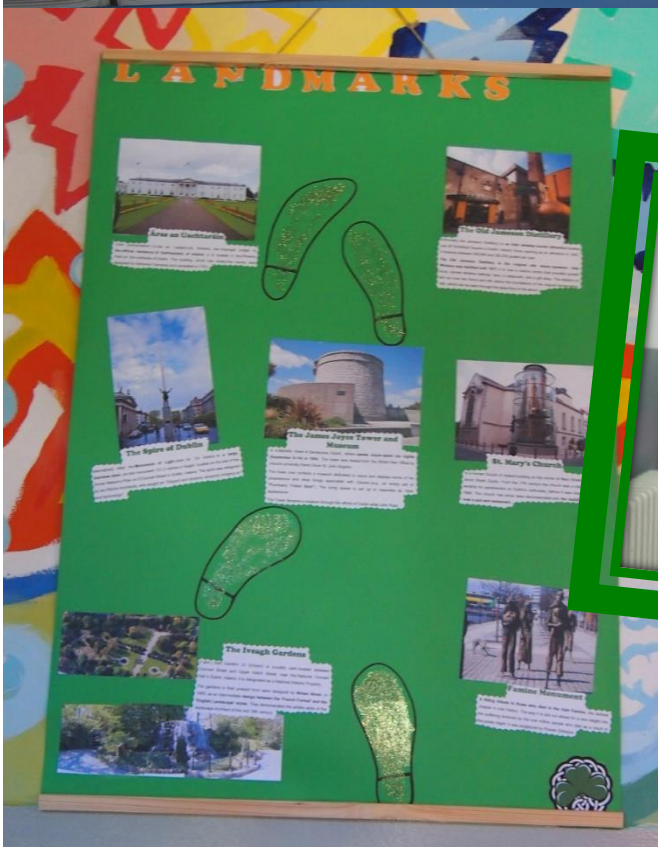
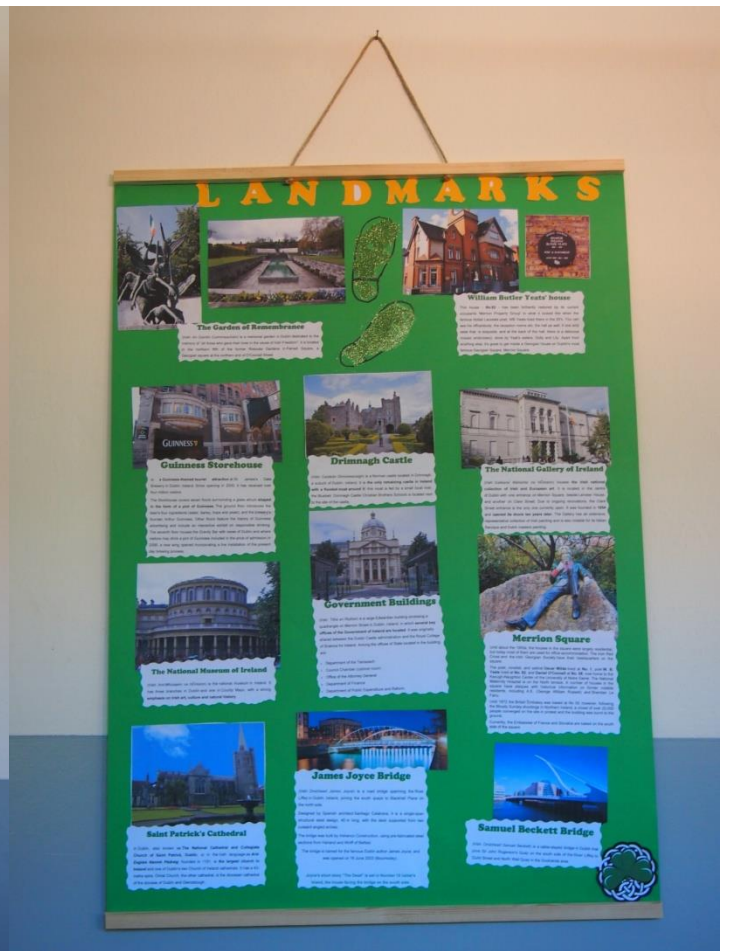
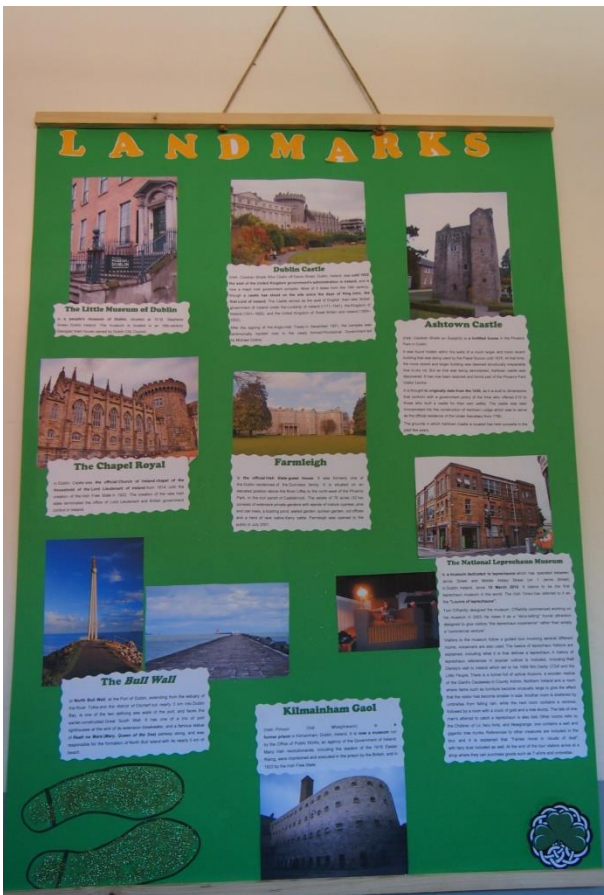
Then they noticed Saint Mary's Church which is no longer the church but it has been turned into a restaurant and a pub.

There were also two beautiful bridges named after two of the greatest Irish witors – one being James Joyce and the other one Samuel Beckett.

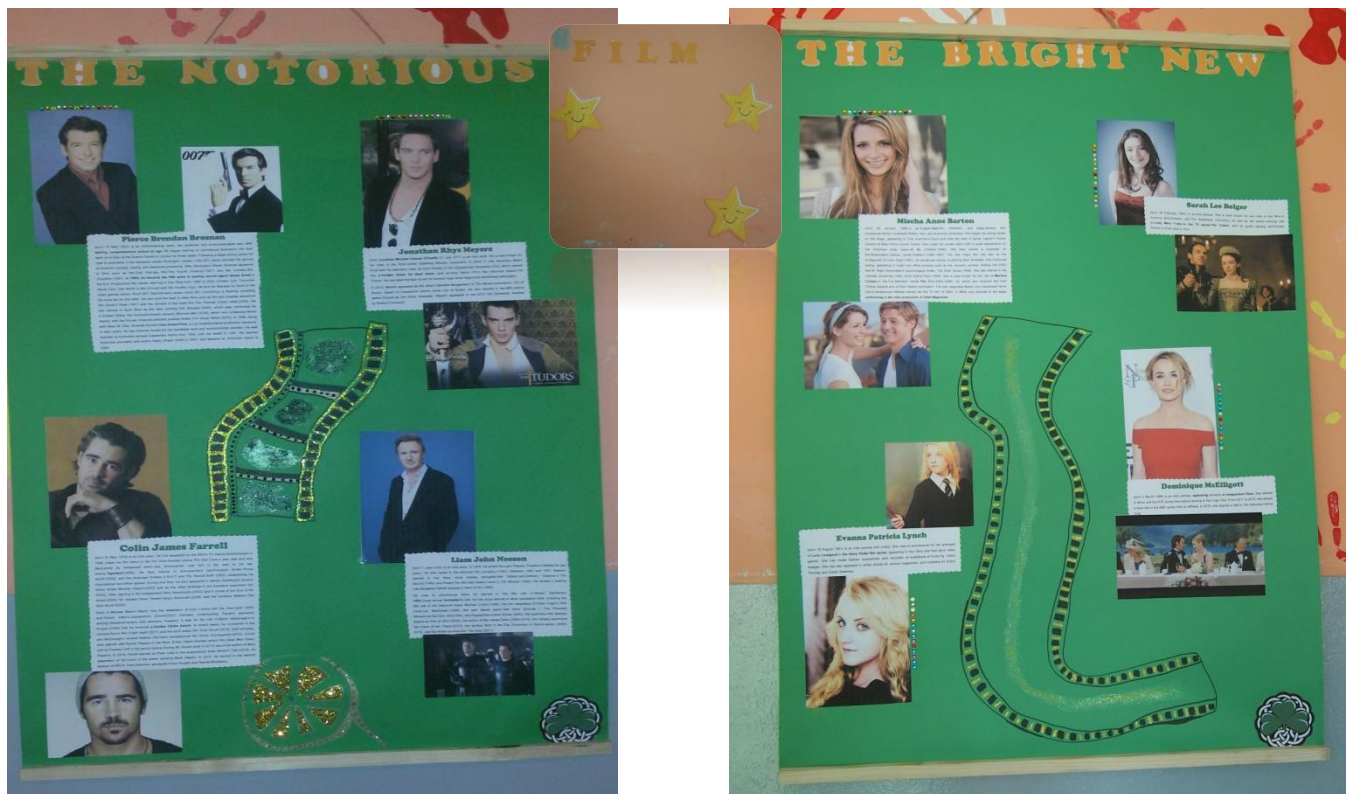
Kilmanheim Gaol was among the landmarks that drew their attention on the first sight because of the building itself. For those among you who don't know this – it used to be a prison. Today it's a museum.

Since there are many breathtaking castles in Dublin, we opted for several such as the Dublin Castle and the Ashtown Castle.

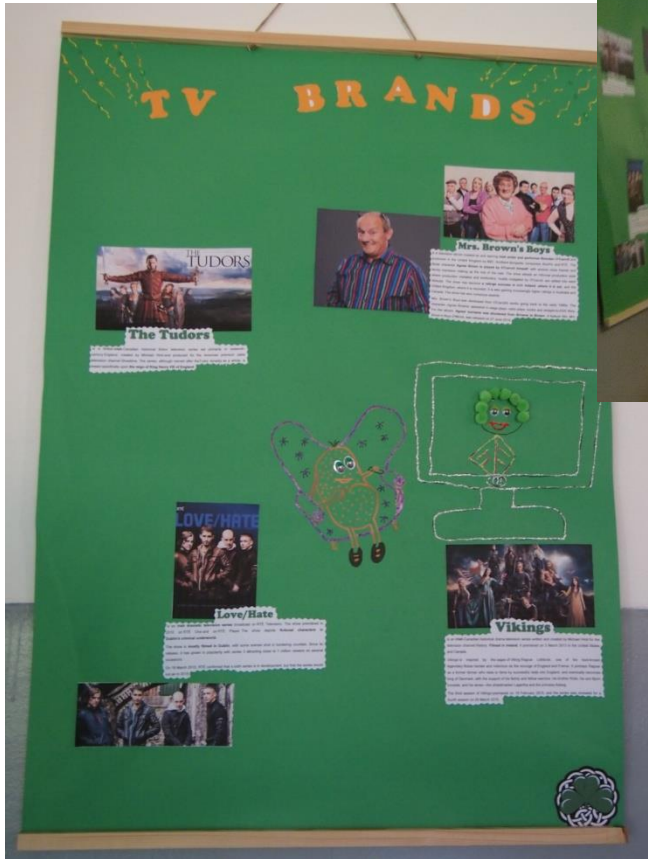
Considering how tiny Vanja the Leprechaun is...please have in mind that she can fit into any suitcase...and she likes travelling!



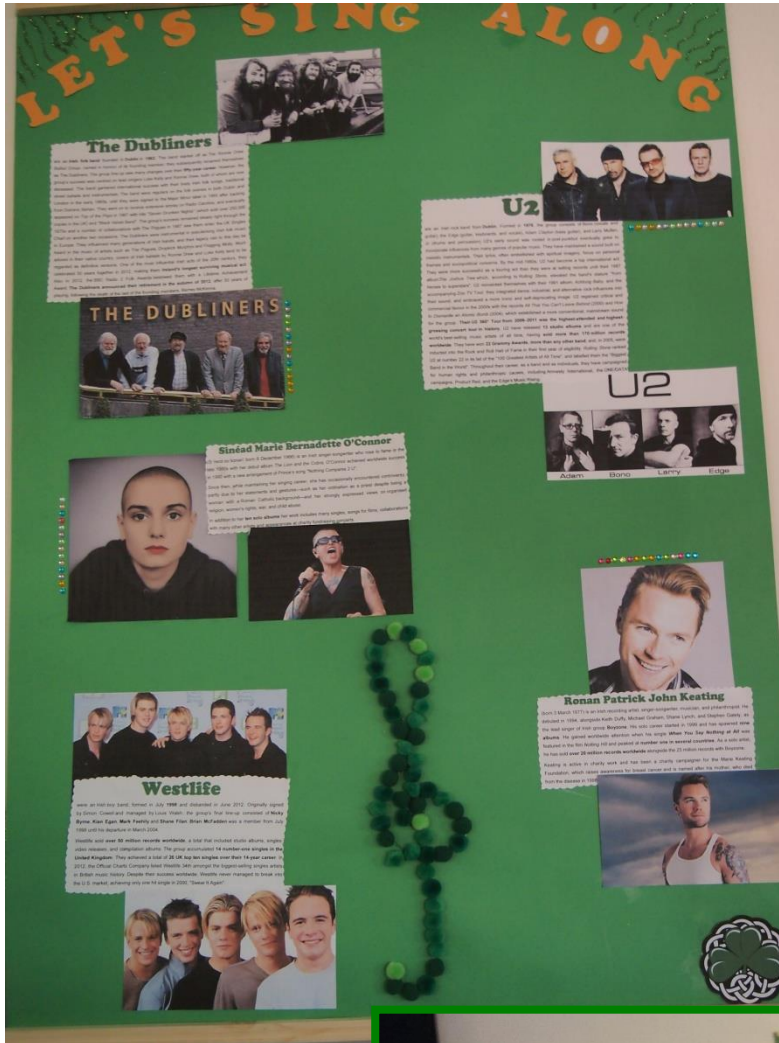
Walking through the landmarks of the capital, we came to the posters presenting the notorious and the bright new film stars. The notorious ones are all men: one of the best *Bonds* ever – Pierce Brosnan and the man the older generations know for his role in *Schindler's List* while the younger ones know his from *Batman*. There's also Colin Farrell and a star of *The Tudors* Jonathan Rhys Meyers. The bright new stars are Evanna Lynch or famous Luna Lovegood from several *Harry Potter* films, Misha Barton who made her name in *The OC*. There's Sarah Bolger who plays the role of Lady Mary Tudor in *The Tudors* and less known Dominique McElligott who plays mostly in the independent films.



The most famous TV brands we could find are already mentioned *The Tudors* that deal with Henry VIII and his reign. There's *Love/Hate* about the criminal underground of Dublin. *The Vikings* are made in the Irish production so we decided to put them on the poster as well. And finally there's *Mrs Brown's Boys* in which the main role of Mrs Brown is played by an actor Brendan O'Carroll.



After enjoying in the film industry, we came to the music which is represented by the legends such as The Dubliners and U2. But there's also one of the greatest vocalist ever and her name is Sinéad O'Connor. There's one boyband that split several years ago – Westlife and Ronan Keating, now a solo singer and before a member of another boyband called Boyzone.



After putting down our dance shoes, we came to the Irish literature or the Magnificent Four as we have called them: Jonathan Swift famous for his *Gulliver's Travels* that pupils read in the 6th class, George Bernard Shaw who wrote *Pygmalion* on which *My Fair Lady* starring Audrey Hepburn was made, James Joyce with his many works out of which we have chosen *The Dubliners* and Bram Stoker, the man who created ever-inspiring *Dracula*.



The last in line was the festive poster about Saint Patrick's Day (naturally). It's celebrated on March 17th and people usually dress up in green. Some even go so far as to dress up their dogs as seen on the poster. The symbol of Ireland is a shamrock which actually symbolised Christianity at the very beginning. It represents the Holy Trinity – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

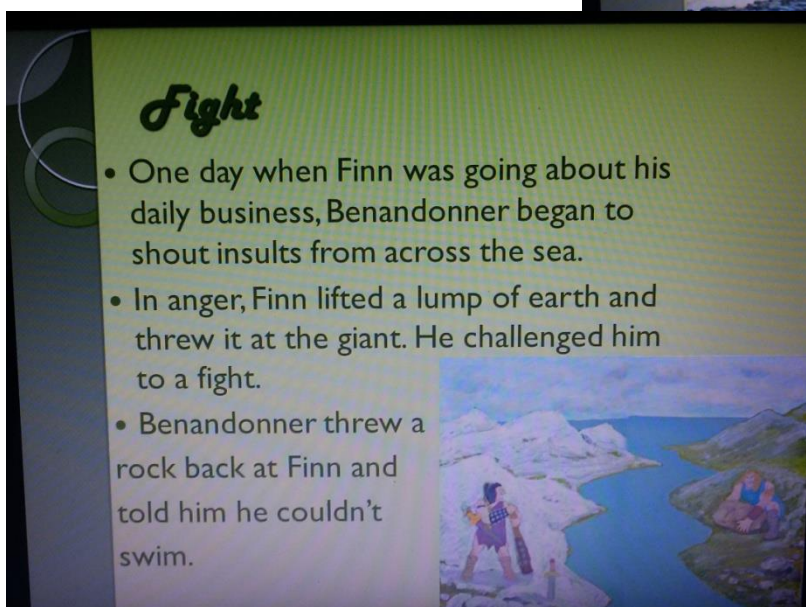
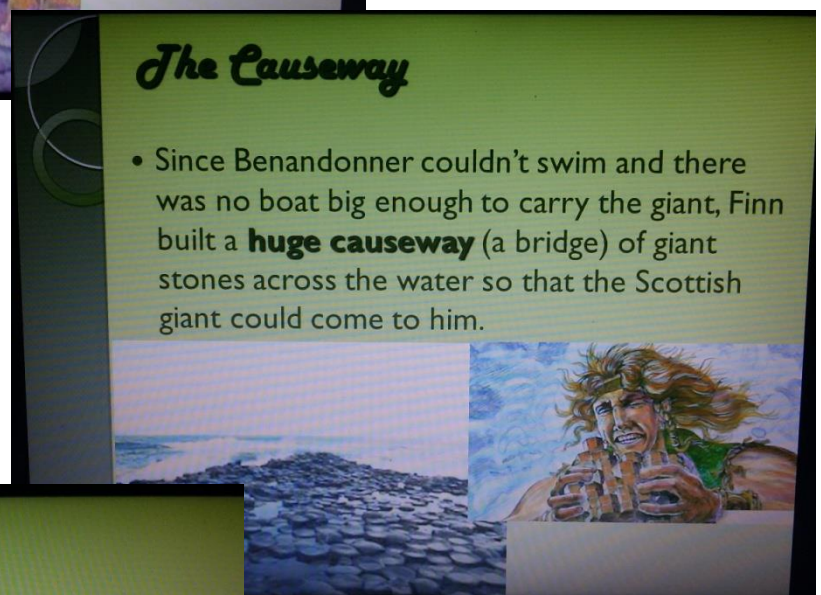
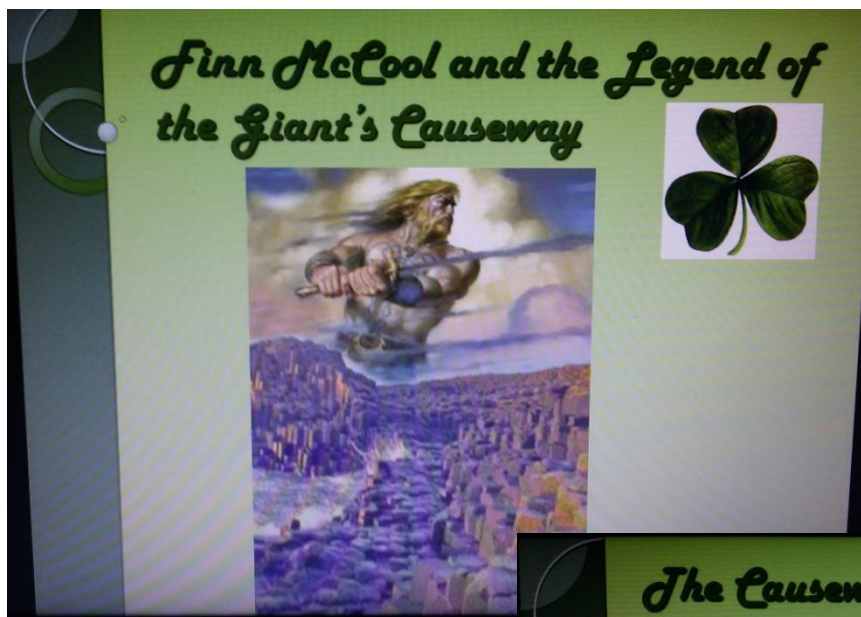
And so you know we can pronounce this:

Lá fhéile Pádraig sona daoibh!

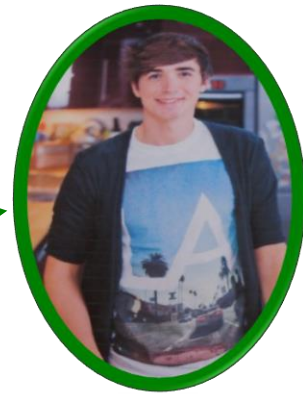
Can you?



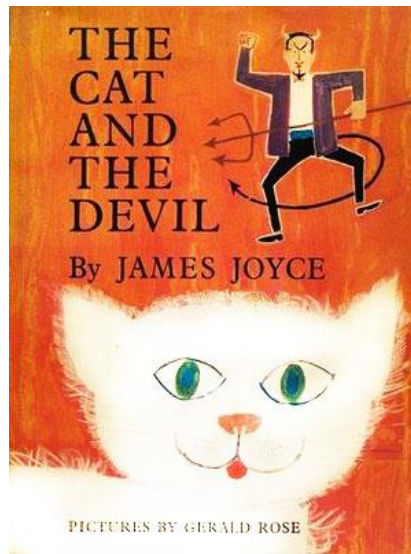
There was a Powerpoint presentation about the Irish giant Finn McCool who wasn't so cool when he saw the Scottish giant Benandonner. But luckily for him, he had a clever wife who saved the day disguising him as a baby. The Scotsman ran away after seeing „the baby“. He even destroyed the causeway so that Finn can't come to Scotland. If you are interested in the legend of the two giants, read „Finn McCool and the Giant Causeway“.



The British may have Jaime Oliver, but the Irish have Donal Skehan. And he's better looking than Jaime (at least my girls think so). If you want to try some traditional Irish dishes, you should follow Donal's recipes for Irish soda bread, Irish brown yeast bread, calcannon or the legendary Irish stew. When you make some, we promise to come!



There was a literary workshop held on James Joyce's *The Cat and the Devil* which the younger ones loved.



Little Doris from the 1st class drew and coloured a cat and a devil together with her mom Tea. As you can see even the parents participated.



A film workshop was also held. We watched a film called *The Magical Legend of the Leprechauns* from 1999 starring Randy Quaid and Órla Brady. It is a film based on the Shakespearean motive of love between „enemies“ like the one in *Romeo and Juliet*. In this case, a leprechaun named Mickey Maldoon falls in love with a fairy princess named Jessica. There's also the love story between a man and a woman, an American named Jack and an Irish named Kathleen.

After watching the film, we discussed the plot explaining its connection to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* as well as talking about different magical creatures mentioned in the film.

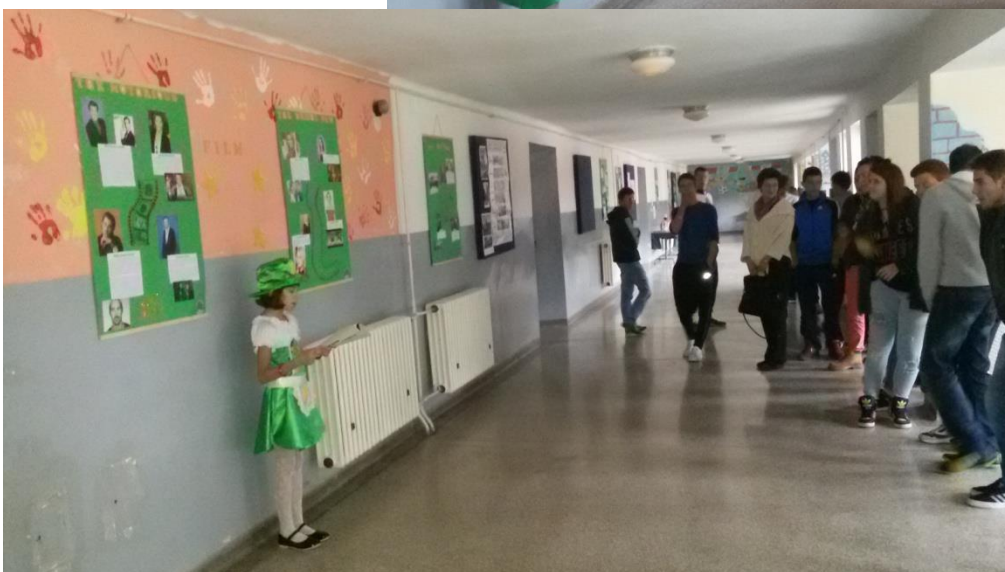
Afterwards, we made a poster dedicated to the film.



During the Week of Ireland all the classes were taken on a journey through the isle. We had visitors who were also interested in finding out more about the Emerald Isle. We would like to thank our visitors from Severin na Kupi for coming and their teacher for bringing them.



We would also also to thank the best neighbours in the world - our neighbouring Railway Technical School, Moravice for coming and supporting us in this project.



Vanja also took our teachers on a journey through the isle. They were happy to see all that we have done and the way culture is taught in our little school.



After the last tour through Ireland we all went to meet Mr Paul O'Grady, the leader and the director of Irish Maiden, the first school of Irish dances in Croatia. He held a workshop which was a combination of the presentation about the Irish culture, singing and of course, dancing. All of us had a great time dancing the Irish dances. We thank Paul for coming and being a patient teacher to both teachers and pupils.





Vanja the Leprechaun also did an interview with Paul O'Grady which he himself called the best interview he has ever had in the last 13 years.



After the workshop there was a little reception at the school and it was very green, but the best thing was the „Irish“ cake.

Take a look at it and you'll immediately see why we call it the „Irish“ cake.



We would also like to thank **the Embassy of the Republic of Ireland** for supporting us every step of the way.

Special thank you goes to **the Ambassador, Mr Tim Harrington** who wanted to come but unfortunately couldn't make it.

And one more thank you goes to **Mr Bernard Urban** from the Embassy who was very helpful and supporting.

You have...

...a beautiful homeland everyone should visit

...a language you should try to preserve

...the dances you should teach worldwide

...the writers everyone should read

...and much, much more.

Sláinte!

