

Speaking Card 28

Basic Facts about Ireland

● Where is Ireland?

Ireland is an island located in the Atlantic Ocean, next to Great Britain. The island is divided into / has two parts: Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Ireland. The Republic of Ireland covers just over 80 % of the island and about 4.5 million people live there. Around 1.8 million people live in Northern Ireland. People speak English and Irish, which is a Celtic language.

● What are some things Ireland is famous for?

Irish dancing is very well known around the world. A lot of people watch *Riverdance* every year. Irish music, both traditional and modern, is popular too. For example, U2 is one of the biggest rock bands in the world and Ireland has won the Eurovision Song Contest more times than any other country.

● What is the relationship between the English and Irish?

For about 800 years, England ruled / controlled Ireland and there was a lot of fighting between the two countries. Then, in 1922, Ireland won / got its independence from the UK / United Kingdom. But part of Ireland wanted to remain / stay in the UK / United Kingdom. That's how the two different countries were formed / created in the north and south of the island. Today, Ireland and England are friendly neighbours. Like all the countries of the British Isles they share / have a similar culture and way of life.

● What can you see in Ireland?

Ireland is known as / called the Emerald Isle because it has lots of green fields and beautiful countryside. The Wild Atlantic Way is the longest coastal road in the world. It runs / goes along the west coast. The Burren is an unusual moon-like

area of rocky land. The Cliffs of Moher are famous high cliffs. Newgrange is an ancient / a very old historical site / building. It is older than both the Great Pyramids and Stonehenge. Derry is a famous walled city.

● What do you know about Dublin?

Dublin is the Republic of Ireland's capital city. Around 1.8 million people live there. It is the home of Guinness, a famous type of dark beer sold in over 150 countries. Many world-famous poets and writers also come from / were born in Dublin. They include Bram Stoker, who wrote *Dracula*. Dublin's Temple Bar area is popular for its live music / bars and pubs. And one of the oldest and most famous books in the world, *The Book of Kells*, is kept at Trinity College, a famous university.

● What are some of the symbols of Ireland?

The Irish or Gaelic harp is Ireland's national symbol. It is on money and government papers. The design is based on / comes from an instrument called the Brian Boru Harp. This harp is over 600 years old and is on display / can be seen at Trinity College. Northern Ireland uses the harp symbol too. The shamrock is another symbol of all Ireland. It is connected to Christianity.

● Do you know any famous Irish people?

Bono is the main singer in U2, one of the world's biggest rock bands. Niall Horan is a member of the biggest boy band in the world, One Direction. Katie Taylor is an Olympic, European and world champion female boxer. Saoirse Ronan is a young female actor. She has acted in Hollywood movies like *Atonement* and *The Lovely Bones*. Other well-known Irish actors include Liam Neeson, Colin Farrell and Jonathan Rhys Meyers.



03 gate

