

the ARTICLE (for instructors)

Danny Boy Banned

On March 17th of each year, every person enjoys honorary Irish heritage for a day. It's St. Patrick's Day, and from north to south and east to west across the globe, in New York City and Buenos Aires and Tokyo, people watch parades, imbibe green beer, and tuck into a plate of corned beef and cabbage. The lead up to the festivities throughout the month sees a spike in all things Irish, too, especially Guinness purchases and Irish songs played on jukeboxes. But at a bar in Manhattan, the owner has nixed one thing particularly Irish for the whole of March, regardless of the holiday - the song "Danny Boy."

"Danny Boy," ranked as one of the twenty-five most depressing tunes of all time, seems far more appropriate for a funeral than a holiday celebration. It symbolizes the exodus in the 1800s, when Irish fled starvation and bleak economic conditions for more optimistic opportunities elsewhere. A number of other Irish songs offer similarly depressing fare, though, such as "Cockles and Mussels." The song relates the story of a young and beautiful fishmonger who dies of fever. Yet "Danny Boy" has gotten the axe.

The bar owner griped that the song simply gets far too much playtime during the month, and he was frankly sick of it. In fact, he promised that participants at the pre-St. Patrick's Day karaoke party would receive a Guinness on the house for singing any traditional Irish song but "Danny Boy."

Although some patrons are pleased with the decision, others consider it tantamount to blasphemy. A fair comparison would be the banning of "Jingle Bells" or "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" during December - something that just isn't done.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface are the answers.

the ARTICLE (for students)

Danny Boy Banned

On March 17th of each year, every person enjoys honorary Irish heritage for a day. It's St. Patrick's Day, and from north to south and east to west across the globe, in New York City and Buenos Aires and Tokyo, people watch parades, imbibe green beer, and tuck into a plate of corned beef and cabbage. a) _____

_____, too, especially Guinness purchases and Irish songs played on jukeboxes. But at a bar in Manhattan, the owner has nixed one thing particularly Irish for the whole of March, regardless of the holiday - the song "Danny Boy."

"Danny Boy," ranked as one of the twenty-five most depressing tunes of all time, seems far more appropriate for a funeral than a holiday celebration. It symbolizes the exodus in the 1800s, b) _____

_____. A number of other Irish songs offer similarly depressing fare, though, such as "Cockles and Mussels." c) _____. Yet "Danny Boy" has gotten the axe.

d) _____, and he was frankly sick of it. In fact, he promised that participants at the pre-St. Patrick's Day karaoke party would receive a Guinness on the house for singing any traditional Irish song but "Danny Boy."

e) _____, others consider it tantamount to blasphemy. A fair comparison would be the banning of "Jingle Bells" or "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" during December - something that just isn't done.

Notes:

STEP ONE

Discuss: Do you agree or disagree? Why?

a.	St. Patrick's Day is one of my favorite holidays.
b.	I want to drink green beer and sing Irish songs on St. Patrick's Day.
c.	It's okay if a bar wants to ban St. Patrick's Day celebrations.
d.	It's okay if a bar wants to ban certain songs on St. Patrick's Day.
e.	It's okay if a bar wants to ban certain customers on St. Patrick's Day.

STEP TWO

Questions: Read as much of the article as you can in two minutes. Guess the answers to the questions below, then listen to your teacher read the article. Try to confirm your answers.

a.	According to the article, everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day.	T / F
b.	"Danny Boy" is ranked as the most depressing song of all time.	T / F
c.	"Danny Boy" is about a fishmonger who dies of fever.	T / F
d.	The owner of the bar thinks the song gets played too much in March.	T / F
e.	Most people are upset about the bar owner's decision.	T / F

STEP THREE

Fill in the Blanks: Listen and fill in the missing sentences. Compare answers with a partner, and then listen once more.

STEP FOUR

Summarize: Work with a partner to summarize the article in your own words.

STEP FIVE

Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

a.	Did you like this article?
b.	Are there any songs you particularly hate? Would you consider banning those songs? Why/not?
c.	What else would you ban besides a particular song? Why would you ban it?
d.	Are any holidays in your country associated with a particular song? If yes, please explain.