



Name _____

The Blarney Stone

Read about the history and legends of the famous Blarney Stone and answer the questions that follow.

The Blarney Stone is a block of stone set in the wall of the Blarney Castle tower in the village of Blarney, Ireland. The stone is between the wall and the parapet. A parapet is a low protective wall along the edge of a roof, bridge, or balcony. The castle was built in 1446 by Cormac Laidhiv McCarthy. This castle is now a favorite tourist destination in Ireland. More than 300,000 people visit it each year. Many famous people like Winston Churchill have kissed the Blarney Stone! To kiss the blarney stone is not an easy task. The stone is tough to reach. Anyone who wants to kiss the stone has to lie on their back, bend backwards and downwards and hold on to iron bars for support to get to it. Kissing the blarney stone is said to give the gift of wit and eloquence of speech.

Many legends are associated with the Blarney stone. According to one legend, an old woman cast a spell on the stone to reward a King who had saved her from drowning. It gave the king the ability to speak sweetly and convincingly if he kissed the stone. Another legend is that the castle's builder was involved in a lawsuit and pleaded to a witch to help him. She put a spell on the stone that allowed McCarthy the ability to speak eloquently and win his case in court. The most commonly accepted story though, was that the stone was a gift of thanks for Irish support at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

1. How many people visit the Blarney Stone each year? _____

2. Where is the Blarney Stone located? _____

3. What is a parapet? _____

4. The Blarney Stone is said to give the gift of what, if kissed? _____
