

## St. Patrick's Day Art Project

It's green. It's lucky. And guess what: St. Patrick's Day is a kindergarten social studies topic, too! This year, kids are learning about major holidays in their communities, and kindergarten classrooms usually feature special treats like shamrock crafts and picture book read-alouds. As your child explores this day, you've also got a great opportunity to bring the day home with some "leprechaun" fun. You know—those mischievous characters who leap in to cause all sorts of whimsical mischief? The ones you never see, but who you "know" are real because of their "leprechaun gold"? Here's a cute discovery game that should make everyone grin while giving those early social studies skills some joyful flex.



### What You Need:

- Piece of white construction paper
- White crayon
- Small tin of watercolors
- Clean, dry pebbles and gold spray paint...OR a small bag of gold-wrapped chocolate "coins"

### What You Do:

1. At some point when your child is at school or at least not paying any attention to you, collect some plain pebbles, wash and dry them, and then spray them with gold paint. (Or, just buy a small bag of gold-wrapped chocolate "coins").
2. Hide all but three of the pebbles or coins someplace in your home or yard, or even at a local park that you will visit later in the day.
3. Using the white crayon, make a simple "map" of the treasure, with a big shamrock for the magic place where it's hidden, along with the words "Happy St. Patrick's Day." Don't fuss about details on your map—this is kindergarten after all. At this phase, kids do not need to understand the compass rose, but they do need to match a rough drawing of a tree to a tree they see, and be able to decipher whether to go to its left or right!
4. When you've finished your map, leave it in some place where it will look like it's been dropped by accident, such as on the floor next to your kitchen table, or on a front step. Drop a few gold pebbles nearby, as if the leprechauns have been in such a rush, they lost track. Finally, open a watercolor tin and leave it strewn near the paper with a brush nearby.
5. When you're ready, make it a show for your child. Be sure to act really surprised, with incredulous questions of "What could this be?" "Who comes mysteriously to a house and leaves gold?" (As a result of kindergarten stories, expect an authoritative answer: Leprechauns!) Then examine the paper and again theatrically suggest an aha! There seems to be something written there!
6. Have your child paint over the entire picture with watercolor. The crayon will resist the water-based paint, and your map will magically pop up!
7. Help your child decode the map and the words. This may take a minute; kids this age are just learning to transfer two dimensions to three. Once the "aha" happens, though, do be prepared for a mad dash. After all, you've hit three levels in one here: you've supported kindergarten holiday learning, kindergarten map skills, and above all, seriously happy family fun.