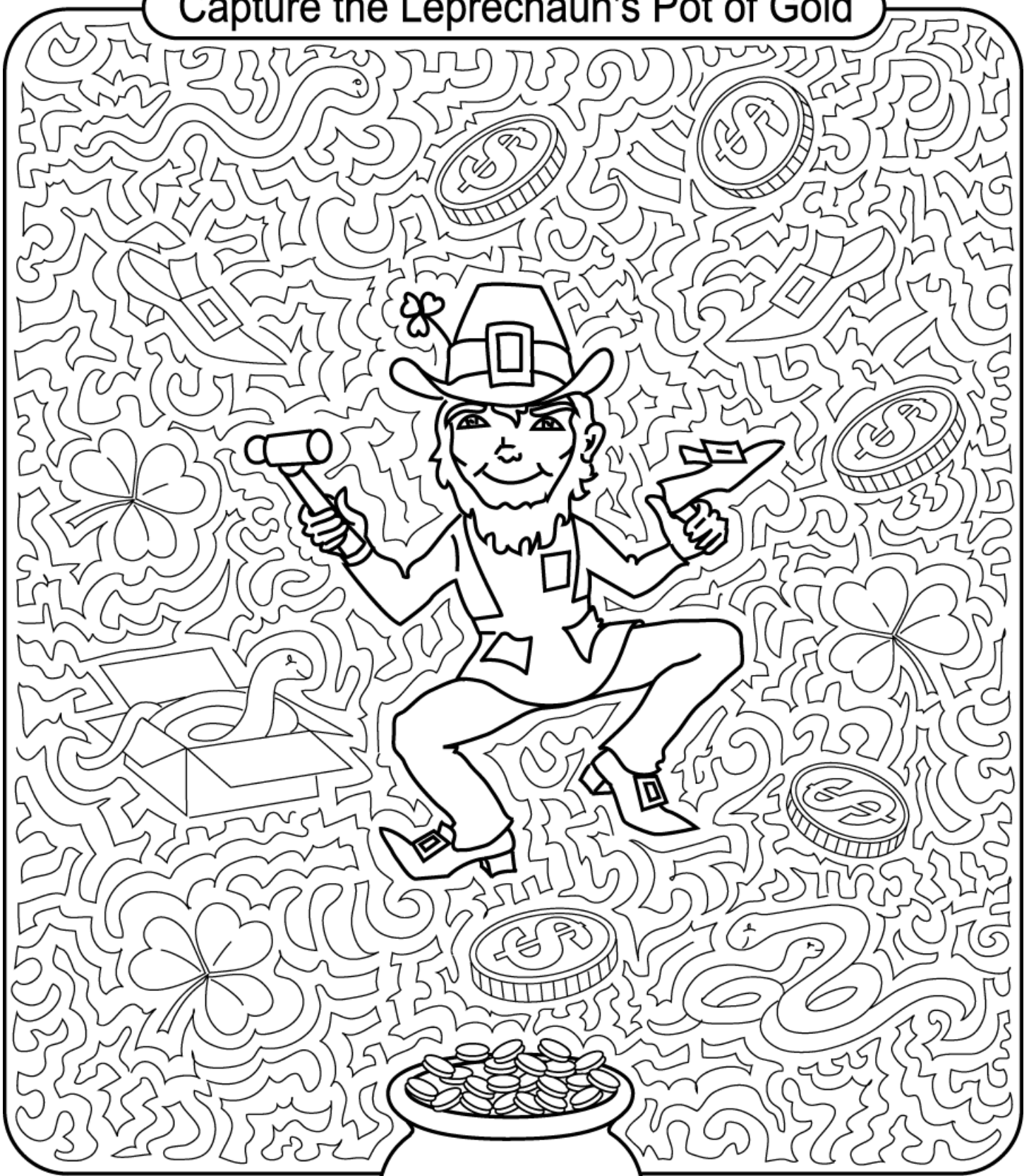


# Capture the Leprechaun's Pot of Gold



Find one box and color it purple.  
Find two shoes and color them brown.  
Find three shamrocks and color them green.  
Find four snakes and color them blue.

Find five coins and color them yellow.  
Now you can capture the leprechaun.  
Color the leprechaun's beard red.  
The pot of gold is yours. Color it orange.

## Background Information for Teachers and Parents

### A Short History of St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick was born Maewyn Succat in Wales in 389. At sixteen he was kidnapped by pirates and sold into slavery in Ireland. Six years later he escaped to France where he was eventually ordained a deacon and adopted the Roman name Patrick. He long dreamed of returning to Ireland to preach, and in 432 he was consecrated as Bishop and sent there to spread the Christian faith.

His twenty years of work building schools and converting the pagan Celts made him one of Ireland's most honored patrons, and the Catholic Feast Day honoring his death on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 461 has become a day for celebrating Irish culture, a day when "everyone's Irish." The first U.S. celebration of St. Patrick's Day was in Boston in 1737, and today more than a hundred cities across the country sponsor St. Patrick's Day parades.

In his preaching, St. Patrick adopted the three-leaf shamrock as a symbol of the Christian Trinity. It had been the sign of the Celtic goddess Brigit, representing her three responsibilities: poetry, healing, and crafts.

Also particularly identified with Irish culture on St. Pat's Day is the Leprechaun ("one-shoe" in Old Irish), a mischievous, elfin shoemaker in leather apron and plumed hat. People believed you could find a Leprechaun by listening for the sound of his hammer tapping away in the night, and if you captured him, he would lead you to hidden treasure. But this was not easy. the instant you took your eyes off a Leprechaun he would disappear, and captured Leprechauns would do almost anything to distract you.

Finally, St. Patrick was famous for having driven the snakes, perhaps symbols of evil, from Ireland, which is unlikely since there were no snakes there to begin with. Still, the story is that when he was de-snaking, one old serpent refused to go. When St. Patrick offered it a comfortable box as a home, the snake said the box was too small, and crammed itself inside to prove its point. Whereupon St. Patrick tossed the box, snake and all, into the sea.

