

HALLOWEEN TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD



NAME:

GRADE:



Samhain

Before Halloween



Samhain is an ancient tradition from Scotland and Ireland, celebrated many years ago. For the old Celts who lived there, Samhain marked the end of summer and the beginning of winter. They believed that at this time of year, the boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead became very thin, allowing spirits to enter our world.

The Druids, who were a kind of priests and wise men, played an important role in Samhain. They lit large bonfires, around which people gathered. These fires were meant to scare away evil spirits and protect the living. People also threw small offerings, such as food, into the flames to ensure that the dead were happy and wouldn't come too close.

Another tradition during Samhain was that people dressed up in costumes, often as animals or spirits, to trick the real spirits and avoid being recognized by them.

When people from Scotland and Ireland later moved to North America, they brought the Samhain traditions with them. Over time, Samhain evolved into what we now know as Halloween. Children began dressing up in fun costumes and going from house to house for candy, and the bonfires were replaced by carved pumpkins with candles inside. This is how the old Samhain tradition transformed into the Halloween we celebrate today.

Old Halloween Traditions



Apple Snapping with a twist

Imagine an apple hanging from one end of a plank, while at the other end there's a burning candle. The plank is spun around, and you must try to take a bite of the apple – but be careful! If you're not quick enough, you might get a mouthful of hot wax from the candle instead of the juicy apple. This game, called "Snap Apple," was a fun yet slightly dangerous Halloween tradition, where you had to be both brave and fast to avoid an unpleasant surprise!



Fortune-telling with cabbage

In Scotland, there was a Halloween tradition of using cabbage to predict the future. Young people would go out into the field at night and blindly pull up a cabbage plant. The shape, size, and condition of the cabbage were believed to reveal something about their future marriage. A large, beautiful cabbage meant a handsome and wealthy spouse, while a small or crooked cabbage could foretell a less fortunate match. It was a fun, though slightly strange, way to get a glimpse into the future!



The strange Soul Cakes

In the old days, people baked soul cakes for Halloween. They were given to the poor, who in return promised to pray for the souls of the dead. The more cakes one received, the more souls they could help. Children would go from door to door singing for the cakes, much like today's "trick or treat." Soul cakes were small and round, and sometimes little surprises were hidden inside them. Although the tradition has become rare, the idea of sharing cakes to help souls is still rather magical!

What is Happening?



Describe each picture using three adjectives.

















The Day of the Dead



Día de los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead, is a tradition in Mexico where people celebrate and remember their deceased loved ones. The tradition takes place on November 1st and 2nd, with roots that trace back to the ancient Aztecs who lived in Mexico hundreds of years ago. The Aztecs believed that death was not the end, but part of a long journey, and they celebrated their dead to show respect and love.

Today, Día de los Muertos is a festival where people create beautiful altars called "ofrendas" in their homes or at cemeteries. These altars are decorated with photos of the deceased, their favorite foods, colorful flowers like marigolds, and sugar skulls known as "calaveras." The living believe that the dead return to visit them, and the ofrenda is a way to welcome them.

Día de los Muertos is a huge and very festive event in Mexico! It is one of the most important holidays in the country. Although the day is about remembering the dead, the atmosphere is far from sad. On the contrary, it is a lively celebration full of color, music, dancing, and lots of delicious food. People paint their faces as skeletons, often referred to as "La Catrina," a symbol showing that death can be beautiful and should not be feared.

In many cities, especially in places like Mexico City, Oaxaca, and Mixquic, there are large parades where people dress as skeletons and dance through the streets. The streets are also decorated with colorful paper banners called "papel picado," flowers, and candles.

Many people also visit cemeteries, where they decorate the graves with flowers and candles and spend the night there, eating, singing, and telling stories about their departed loved ones.

Dracula's Castle

Halloween in Romania is a truly exciting experience, especially if you visit Bran Castle, which many refer to as "Dracula's Castle."

Many years ago, Halloween wasn't celebrated in Romania as it is today. Back then, people were afraid of evil spirits, so they used garlic and other items to protect themselves. They believed in creatures like werewolves and vampires, which were part of their folklore. And it's no wonder—Dracula stories might actually be based on a real person, Vlad Dracul Tepes. Vlad was a prince who lived hundreds of years ago in Romania, and he was known for being very cruel.

At Bran Castle, you can go on a special Halloween tour while hearing spooky stories about Count Dracula. According to legends, Dracula could also turn into a bat and fly out at night to find blood, which he needed to survive. On the tour, you can see places in the castle where Dracula is said to have hidden, and you might discover secret passages and hidden rooms. Maybe you'll even encounter some "ghosts" along the way! There are pumpkins everywhere, and the castle is decorated with lots of candles and spooky decorations.

After the tour, there's a big party where both adults and children dress up in fun and scary costumes.



Do You Remember?



Assignment 1:

What did you read about in the text "Samhain - Before Halloween"?

At Samhain, there were bonfires, and people dressed up as animals and spirits.

Chocolate pie was an important Samhain tradition.

Hooligans were very important to the Samhain tradition.

Druids were important to the Samhain tradition.

Around Samhain, the boundary between the land of the living and the dead was thin.

Samhain means Christmas tree in Old English.

They threw weapons into the bonfire to combat the spirits.

They threw food into the bonfire to keep the spirits happy and satisfied.

Assignment 2:

Which old Halloween traditions have you heard about? Describe dem in the box.

Snap Apple



Fortune-telling with cabbage



Soul Cakes



Do You Remember?



Assignment 3:
Mark the right box.

The Day of the Dead is celebrated in Monaco.

TRUE

FALSE

The Day of the Dead is a big festive day with parades and lots of food.

On the Day of the Dead, people light candles at gravesites and stay there all night.

The atmosphere is sad on the Day of the Dead.

People create small altars in their homes to welcome the dead.

Halloween at Dracula's Castle has become a tradition in Poland.

Prince Vlad Dracul was a sweet and kind old man.

People in Romania were afraid of vampires and werewolves in ancient times.

It is said that Count Dracula could turn into a raven and fly out at night.

Witches and Halloween



Halloween in Salem, Massachusetts, is a fantastic experience filled with magic and history! Salem is known for its witch trials in 1692, and that's why Halloween is celebrated here in a special way.

In October, Salem transforms into a grand Halloween festival! The town is decorated with enormous pumpkins, some as large as 2 meters in diameter! They are carved with imaginative and spooky faces, lighting up the night. There are also plenty of decorations featuring ghosts, witches, and skeletons, turning the streets into a creepy wonderland.

One of the most exciting places to visit is the Salem Witch Museum. Here, you can learn about the old witch trials through engaging exhibits and theater. The museum showcases what life was like in Salem in 1692 and tells the stories of the people who were accused of being witches.

A fun part of Halloween in Salem is "Haunted Happenings," a massive festival that lasts throughout October. During this festival, you can enjoy parades, costume parties, and even witch tours, where you walk around the town and hear about the old witch tales. The festival attracts thousands of visitors each year and is filled with fun activities for the whole family. So if you love Halloween and are curious about witch stories, Salem is the perfect place to celebrate!

Did You Know?



Ghost Train in Japan

In Japan, trains become rolling haunted houses during Halloween! Every October, they decorate the trains with pumpkins, ghosts, and bats. Passengers can also dress up as their favorite monsters or superheroes. Some trains even offer small goodie bags for children! It's a fun way to turn an otherwise dull train ride into a magical Halloween adventure. Imagine riding through the city with ghosts hanging overhead and cobwebs in the corners—it's like being in a real horror movie!

Apple Peeling Ritual in Scotland



In Scotland, there's a fun Halloween tradition involving apple peeling. It's important that the entire peel comes off in one long strip! Then, people throw the peel over their shoulder. If the apple peel lands and forms a specific letter, it's said to represent the first letter of the person they will marry in the future. Sometimes the peel ends up as a strange, twisted shape, but it's always fun to guess what it could mean. This tradition is old, but it continues to thrive as a playful Halloween activity in many Scottish homes.

Mask Festival in Costa Rica

Día Nacional de la Mascarada Costarricense is celebrated on October 31st in Costa Rica each year. "Mascaradas" are large, colorful masks representing various figures, often based on ancient myths, legends, or famous people.

The tradition of mascaradas dates back a long time and began in small towns in Costa Rica, where people made large papier-mâché masks to celebrate special events. These masks were used in parades, where people walked through the streets, danced, and had fun. Often, the masks resembled "payasos" (clowns), ghosts, devils, or historical figures. The masks served as a way for people to express themselves, especially on topics that might otherwise be difficult to discuss openly. They also allowed people to let loose and engage in fun, and sometimes slightly risqué activities, without being recognized. Additionally, they could be used to humorously comment on political issues. The masks became an important part of both celebration and critique in local communities.

Today, Día Nacional de la Mascarada Costarricense is a grand celebration where you can see many masks in all shapes and sizes. There are parades in the streets with music, dancing, and lots of happy people. Masks from all over Costa Rica are showcased, and both children and adults can participate in the festivities by dressing up. Some masks can be very large and require multiple people to carry them!



Seek and Find



T W R A H E O W R C M I L J U N D F F L
T R W T U S K E L E T O N P Z D J G A G
E B Z S L I K S L A E E A H T E C S P E
D W T R A D I T I O N L R R L S V T A N
R E A P A Y A S O G L Y S E A Y L E R S
O L V G O G R C C E H L A N D D E E A Y
N E S I G L M W T U H O D L S K E A D M
N S W K L E K E O T R F S F H E K S E B
S K I K R B K N B E S N E T Z C N N N O
M R W P Q A S A E E Q P F Y L H U S S L
G O R Y U R L K R N M M S V J O R H B S
A L N O U M A D A E O M U S E U M A O K
P A O S T O P E R R N L G N E E R R P I
A M B D T I L K N S S K E D T L T E L K
Y E U R V E Y S I E T I N E P W I T C H
A H U S E A R A K N E A B N E R Y E S D
S E A S E V G E N R R L R B X D B F T E
O K L V A U E P L A C Y S Y R F I H M N
S S A S D J M R S C E L E B R A T I O N
F E L O F I M A S K S R D D O G G D I N

Find the words:

masks october pumpkin museum
parade celebration witch payasos
devil ghost monster skeleton

Did You Know?



Nut Crack Night

Nut Crack Night is an old Halloween tradition from Scotland and Northern England. Here, people would eat lots of freshly harvested nuts and throw their shells into the fire, where they would crackle and pop. Young people also used the nuts to tell the future. They would throw two nuts into the fire and name them after two people they wanted to test. If the nuts burned peacefully together, it meant the couple would be happy together. If the nuts jumped away from each other or popped, it was a sign that the relationship wouldn't last.



Hidden Knives in Germany

In Germany, people hide their knives on Halloween night. Why? To protect against ghosts and spirits! It is believed that the souls of the dead wander around on this night, and no one wants to risk one getting hurt. So, to avoid accidents, the knives are packed away in drawers and cupboards. It's a bit spooky but fun tradition that gets the whole family involved in the hunt to hide the knives—and no one is allowed to find them until the next day!



The Magical Barmbrack in Ireland

In Ireland, they bake a special cake for Halloween called Barmbrack. Before the cake is baked, small items like a coin, a ring, and a button are added to the dough. Once the cake is finished baking, it's cut into slices, and it's always exciting to see what you get in your piece. If you find a coin, it's said that you will become rich, and if you find a ring, there might be a wedding in your future!

Do You Remember?



Assignment 1:

What did you read about in the text "Witches and Halloween"?

In which American state do we find Salem?

What is Salem known for?

What is Haunted Happenings?

Assignment 2:

What fun Halloween traditions do they have in Japan, Scotland, and Germany? Draw a line from the country to the correct tradition.

Germany

Japan

Scotland

Halloween decorated trains

Hides all knives

Apple peeling

Do You Remember?



Assignment 3:
Mark the right box.

In Puerto Rico, they have a costume party for Halloween.

TRUE

FALSE

Costa Rica is known for their mask festival for Halloween.

In ancient times, the masks were made to rob banks.

In ancient times, the masks were made to scare away spirits.

The masks were made for social and political reasons.

Some of the masks are so large that several people have to carry them.

The Mask Festival takes place on October 31th.

The Mask Festival takes place on Christmas Eve.

The Mask Festival is brand new and started in 2023.

Ognissanti and the Bones of the Dead

Ognissanti is an important tradition in Italy, celebrated on November 1st. "Ognissanti" means "All Saints' Day" in Italian, and it is a day to remember all the saints who are significant in the Catholic Church.

Saints are individuals who have helped others, been very devout, or performed something particularly important for Christianity. They often serve as role models for others, and many believe that saints can help them if they pray to them.

Many saints have special days dedicated to their celebration, and there are also many churches and schools named after them. On Ognissanti, which means All Saints' Day, all saints are celebrated at once.

On Ognissanti, many Italian families visit cemeteries to lay flowers on the graves of their loved ones who have passed away. They decorate the graves, particularly with chrysanthemums, which are the flowers most associated with this day. It is a day to think about both the saints and their own family and friends who are no longer here.

In some parts of Italy, there is a tradition of making sweet cookies called "Ossi dei Morti," which means "bones of the dead." Although the name sounds a bit spooky, they actually taste very good! They are made from almonds and sugar and are shaped like small bones.



Kites in Guatemala



Festival de Barriletes Gigantes means "Festival of Giant Kites," and that's exactly what this celebration is all about! In the towns of Sumpango and Santiago Sacatepéquez, people gather to fly enormous, handmade kites into the sky.

The tradition began many years ago as a way to communicate with the dead. People believed that the kites could reach the heavens and send messages to their loved ones.

Today, the festival has turned into a grand event, with people spending several months building giant kites, some up to 20 meters in diameter! The kites are made of colorful paper and bamboo, and they are decorated with beautiful patterns and images.

It takes many people to get the large kites into the air, and it's not always easy! But when the kites finally soar high above the ground, it's an incredible sight.

The festival is a way to celebrate life, remember the deceased, and bring the entire community together in joy and color.

Who is Who?



Choose one of the eight people. Write 10 sentences where you describe him/her as well as possible. Ask your classmate or teacher if they can guess who you have chosen.



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Frankenstein's Castle



Halloween at Burg Frankenstein in Germany is an exciting experience! Burg Frankenstein is an old castle located on a hill near the town of Darmstadt. The castle is named after a historical figure named Johann Konrad Dippel, who lived there long ago. Johann Konrad Dippel was a physician and alchemist. He is known for his experiments and writings, which may have inspired Mary Shelley's famous book "Frankenstein" from 1818. The book is about a scientist, Victor Frankenstein, who creates a creepy living creature through experiments.

Today, Halloween at Burg Frankenstein is a huge celebration! The castle is decorated with pumpkins, ghosts, and skeletons, and there are large bonfires and fireworks. Many visitors dress up as witches, monsters, and other spooky creatures, and there are exciting events like witch tours, haunted houses, and fun shows. The castle is said to be haunted, and many visitors love to hear the spooky stories about the ghosts that are supposed to live there. Burg Frankenstein transforms into a fantastic Halloween wonderland where both children and adults can enjoy a magical and slightly spooky celebration!

Did you Know?

About Guy Fawkes



Guy Fawkes Night, also known as Bonfire Night, is celebrated in England on November 5th. This special day has an exciting history that children and adults in England look forward to each year!



Long ago, in 1605, a man named Guy Fawkes attempted to blow up the British Parliament to kill the king and his government. Fortunately, the plot was discovered, and Guy Fawkes was caught. To celebrate that the assassination attempt failed, people began to make large bonfires and burn effigies (men of straw or paper) representing Guy Fawkes.



Today, Guy Fawkes Night is celebrated with large, colorful bonfires and fireworks that light up the night sky. People gather to enjoy the spectacular fireworks and warm bonfires. In many places in England, people create large, fun effigies of Guy Fawkes made from clothes stuffed with straw or paper, and these are burned on the bonfire. Children also go around the neighborhood saying "Penny for the Guy," asking for small coins to help make the effigies.



Guy Fawkes Night is also known for its song: "Remember, remember, the Fifth of November," which reminds people of this exciting story. It is a day filled with lights, music, and fun, and it's a fantastic way to commemorate a historical event!

Do You Remember?



Assignment 1:

What things did you read about in the text 'Ognissanti and the Bones of the Dead'? Color the correct answers orange.

Ognissanti means Halloween in Italian.

Ognissanti means All Saints' Day in Italian.

The Italians go to church for Ognissanti.

The Italians go to nightclubs for Ognissanti.

The Italians visit graves and decorate them with flowers.

The Italians dance in the mountains for Ognissanti.

Some people bake cookies called the blood of the dead.

Some people bake cookies called the bones of the dead.

Assignment 2:

How do they celebrate Halloween in Guatemala? Write what is special about their way of celebrating.

Do You Remember?



Assignment 3:
Mark the right box.

Frankenstein's Castle is decorated with gnomes for Halloween.

TRUE

FALSE

Frankenstein's Castle is known for being haunted.

Frankenstein's Castle is located in Sweden.

Frankenstein is a book from 1818.

Assignment 4:

Write four things Guy Fawkes Night is known for:

Hungry Ghost Festival

The Hungry Ghost Festival is an exciting and slightly spooky festival celebrated in China every year. It occurs in the seventh month of the Chinese calendar, which many call "Ghost Month." According to ancient Chinese tales, the door to the ghost world opens in this month, and the spirits of the deceased return to earth.

The origin of the festival goes back many hundreds of years. People believed that if the dead were not properly cared for, they could become angry and cause trouble. The Hungry Ghost Festival gets its name because it is believed that the ghosts returning to earth during this festival are very hungry. According to ancient Chinese tales, some of these spirits have not been treated well by their families, or perhaps they have not been properly buried. Therefore, they have not received the food and gifts they need in the afterlife.

It is believed that the hungry ghosts wander around the earth hoping to find food and things they can take back to their world. If the ghosts do not receive anything, they may become angry and bring misfortune to the living. Therefore, people put out food for them, burn paper money, and other gifts so that the ghosts can feel full and happy. During the festival, one can often see large paper figures of houses, cars, and clothing being burned. It is believed that when these things are burned, the spirits can use them in their world.

Today, the Hungry Ghost Festival is still celebrated in many countries, especially in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore.



Halloween and All Saint's Day in Denmark



Halloween in Denmark is a blend of old traditions and new, fun festivities. In the past, people celebrated All Saints' Day, where they remembered the dead and placed lights on graves to honor their memory. It was a time when people reflected on those they had lost, but without the spooky elements that we associate with Halloween today.

In many churches, there is still a special All Saints' service where those who have lost a loved one during the year are invited. The name of the deceased is mentioned, a candle is lit for them, and they are remembered in peace and community.

Today, Halloween has become a big celebration in Denmark, inspired by American traditions. Children dress up as witches, zombies, and vampires and go "trick-or-treating" in the neighborhood. Many families also carve pumpkins and turn them into spooky lanterns with lights inside. These pumpkins, called "Jack-o'-lanterns," stand outside homes and light up the dark evening.

Halloween in Denmark is therefore a time when we can both remember the old All Saints' traditions and also have fun with modern festivities. It is an evening filled with both spookiness and coziness, where everyone can help create magic in the darkness!

Do You Remember?



Assignment 1:

Get 13 answers right. In each row, you must cross out the correct answer with an orange color. There are answers to all the questions in the booklet.

		
Samhain is a Christmas tradition where you get pancakes.	Samhain is an old Halloween tradition.	Samhain is German and means Easter Bunny.
Snap Apple is an app for apples.	Snap Apple is a form of apple theft.	Snap Apple is an old Halloween game.
Días de los Muertos is celebrated in Mexico.	Días de los Muertos is an old-fashioned slideshow.	Días de los Muertos means a boring day in Spanish.
In Romania, they believed in werewolves and vampires long ago.	In Romania, they believed in dragons in ancient times.	In Romania, they believed in the abominable snowman long ago.
In Salem, there were witch trials in 1917.	In Salem, there were witch trials in 1815.	In Salem, there were witch trials in 1692.
In Japan, they decorate their trains for Halloween.	In Japan, they decorate their airplanes for Halloween.	In Japan, they decorate their ferries for Halloween.
Mask festival is celebrated in Guatemala.	Mask festival is celebrated in Costa Rica.	Mask festival is celebrated in Italy.
The bones of the dead are an icecream dessert in Spain.	The bones of the dead are white candies in France.	The bones of the dead are cookies from Italy.
Nut Crack Night is a holiday for squirrels.	Nut Crack Night is a Halloween tradition.	Nut Crack Night is a Christmas tradition.
Dragon Festival is a Halloween tradition in Brazil.	Dragon Festival is a Halloween tradition in Puerto Rico.	Kite Festival is a Halloween tradition in Guatemala.
Frankenstein's Castle is located in Slovenia.	Frankenstein's Castle is located in Poland.	Frankenstein's Castle is located in Germany.
Guy Fawkes was a heroic police officer.	Guy Fawkes was a knight of the Round Table.	Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the Parliament in Great Britain.
At the hungry ghosts' festival, the cookies 'bones of the dead' are baked.	At the hungry ghosts' festival, paper offerings are burned for the dead.	At the hungry ghosts' festival, people fly kites.

Happy Halloween!





Seek and Find



T W R A H E O W R C M I L J Ø N D F F L
 T R W T U S K E L E T O N P Z D J G A G
 E B Z S L I K S L A E E A H Å E Æ S E
 D Æ T R A D I T I O N L R R L S V T N
 R E Æ P A Y A S G L Y S E A Ø L E S
 O L V G O G R Æ C E H L A N D D E E Y
 N E S I G L M W T U H Ø D L S K E A M
 N S W K L E K E O T R F S F H E K S B
 S K I K R B K N B E S N E T Z C N N N O
 M R W P Q A S A I E Q P F Y L H U S S L
 G O R Æ U R L K R N M M Ø V J O R H B S
 A L N O U M A D A E O M U S E U M A O K
 A O S T O P E R R N L G N E E R R P I
 M B D T I L K N S S K E D T L T E L K
 Æ U R V E Y S I E T Ø N E Æ W I T C H
 H U S E A R A K N E A B N E R Y E S D
 S E A S E V G E N R R L R B X D B F T E
 Ø K L V A U E P L A C Y S Y R F I H M N
 S S A S D J M R S C E L E B R A T I O N
 F E L O F I M A S K S R D D O Æ G Æ I N

Find the words:

- masks
- october
- pumpkin
- museum
- parade
- celebration
- witch
- payasos
- devil
- ghost
- monster
- skeleton