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Halloween

Halloween is a popular holiday that is associated with ghosts, vampires, witches, and other mysterious creatures. How much do you know about this holiday's history and customs? Set off on a webquest to explore Halloween and find out!

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Find It!

Find the answers to the questions below by using the "Search" tool to search key words. Since this activity is about Halloween, you can start by searching the key word "Halloween."

Write the answers on the lines provided or below the question.

1. When does Halloween take place each year?
2. Halloween developed from an ancient pagan festival, called _____, which was celebrated by Celtic people over 2,000 years ago.
3. What did the Celtic festival of Samhain mark and when was it celebrated?
4. In the 800's, what holiday did the Christian church establish that was celebrated on November 1?
5. In the 1500's and 1600's, people in Europe believed that the devil made _____ do evil deeds.
6. In the United Kingdom, children ask, "_____" rather than demand, "trick or treat!"
7. In the 1800's, people in Louisiana cooked a dumb supper and watched for a _____ to join the table.
8. People in Scotland and Ireland once carved out large _____ or _____ to use as lanterns on Halloween. Americans use pumpkins instead.
9. Halloween magic is associated with such foods as _____ and _____.

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True or False

Write "True" if the statement is correct. If the statement is not correct, write "False" and correct the statement in the space below.

_____ 10. It was once common for people to leave food out on a table as a treat for spirits believed to be about on Halloween.

_____ 11. In ancient Celtic stories, Samhain was a time when the barriers between the natural world and the supernatural were broken.

_____ 12. Halloween is also known as Mischief Night and Devil's Night.

_____ 13. Fireworks are a part of many Halloween celebrations in Ireland and Canada.

_____ 14. Halloween costumes were popularized in the United States by children in the late 1800's.

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Find It!

15. How did Halloween get its name?

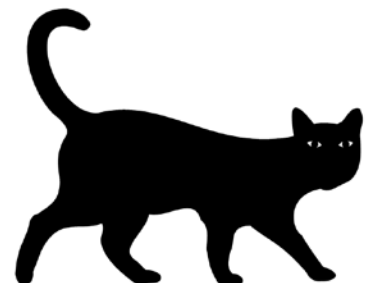
16. According to an Irish legend, who were jack-o'-lanterns named for?

17. List 2 ways that a child can prevent accidents while trick-or-treating.

1. _____

2. _____

18. What did the Celts believe that the dead could do during Samhain?



Early November Holidays

Answer these questions about holidays celebrated around Halloween.

19. All Saints' Day is celebrated on November 1. Who does All Saints' Day honor?
(Hint: For this question see the "All Saints' Day" article.)
20. All Souls' Day is celebrated on November 2. What was All Souls' Day set aside for?
(Hint: For this question see the "History" section of the "Halloween" article.)
21. Día de los muertos is usually celebrated on November 2. Who does Día de los muertos honor?
(Hint: For this question see the "Día de los muertos" article.)



Halloween Symbols

Answer these questions about these Halloween symbols.

22. How long did it take the ancient Egyptians to prepare a mummy?
(Hint: For this question see the "Mummy" article.)
23. According to tradition, what is a ghost? (Hint: For this question see the "Ghost" article.)
24. What do spiders use their fangs and poison glands for?
(Hint: For this question see the "Spider" article.)
25. What is a vampire? (Hint: For this question see the "Vampire" article.)
26. What is witchcraft? (Hint: For this question see the "Witchcraft" article.)
27. Where do vampire bats live? (Hint: For this question see the "Vampire bat" article.)
28. What is a jack-o'-lantern? (Hint: For this question see the "Jack-o'-lantern" article.)

29. The character Dracula is loosely based on which historical figure? (Hint: For this question see the “Dracula” article.)
30. About how many bones does a human skeleton have? (Hint: For this question see the “Skeleton” article.)

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Watch It!

In the “Images, Videos, and Audio/Media” section of the “Halloween” article, you will find the video “How did Halloween begin?”. Watch the video and answer the following questions.



31. In ancient times, Samhain was considered _____.
32. What did the people who celebrated Samhain carve out, instead of pumpkins, when they made jack-o'-lanterns?
33. In medieval times, why were evil witches predominately thought of as women?



Teacher Page

Answers

1. Halloween takes place each year on October 31.
2. Halloween developed from an ancient pagan festival called Samhain, which was celebrated by Celtic people over 2,000 years ago.
3. Samhain marked the beginning of the dark winter season and was celebrated around November 1.
4. In the 800's, the Christian church established All Saints' Day, which was celebrated on November 1.
5. In the 1500's and 1600's, people in Europe believed that the devil made witches do evil deeds.
6. In the United Kingdom, children ask, "Anything for Halloween?" rather than demand, "trick or treat!"
7. In the 1800's, people in Louisiana cooked a dumb supper and watched for a ghost to join the table.
8. People in Scotland and Ireland once carved out large beets or turnips to use as lanterns on Halloween. Americans use pumpkins instead.
9. Halloween magic is associated with foods, such as apples and nuts.
10. True.
11. True.
12. False. The day before Halloween is also known as Mischief Night and Devil's Night.
13. True.
14. False. Halloween costumes were popularized in the United States by adults in the late 1800's.
15. Halloween got its name because November 1 was celebrated as All Saints' Day, which was also called All Hallows'. The evening before All Hallows' was known as All Hallows' Eve, or All Hallow e'en, which was eventually shortened to Halloween.
16. According to an Irish legend, jack-o'-lanterns were named for a character named Jack, who could enter neither heaven nor hell. As a result, Jack had to walk the earth forever.
17. Answers will vary. Five possible answers are:
 1. A child can wear a light-colored costume or one with reflecting tape sewn on so they can be easily seen by drivers.
 2. The child's costume should be made of a material that does not burn easily.
 3. Because masks can block vision, many parents of small children use face makeup instead.
 4. Children should visit only homes in their own neighborhood.
 5. Younger trick-or-treaters should be accompanied by an adult.
18. The Celts believed that the dead could walk among the living at this time. During Samhain, the living could visit with the dead, who they believed held secrets of the future.
19. All Saints' Day honors all Christian saints, especially those who do not have days named for them.

20. All Souls' Day was set aside for people to pray for friends and family who had died.
21. Día de los muertos is a Mexican holiday that honors the dead.
22. The ancient Egyptians took 70 days to prepare a mummy.
23. A ghost, according to tradition, is the spirit of a dead person that returns to the living world.
24. Spiders use their fangs and poison glands to kill prey.
25. A vampire is a corpse that supposedly returns to life at night to suck people's blood.
26. Witchcraft is commonly defined as the use of supposed magical powers to influence people and events.
27. Vampire bats live in Mexico, Central America, and South America.
28. A jack-o'-lantern is a hollowed-out pumpkin which has eyes, nose, and a mouth carved in one side.
29. The character Dracula is loosely based on Vlad the Impaler, a prince of the 1400's who lived in Walachia, a region south of Transylvania.
30. A human skeleton has about 206 separate bones.
31. In ancient times, Samhain was considered New Year's Eve.
32. People who celebrated Samhain carved out turnips, instead of pumpkins, when they made jack-o'-lanterns.
33. In medieval times, evil witches were predominately thought of as women because people in medieval times believed that women were much weaker than men and were more susceptible to the forces of evil.

Extension Activities 1 and 2: Answers will vary.