

All about Halloween

1 Before you read Work with a partner.

- What do you know about Halloween?

2 Vocabulary Match the word/phrase with the correct meaning.

commercialized (adj)
a pumpkin (n)
a costume (n)
a festival (n)
carve (v)

an event when people celebrate
a kind of vegetable
to cut (usually food, wood or stone)
something arranged for profit
clothing



3 Reading Read the following text, and fill in the spaces using a word from the box below.



Halloween, like Christmas, seems to start earlier every year. As soon as October begins, you notice the most common Halloween symbols in the shops – pumpkins, witches, ¹..... and more. In recent years, Halloween has become a very commercialized festival, with shops selling many costumes and ²..... However, the roots of Halloween are very old indeed.

Origins

Halloween goes back to a festival called ‘Samhain’. This was celebrated by Celts in Ireland and Britain. The word ‘Halloween’ means ‘All Hallow Even’ and was the evening before ‘All Saints’ Day’ in the Christian calendar. The festival celebrated a mixture of Christian and Celtic traditions.

The Pumpkin

The most famous symbol of Halloween is a carved pumpkin containing a ³..... This is a very old symbol, which originated in Ireland. Carving pumpkins at Halloween first became very popular in America.

Halloween Today

Halloween has spread across much of the world, especially in ⁴.....-speaking countries. In North America, it is common for children to go to Halloween parties, dressed up in costumes. ‘Trick or Treating’ is also popular. In this tradition, children go to houses, and ask for candy by saying ‘Trick or Treat’.

Missing Words

- candle
- English
- decorations
- ghosts

4 According to the text, are these sentences true or false? Correct the false ones.

1. Halloween goods can be found in the shops from the start of October.
2. Halloween isn't very old.
3. Pumpkins are a well-known symbol of Halloween.
4. Halloween isn't celebrated much outside North America.

5 Speaking Activity #1 Look at the table, and read the instructions below

Festival Name	When	Food & Drink	Activities

Ask your classmates about festivals in their countries. Make notes in the table above.

- Useful English:**
- What festival is popular in?
 - When does the festival take place?
 - What do you have to eat / drink?
 - What things do you do?

6 Discussion Work in small groups.

- What happens in your country on October 31st?
- Does your country have any similar festivals to Halloween?
- What do you think of the commercialization of many festivals?
- Your Ideas!



All about Halloween: Teacher's Notes

Target Structure:	Theme Lesson: Reading, Vocabulary and Discussion
Vocabulary:	General / Halloween (UK Spelling / Vocabulary)
Level:	Upper-Elementary / Pre-Intermediate
Time:	60 minutes, depending on discussion
Preparation:	None

Suggested Teaching Method

This worksheet takes Halloween as its theme, with a simple reading on the origins of the festival.

The reading is followed by comprehension and speaking activities.

- 1 Give one worksheet to each student. Students should discuss the opening question in pairs, or small groups. Don't spend too long on this section - the main discussion questions come at the end of the worksheet.
- 2 Students can work alone on this exercise, and check their answers in pairs. If necessary, tell the students to find the vocabulary in the text, to allow them to guess from context.
- 3 Direct the students to the missing words under the text. This is the task for the reading. The students should read the article at brisk pace, filling in the spaces with the words in the box. Pre-teach the words in the box, if necessary.

After reading the text, they can check their answers to the task with a partner.

- 4 Follow the directions on the worksheet. Students can work in pairs. Go through the answers with the group.
- 5 This activity gives students the chance to talk about common festivals. Give the students a moment to think of some festivals. Give an example or two from your country. Direct your students' attention to the 'Useful Language' listed below the table. Give a demonstration for Halloween with a confident student.

Students can then take turns asking and answering questions. Encourage regular changing of partners.

- 6 Leave plenty of time for class discussion. To maximize student talking time, it's best to put students in pairs, or small groups. Students should read all the questions first, before beginning the discussion.

Encourage eye contact and follow-up questions.

While the students are speaking, monitor the conversations, but try not to interrupt. When the discussion comes to a close, ask a few of the questions yourself, and go through any points of English you made a note of while monitoring.

The answers are on the next page.

Answer Key (Other answers may be possible.)

- 2 commercialized (adj) something arranged for profit
a pumpkin (n) a kind of vegetable
a costume (n) clothing
a festival (n) an event when people celebrate
carve (v) to cut (usually food, wood or stone)
- 3
1. ghosts
 2. decorations
 3. candle
 4. English
- 4
1. True.
 2. False. Halloween goes back to an old Celtic festival.
 3. True
 4. False. It has spread to many other countries.

How are we doing?

Have you taught this lesson? We'd be pleased to hear some feedback on our worksheets.

Send your comments on this lesson to editor@handoutsonline.com.

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