

Super English



Level 7 Halloween



Samhain and Seasonal Change

Read and discuss. Source: Library of Congress.

Halloween **has roots** in Samhain, a Celtic festival associated with the end of summer and the arrival of winter. Seasonal change mattered deeply to communities whose harvests shaped their survival. Bonfires and beliefs about **spirits** became part of the festival. However, a modern costume party is not an unchanged ancient **ritual**. Different communities have adapted customs over centuries. Calling Halloween simply an ancient festival overlooks that complicated history. A tradition can preserve **traces** of the past while acquiring meanings that its earliest participants would never recognize.

1. How could uncertainty about winter shape a community's rituals?
2. What makes a modern tradition feel connected to the past?



All Hallows' Eve

Read and discuss. Source: Library of Congress.

1. Why is a single origin story sometimes misleading?
2. Who should decide what counts as an authentic tradition?



Halloween comes from All Hallows' Eve, the evening before All Saints' Day on November 1. Christian **observances** and older seasonal customs contributed to its development. Some people connect the season with religious remembrance, while others enjoy a **secular** celebration. These interpretations can coexist. When someone describes a tradition as **authentic**, it is useful to ask which place, period, or community they mean. A familiar name can **conceal** a complicated history.

Idioms

Match the idioms to their meanings.

- Get cold feet
- Make your blood run cold
- A skeleton in the closet
- Give someone the creeps
- In the dead of night
- Scared stiff

1. A hidden, embarrassing secret from someone's past.
2. During the quietest, darkest part of the night.
3. To make someone feel intensely frightened.
4. So frightened that you cannot move or react.
5. To lose your courage before doing something.
6. To make someone feel uneasy or frightened.

The Jack-o'-Lantern Legend

Read and discuss. Source: Library of Congress.

Before pumpkins became familiar Halloween decorations, people in Ireland carved lanterns from turnips. **Folklore** links these lights with Stingy Jack, a trickster **condemned** to wander with a glowing coal. The story offers an explanation for an object, but it does not prove that the events happened. That **distinction** matters when we discuss folklore. A legend can carry cultural meaning without being reliable historical evidence. Today, a carved pumpkin may suggest welcome, creativity, or danger, depending on its face and setting. The same symbol can support very different interpretations.



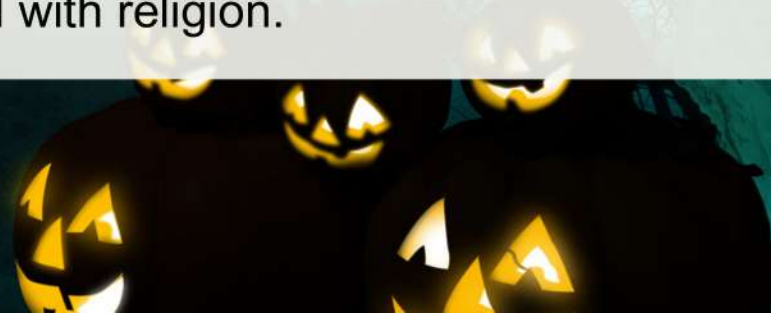
1. Can a legend be meaningful without being historically true?
2. How can changing a symbol's setting change its meaning?

Vocabulary

Match the vocabulary words to their definitions.

- ritual
- secular
- folklore
- superstition
- skeptical
- inclusive

1. Traditional stories and beliefs shared within a community.
2. Designed to welcome people with different needs or backgrounds.
3. A belief that an event affects luck without a proven connection.
4. A repeated action or ceremony with special meaning.
5. Doubtful or unwilling to accept a claim without evidence.
6. Not connected with religion.



Dialogue 1: The Brave Volunteer



Read the dialogue and answer the question.

Mia: You said this haunted house would be boring.

Leo: I was evaluating it from a safe distance.

Mia: Now you're getting cold feet at the entrance.

Leo: That's the weather. My courage is absolutely fine.

Mia: You're hiding behind a twelve-year-old.

Leo: She looks experienced. I'm respecting local expertise.

Question: How does Leo avoid admitting his fear? Is that convincing?

Dialogue 2: The Budget Ghost



Read the dialogue and answer the question.

Jace: My ghost costume cost nothing. It's an old sheet.

Rina: Very sustainable. Can you actually see through it?

Jace: Mostly. That coat rack gave me the creeps.

Rina: That's your reflection.

Jace: Excellent. The costume works.

Rina: On its designer, at least. That's a very specific audience.

Question: Is Rina being supportive or sarcastic? Explain your interpretation.

Two Explanations for a Ghost

Read this fictional scenario and compare explanations.

At midnight, a student hears footsteps in an empty school corridor. The lights flicker. A door opens, but nobody enters. In a supernatural version, a former teacher has returned. In a realistic version, a loose window creates a draft and a caretaker works upstairs. Both versions explain some details. A convincing mystery gives the audience clues without immediately settling the question. Your interpretation depends on which details you notice and which assumptions you bring.



Discussion: Which clue would you add to support each explanation?

Final Activity



The Halloween Pitch Meeting

A studio wants a Halloween mystery for teenagers. Work alone or with a partner. Prepare a two-minute pitch, then defend your choices.

Main Character and Setting:

Who investigates the mystery? What might make their account unreliable?

Tradition and Conflict:

Include a Halloween custom from the lesson. How does it create a problem?

Two Explanations:

Give one supernatural and one realistic explanation. Include a clue for each.

Your Pitch:

Use two idioms and three vocabulary words. End with an unresolved question.

Listeners: challenge one assumption and ask for evidence.

See you next time!

