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Activity 4 – October 26th

Anecdotes – Halloween

Hey you guys, how are you doing? This week we're going to be talking about "Halloween".

Halloween is a holiday celebrated each year on October 31, and Halloween 2020 will occur on Saturday, October 31. The tradition originated with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, when people would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off ghosts. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1 as a time to honor all saints. Soon, All Saints Day incorporated some of the traditions of Samhain. The evening before was known as All Hallows Eve, and later Halloween. Over time, Halloween evolved into a day of activities like trick-or-treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, festive gatherings, donning costumes and eating treats.

Ancient Origins of Halloween

Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced sow-in). The Celts, who lived 2,000 years ago, mostly in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom and northern France, celebrated their new year on November 1.

This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death. Celts believed that on the night before the new year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred. On the night of October 31 they celebrated Samhain, when it was believed that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth.

In addition to causing trouble and damaging crops, Celts thought that the presence of the otherworldly spirits made it easier for the Druids, or Celtic priests, to make predictions about the future. For a people entirely dependent on the volatile natural world, these prophecies were an important source of comfort during the long, dark winter.

To commemorate the event, Druids built huge sacred bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes.

When the celebration was over, they re-lit their hearth fires, which they had extinguished earlier that evening, from the sacred bonfire to help protect them during the coming winter.

Did you know? One quarter of all the candy sold annually in the U.S. is purchased for Halloween.



By 43 A.D., the Roman Empire had conquered the majority of Celtic territory. In the course of the 400 years that they ruled the Celtic lands, two festivals of Roman origin were combined with the traditional Celtic celebration of Samhain.

The first was Feralia, a day in late October when the Romans traditionally commemorated the passing of the dead. The second was a day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple, and the incorporation of this celebration into Samhain probably explains the tradition of bobbing for apples that is practiced today on Halloween.

All Saints' Day

On May 13, 609 A.D., Pope Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon in Rome in honor of all Christian martyrs, and the Catholic feast of All Martyrs Day was established in the Western church. Pope Gregory III later expanded the festival to include all saints as well as all martyrs, and moved the observance from May 13 to November 1.

By the 9th century, the influence of Christianity had spread into Celtic lands, where it gradually blended with and supplanted older Celtic rites. In 1000 A.D., the church made November 2 All Souls' Day, a day to honor the dead. It's widely believed today that the church was attempting to replace the Celtic festival of the dead with a related, church-sanctioned holiday.

All Souls' Day was celebrated similarly to Samhain, with big bonfires, parades and dressing up in costumes as saints, angels and devils. The All Saints' Day celebration was also called All-hallows or All-hallowmas (from Middle English Alholowmesse meaning All Saints' Day) and the night before it, the traditional night of Samhain in the Celtic religion, began to be called All-Hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween.

How Trick-or-Treating Became a Halloween Tradition

In the late 1800s, there was a move in America to mold Halloween into a holiday more about community and neighborly get-togethers than about ghosts, pranks and witchcraft. At the turn of the century, Halloween parties for both children and adults became the most common way to celebrate the day. Parties focused on games, foods of the season and festive costumes.

Parents were encouraged by newspapers and community leaders to take anything "frightening" or "grotesque" out of Halloween celebrations. Because of these efforts, Halloween lost most of its superstitious and religious overtones by the beginning of the twentieth century.

Halloween Parties

By the 1920s and 1930s, Halloween had become a secular but community-centered holiday, with parades and town-wide Halloween parties as the featured entertainment. Despite the best efforts of many schools and communities, vandalism began to plague some celebrations in many communities during this time.



By the 1950s, town leaders had successfully limited vandalism and Halloween had evolved into a holiday directed mainly at the young. Due to the high numbers of young children during the fifties baby boom, parties moved from town civic centers into the classroom or home, where they could be more easily accommodated.

Between 1920 and 1950, the centuries-old practice of trick-or-treating was also revived. Trick-or-treating was a relatively inexpensive way for an entire community to share the Halloween celebration. In theory, families could also prevent tricks being played on them by providing the neighborhood children with small treats.

Thus, a new American tradition was born, and it has continued to grow. Today, Americans spend an estimated \$6 billion annually on Halloween, making it the country's second largest commercial holiday after Christmas.

- Watch the videos:

Why do we celebrate Halloween?:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9pzNpKKRYc&ab_channel=Thoughty2

How to Celebrate Halloween [Advanced American English Lesson]:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdLxDdouJ1U&ab_channel=SpeakEnglishWithVanessa

Top 10 Best Halloween Episodes TV Series ever:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVr9f9HRF6A&ab_channel=MsMojo

- Now, we have two tasks for you:

1st) Watch the teachers' Anecdotes:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ae5nZi3DT7U&ab_channel=ElaineMartins

2nd) Go to our Google Drive and share with us your spooky anecdote, a scary story, sending an audio in MP3, or a video if you want to: (you can use the voice recorder from your cell to do this task).

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1N3YiqYLMrTwZr0rz0m7Dw5gJAtJvR861?usp=sharing>

*If you don't feel comfortable to record an audio, you can write your Anecdote and post on the Padlet, although, we encourage you to speak:

<https://padlet.com/inglescemear/wucqlms9yqh6wpoc>

You are going to have one week to do this activity. Take your time, do it carefully and enjoy it!