

# Halloween in English speaking countries

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Read the text and match the Halloween vocabulary with the pictures.

Halloween or Hallowe'en (a contraction of All Hallows' Evening 'Vispera de todos los santos') is celebrated on October 31<sup>st</sup>. It can be traced back about 2,000 years to a pre-Christian Celtic festival called *Samhain* (pronounced "sah-win"), which means "summer's end" and the beginning of winter or the "darker half" of the year. The Celts thought ghosts visited the living on that day. They dressed up like ghosts so the spirits would not harm them.

American teenagers often celebrate Halloween with a costume party. They may also watch horror movies, listen to music or tell each other ghost stories. Visiting <sup>1</sup>**haunted houses** and <sup>2</sup>**graves** are also popular activities. Children often dress up as <sup>3</sup>**witches**, <sup>4</sup>**ghosts** and mummies, or famous people such as Superman or Spiderman.

One popular Halloween activity is "trick-or-treating". Children dress up in their <sup>5</sup>**costumes**, then go to people's houses with their <sup>6</sup>**trick or treat bag**. They knock on the door and say "trick or treat?" This means, give us a treat (usually some candies), or we'll play a trick on you. Most people give the candies (sweets in UK).

The tradition of dressing in costumes and trick-or-treating maybe related to the medieval custom of "souling" in Britain and Ireland, when poor people would knock on doors asking for food in exchange for prayers for the dead.

The most common Halloween food is the "toffee apple" (also known as the <sup>7</sup>**candy apple**). This is basically an apple that has been covered in sticky sugar syrup.

One of the most important Halloween symbols is the <sup>8</sup>**Jack O'Lantern**. This is a pumpkin that has been cut to form a face. A candle is often placed inside it and people put the lantern in the front windows of houses. In Ireland and Scotland, people dressed up and carried lanterns made of turnips.

The <sup>9</sup>**skeleton** has been associated with Halloween for thousands of years, the skull being viewed by the Celtic people as the house of the soul. The <sup>10</sup>**black cat** has long been a symbol of bad luck as well as it being a very commonly used Halloween decorating symbol. The black cat has a bit of an evil reputation going as far back as the time of the middle ages. During this time, the black cat was often associated with witches, witchcraft or even the devil himself.



## II. Answer the questions.

What was the original name of Halloween? \_\_\_\_\_

What day is Halloween celebrated on? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did Halloween come from? \_\_\_\_\_

What fruit do people typically carve at Halloween? \_\_\_\_\_

Which animal is most commonly associated with witches? \_\_\_\_\_

What do people do in Halloween? \_\_\_\_\_