



Happy Halloween!

Halloween is on Monday, October 31st. The name means “the evening before All Hallows’ or All Saints’ Day,” which is on November 1st. The origins of Halloween are ancient, from the days of the Druids, and many of the customs stem from old religious beliefs.

On Halloween, children dress in costumes and go from door to door, saying “trick or treat!” and holding out their bags for treats. All are advised to stock up on Halloween candy in preparation.

Some of the symbols associated with Halloween are black cats, bats, spiders, skeletons, haunted houses, monsters, ghosts, and witches flying on broomsticks. Big orange pumpkins are carved into jack-o’-lanterns, with faces glowing eerily from the candles lit inside them. Many people like to decorate their homes for the holiday and host costume parties.



Here are some idioms appropriate for Halloween. See if you can make a sentence using each one.

pale as a ghost – very pale (usually used to describe someone who is frightened)

a skeleton in your closet – an embarrassing secret

scaredy-cat – someone who is easily frightened

as easy as taking candy from a baby – something that is very easy to do

out of your gourd – crazy

let the cat out of the bag – reveal information

a ghost of a chance – a very small possibility

Pronunciation Exercise



Vowel Sounds:

Which Word Doesn't Belong?

Vowel sounds in English are tricky. The same letters can be pronounced in different ways.

Go over these groups of words with your conversation partner. See if you can figure out which word does not have the same vowel sound as the others.

Example: but sometimes put much cousin

Answer: The word "put" does not have the same vowel sound as the other words in this example.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) a. modern
b. got
c. popular
d. joking
e. clock | 4) a. book
b. food
c. woman
d. push
e. good |
| 2) a. shoes
b. movie
c. look
d. soon
e. boot | 5) a. home
b. don't
c. only
d. love
e. goes |
| 3) a. nothing
b. just
c. does
d. money
e. closed | 6) a. cold
b. thought
c. fall
d. awful
e. lost |

ANSWERS: 1) d; 2) c; 3) e; 4) b; 5) d; 6) a

Conversation Practice

For Halloween, many people like to carve pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns. This is a fun way of taking advantage of the autumn harvest and celebrating the holiday.

Have you ever carved a jack-o'-lantern? Have you made other holiday decorations? Describe to your conversation partner how to carve a jack-o'-lantern or how to create your favorite holiday decorations.



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