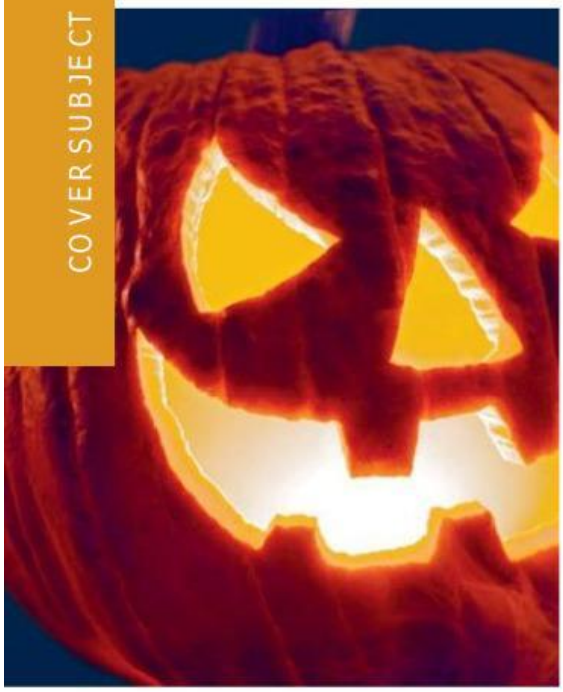
COVER SUBJECT



The Truth About Halloween

Is Halloween celebrated where you live? In the United States and Canada, Halloween is widely known and celebrated every year on October 31. Halloween customs, though, can be found in many other parts of the globe. In some places holidays are celebrated that, although named differently, share similar themes: contact with the spirit world involving the spirits of the dead, fairies, witches, and even the devil and demon angels. -See the box "Celebrations Like Halloween Worldwide."

PERSONALLY, you may not believe in supernatural spirits. You might simply view taking part in Halloween and similar celebrations as a way to have fun and teach your children to explore their imagination. Many people, though, regard these celebrations as harmful for the following reasons:

1. "Halloween," explains the *Encyclopedia of American Folklore*, "is integrally related to the prospect of contact with spiritual forces, many of which threaten

CELEBRATIONS LIKE HALLOWEEN WORLDWIDE

Halloween has generally been regarded as an American holiday. Yet this celebration has become popular in many parts of the world. Additionally, there are other festivities that are like Halloween in that they celebrate the existence and activity of spirit creatures. Shown here are some of the popular holidays like Halloween around the globe.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

The Origin of Some Halloween Customs and Symbols

VAMPIRES, WEREWOLVES, WITCHES, ZOMBIES:
These creatures have long been associated with the evil spirit world. Referring to them as "supernatural monsters" the book Halloween Trivia states that such creatures are "closely connected with death, the death or the fear of dying"

COSTUMES: The Celts wore frightening masks so that evil spirits would mistakenly think the wearers were spirits and would leave them alone. The church gradually amalgamated pagan customs withthe feasts of All Souls and All Saints. Later, celebrants went from house to house wearing costumes of saints, angels, and devils.



PUMPKINS:
Carved, candlelit turnips were dis- played to repel evil spirits. To some, thecandle in the turniprepresented a soul trapped in purgatory. Later, carved pumpkins were more commonly used. During the 1800s in North America, pumpkins replaced turnips because they were plentiful as well as easy to hollow out and carve.

CANDY: The ancient Celts tried to appease wicked spirits with sweets. The church later encouraged celebrants to go from house to house on All Hallows' Eve, asking for food in return for a prayer for the dead. This custom eventually became Halloween's trick or treat.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

"Christians 'don't realize it, but they're celebrating our holiday with us. . . . We like it.'"—The newspaper *USA Today*, quoting a professed witch

or frighten." (See the box "Halloween Time Line.") Likewise, many celebrations like Halloween have pagan origins and are deeply rooted in ancestor worship. Even today, people around the world use these days to make contact with supposed spirits of the dead.

2. Although Halloween has been viewed mainly as an American holiday, each year people in more and more countries have been adopting it. Many newcomers to the celebration, however, are unaware of the pagan origins of Halloween symbols, decorations, and customs, most of which are related to supernatural beings and occult forces. - See the box "Where Did It Come From?"

3. Thousands of Wiccans, who follow ancient Celtic rituals, still call Halloween by the ancient name Samhain and consider it to be the most sacred night of the year. "Christians 'don't realize it, but they're celebrating our holiday with us We like it,'" stated the newspaper *USA Today* when quoting a professed witch.

HALLOWEEN TIMELINE



FIFTH CENTURY B.C.E.

The Celts observe the festival of Samhain at the end of October, when they believe ghosts and demons roam the earth more so than at other times.

FIRST CENTURY C.E.

The Romans conquer the Celts and adopt the spiritistic rituals of Samhain.

SEVENTH CENTURY C.E.

Pope Boniface IV is said to have established the annual celebration of All Saints' Day to honor martyrs.*

* Hallow is an old word meaning "saint." All Hallows' Day (also known as All Saints' Day) is a holiday to honor dead saints. The evening before All Hallows' Day was called All Hallow Even, later shortened to Halloween.

ELEVENTH CENTURY C.E.

The second of November is designated as All Souls' Day to commemorate the dead. Observances surrounding All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day are collectively called Hallowtide.

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EIGHTEENTH CENTURY C.E.

The name of the holiday, Hallowe'en (Hallow Evening) appears in print as Halloween.

NINETEENTH CENTURY C.E.

Thousands of people who move from Ireland to the United States bring with them Halloween customs that, in time, combined with similar customs of emigrants from Britain and Germany, as well as Africa and other parts of the world.

TWENTIETH CENTURY C.E.

Halloween becomes a popular nationwide holiday in the United States.

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY C.E.

Commercial interest in Halloween grows into a worldwide multibillion-dollar industry.

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WHY IS IT CALLED HALLOWEEN?

The name Halloween is connected with the pagan Celtic festival of Samhain. The World Book Encyclopedia states: "Samhain . . . means summer's end. The festival marked the start of the dark winter season and was celebrated around November 1. In the A.D. 700's to 800's, the Christian church established a new holiday, All Saints' Day, on this date. All Saints' Day was also called All Hallows'. Hallow means saint, or one who is holy. The evening before All Hallows' was known as All Hallows' Eve, or as it came to be abbreviated, All Hallow e'en. This name was eventually shortened to Halloween."



DO THE PAGAN ORIGINS OF HALLOWEEN MATTER?

Yes. Although some people view Halloween as harmless fun, the practices associated with it are in direct conflict with Bible teachings. Halloween is based on false beliefs about the dead and invisible spirits, or demons.

LIVEWORKSHEETS