3° Year Advanced Literature

Student´s name:



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HISTORY OF THE JACK O' LANTERN

The Story of Stingy Jack

Jack-o'-lanterns are everywhere at this time of year. They adorn our yards and our stoops. Their gruesome faces light the dark nights leading up to Halloween. Some are goofy, some are grotesque. Where does this custom come from? Why do we choose to eviscerate helpless vegetables and burn their bellies? Well, nowadays people placed them near doors to keep evil spirits away. It's a story born of treachery and hell fire. It's the story of Stingy Jack.

Ireland, long ago.

Old Stingy Jack, a blacksmith and notorious drunkard was drinking at a local pub when the Devil appeared before him. "It's time, Jack", said the Devil. "Let's have one more", said Jack, "so we may discuss this further". "Very well", said Satan, and he sat down. Jack ordered another pint. Satan had a drink with Jack. "Time to go, Jack". Jack eyed Satan and said, "I am without coin and cannot pay, but I have an idea, why don't you shape-shift into sixpence, so we can pay and leave this place". Satan agreed and changed into the requested sixpence. Jack quickly slipped the Devil into his wallet, next to his silver crucifix, rendering the Devil powerless. Satan was furious and demanded to be released from inside Jack's wallet. "Only on the condition that you don't claim my soul for ten years, Lucifer", said Jack. Satan agreed and Jack released him. With this treachery Jack bought himself ten more years.

Ten years to the day, Jack was walking down a country road when Satan appeared before him. "Time to go, Jack". Jack stalled and pointed out the apple tree on the path. "Oh, Satan, allowed me one more bite of juicy apple before I go". Satan nodded his assent. "As you can see, my body is old and withered, Satan, could you reach that most choicest of apples for me?". When Satan was safely in the branches, Jack placed a cross at the bottom of the tree. Tricked again, Satan was furious and demanded to be released. "Only on the condition that you never claim my soul, Lucifer". Satan agreed and Jack felt smug.

Jack soon took ill and died a lonely death. Jack's soul ascended to the gates of heaven. "Your eternal soul cannot reside here", said Saint Peter, and so Jack was turned away. And so Jack approached the gates of hell, where he was greeted by the Prince of Darkness himself. "Let me in, Satan", said Jack. "I'm sorry Jack, but I must honor our agreement, I cannot claim your soul". "But where am I to go?", asked Jack. "Back to earth Jack, allow this hell fire to light your way". And so Jack inserted the hell fire ember into a hollowed-out

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pumpkin and it led his way back to earth where he can still be seen on moonless nights. He, Jack of the lantern.

A. Are the following statements true (T) or false (F)?
1. Jack-o'-lanterns first appeared in Ireland.
2. Jack didn't want to pay for the drinks because he was mean with money.
3. The Devil had to promise not to bother Jack for ten years before he could be released from inside Jack´s wallet.
4. Jack placed a cross at the bottom of the tree so that the Devil could never claim his soul
5. When he died, Jack was allowed into heaven.
6. The Devil gave Jack a candle to light his way in the dark.
7. People placed them near doors to keep evil spirits away.

B. Match the words on the left to their definitions on the right (write the correct <u>letter</u> in each box).

1	To stall (v)		a	treason
2	withered (adj)		b	the remains of fire, still red and hot
3	treachery (n)		c	Front steps
4	blacksmith (n)		d	To stop
5	assent (n)		e	alcoholic
6	ember (n)		f	To change shape
7	gruesome (adj)		g	vain
8	goofy (adj)		h	weak
9	Drunkard (adj)		i	Person who makes iron good
10	Stoops (n)		j	Agreement
11	To shape-shift(v)		k	Silly and funny
12	Smug (adj)		l	horrible
13	Moonless (adj)		m	Without a moon that can be seen

