Name: _____ Date: _____

HALLOWEEN!

The history of Halloween is very old. It started more than 2,000 years ago with the ancient people called the Celts. They lived in the area that is now Ireland and the UK.

They celebrated a festival called Samhain (you say it 'Sow-in'). This festival marked the end of the harvest (the time to collect food from farms) and the start of winter.

The Celts believed that on October 31st, the night before their new year, the worlds of the living and the dead became very close. They thought that spirits or ghosts could walk on Earth. People were afraid of these evil spirits.

To protect themselves, people lit huge bonfires (big fires outside). They also wore costumes, like animal skins, to hide from the spirits or to scare them away.

Later, Christian leaders created a new holiday, "All Saints' Day," on November 1st. The night before (October 31st) became "All Hallows' Eve," which later became "Halloween."

In the 1800s, many immigrants from Ireland and Scotland moved to America. They brought their traditions with them. In America, these traditions changed. People started to visit houses and ask for food or money, which became modern "trick-or-treat."

Today, Halloween is a fun holiday for children and adults. People wear all kinds of costumes (not just scary ones) and carve faces into pumpkins. It is very different from the ancient, serious festival it once was.

Answer the questions below.

Where did the ancient festival that led to Halloween begin?

_____

Why did the Celts believe that October 31st was a special night?

_____

What was the reason the Celts wore costumes and lit bonfires?

_____

How did the tradition of Halloween travel to America?

_____

What are two activities people do on Halloween today?

_____

LIVEWORKSHEETS