

Halloween

1 Pre-reading

Answer these questions.

1. What is Halloween?
2. Do you celebrate it?
3. What are some symbols of this festivity?

2 Reading

Read and complete the text with the words in the box.

pumpkins • origins • night • October 31st • skeletons • give • protect • fruit • children • houses



Halloween is a tradition celebrated on the night of (1) by children in costumes. They go door-to-door and say "trick or treat"¹ which means: "If you don't (2) me a treat, I'm going to play a trick on you"². In this way, children collect sweets³, (3) and other gifts⁴.

How old is Halloween? Its (4) date back⁵ to the old Celtic festival of Samhain. Centuries ago⁶ people believed that on the night of October 31st, the souls of the dead⁷ and other supernatural forces came out to terrify people on earth⁸.

Today English children carve pumpkins⁹, called "punkies", but some (5) celebrate an old tradition: they make "punkies" out of large beets¹⁰ and they carve a design on it. Then, they carry their "punkies" through the streets while singing the "Punkie Night Song", knock¹¹ on doors and ask for money. In some rural areas, people put turnip¹² lanterns on gateposts¹³ to (6) their homes from the spirits who roam¹⁴ on Halloween night.

Although Halloween is the (7) of October 31st, children in the United States start preparing from the beginning of the month. They decorate their (8), design their costumes, prepare bags for their treats so that they can collect as much candy as possible. American children carve (9), place candles in them and put these "jack-o'-lanterns"¹⁵ in windows to protect their homes from ghosts. They decorate their houses with orange and purple string lights¹⁶.

The costumes mostly involve witches¹⁷, black cats, phantoms¹⁸, (10), fortune-tellers¹⁹, vampires, mummies²⁰, scarecrows²¹ and spiders²².

Glossary

1 trick or treat dolcetto o scherzetto **2 I'm ... on you** ti farò uno scherzetto **3 collect sweets** raccolgono caramelle
4 gifts regali **5 date back** risalgono **6 centuries ago** secoli fa **7 souls ... dead** anime dei morti **8 earth** terra
9 carve pumpkins intagliano zucche **10 beets** barbabietole **11 knock** bussano **12 turnip** rapa **13 gateposts** pilastri del portone **14 roam** girovagano **15 jack-o'-lanterns** lanterne fatte con zucche **16 orange ... lights** fili di luci di color arancione e porpora **17 witches** streghe **18 phantoms** fantasmi **19 fortune-tellers** chiromanti **20 mummies** mummie
21 scarecrows spaventapasseri **22 spiders** ragni



3 Reading comprehension


Answer these questions.

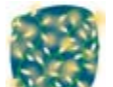
1. When is Halloween celebrated?
2. What do children say when they go door-to-door?
3. What is the origin of Halloween?
4. What do English children carve?
5. When do American children start getting ready for October 31st?
6. What does the jack-o'-lantern protect homes from?
7. How do Americans decorate their houses for Halloween?
8. What are children's Halloween costumes like?





4 Vocabulary


Complete the sentences with the help of the drawings, and then solve the crossword puzzle below.


1.A  protects homes from the spirits that roam on Halloween.

2.  decorate American houses at Halloween.

3. This is a 

4. This is a 


5. This is a 

6. These are 

7. A  protects plants in a garden.

8. This is a 

9. If you don't give children a treat at Halloween, they will play a on you!

10. Children like to wear a  costume on Halloween.

11. This is a  12. These are 

