

### 1. Halloween

The subject of this week's lesson is an annual event whose roots lie in the religious calendar of Celtic peoples in pre-Christian Europe, and which is closely associated with pumpkins, trick or treating, and images of ghosts and witches – the Halloween festivities of 31<sup>st</sup> October.

#### Level

Pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level A2-B1 and above)

#### How to use the lesson

1. Brainstorm on the subject of Halloween. What do your students associate with it? To what extent is Halloween celebrated in their country? Can they think of any other events with a similar theme?
2. Divide the class into two groups, A and B. Give one copy of Worksheet A to each student in Group A along with the first half of Part A marked Group A (on the third page), and one copy of Worksheet B to each student in Group B as well as a copy of the second part of Part A marked Group B.
3. Tell your students they have the same text on Halloween, but there is some information missing from each worksheet. Explain that they are going to ask a member of the other group some questions to help them complete the text, but first they need to prepare the questions.
4. Give the students at least ten minutes to read through the text and check any new vocabulary, then give them another five to ten minutes to work together in their groups to prepare and write down the questions they need to ask in order to complete the text. Monitor this activity to make sure that the students are formulating the questions correctly (see suggestions below).
5. When all the students have prepared their questions, ask a student from Group A to work with a student from Group B. They should take it in turns to ask and answer the questions they have prepared and write the answers in the spaces in the text. Allow five to ten minutes for this activity.
6. When both students have finished asking and answering, allow them to compare worksheets. Then check answers in open class.
7. Ask the students to put away Worksheets A and B or to temporarily hand them back to you. Then, keeping the students in pairs, hand out Worksheet C and give the students another five to ten minutes for the gap-fill exercise in which they have to replace individual words that are now missing from the text. If the students cannot remember what the words are, encourage them to try to work them out from the context of the sentence. You might also want to point out that some of the words feature in the glossary.
8. Check answers in open class.

## Answers

### Part A (questions/answers)

1. When can you find Halloween parties in various different parts of the world?
2. Where is the Halloween tradition probably strongest?
3. What are the most popular costumes at Halloween fancy-dress parties?
4. What did some Celtic tribes do to scare away evil spirits?
5. Why did some Celtic tribes disguise themselves as ghosts?
6. What did the Irish and British people who emigrated to North America take with them?
7. When did the Halloween tradition spread all over the US and Canada?
8. Where do people spend more on decorations and parties during Halloween than during any other annual festival apart from Christmas?
9. What is one of the most well-known Halloween decorations?
10. What is usually inside the pumpkin?
11. Who does 'trick or treating'?
12. What are the 'treats' that trick-or-treaters usually ask for?
13. How many children expect to go trick-or-treating on Halloween night in the US?
14. Who thinks the origin of trick-or-treating is a Scottish tradition called 'guising'?
15. In 'guising', what do children do in return for their treat?
16. What do trick-or-treaters normally receive a lot of during Halloween?

### Part B (gap-fill)

1. various
2. Britain
3. fancy
4. witches
5. scary
6. Christian
7. spirits
8. scare
9. spread
10. decorations
11. hollow
12. knocking
13. expect
14. origin
15. tell
16. good-humoured

## 2. Related Websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/chat/your\\_comments/newsid\\_2370000/2370015.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/chat/your_comments/newsid_2370000/2370015.stm)

A BBC *Newsround* forum (2002) asking 'Is trick or treating right or wrong?', and featuring lots of comments from children and younger teenagers. Accessible to pre-intermediate level.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7033413.stm>

A recent BBC article (October 2007) describing how bad weather in the UK has caused a pre-Halloween shortage of ripe pumpkins. Intermediate level and above.

<http://www.halloween-website.com/>

*Halloween Web*, for those 'who love Halloween and things that go bump in the night'. Intermediate level and above.