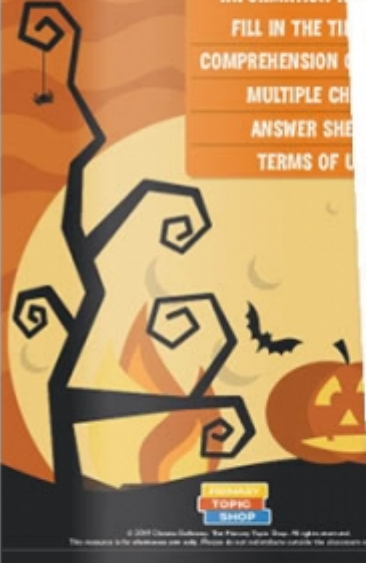


ORIGINS OF HALLOWEEN

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INFORMATION FROM THE
FILL IN THE TIMELINE
COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS
MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS
ANSWER SHEET
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THE CELTS

ORIGINS OF HALLOWEEN

Halloween began 2000 years ago, in the iron age as a Celtic festival called Samhain that marked the change in seasons at the end of October. Over the centuries, Samhain was combined with Roman and Christian celebrations. People in Ireland and Scotland began new traditions, bringing them to North America, where they became modern traditions.

SAMHAIN

Samhain was the Celtic New Year's Eve and end of the harvest season. Celts believed that on the night between October 31 and November 1, the border between the world and the otherworld was weakest, and ghosts could cross over. Celts wore costumes, to confuse the spirits, and avoid being kidnapped or harmed. While keeping safe from unwanted spirits, Celts would honour the spirits of the dead. Druids would build bonfires and sacrifice animals for a feast to be shared among the community.

did you know?
Samhain is pronounced 'saw-in' like the 'aw' in 'now'.

ROMAN FESTIVALS

The Romans conquered the Celts in Britain in 43AD. Over the next 400 years of Roman rule, Roman festivals influenced the celebration of Samhain. Baking for apples was originally a Roman tradition during the festival of Pomona, a goddess of fruitful abundance, held around November 1. Pomona also had festivals like Lemuria and Feralia which honoured the dead.

ALL HALLOWS EVE

In the eighth century, Pope Gregory II moved the Christian holiday of All Saints' Day from May 13 to November 1. All Saints' Day honoured Christian Saints. The night before (Oct 31) was called All Hallows Eve and was celebrated in much the same as Samhain.

IRISH & SCOTTISH TRADITIONS

In 16th-century Ireland, people would go door-to-door wearing costumes and singing songs to the dead in exchange for coins.

Later, in the 17th century, people in Ireland and Scotland used to carve lanterns from turnips and put them in the window to frighten away spirits. When immigrants from Scotland and Ireland went to North America, they brought the tradition with them, and they evolved. The North American pumpkin was used in place of the turnip. The name jack-o'-lantern probably came from the legend of Stingy Jack, an Irish myth of a man who can't get into heaven or hell and ends up trapping the devil with a lantern carved from a turnip.

During the Irish Potato Famine in the 19th century, millions of Irish people immigrated to North America, bringing their Halloween traditions with them.



THE CELTS | THE ORIGINS OF HALLOWEEN

FILL IN THE TIMELINE

Fill in the timeline by drawing a line from each event to the year it happened.



Samhain is celebrated by the Celtic people during the iron age.

The Celts are conquered by the Romans and Roman festivals are combined with Samhain.

Pope Gregory II moves the Christian holiday of All Saints' Day from May 13 to November 1.

People in Ireland go door-to-door wearing costumes and singing songs to the dead in exchange for coins.

Irish and Scottish people carve lanterns from turnips and put them in the window to frighten away spirits.

During the potato famine, Irish people immigrate to North America popularising Halloween traditions.

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