

©HISTORY OF HALLOWEEN

NAME _____ DATE _____

The Halloween customs we celebrate each October 31st began long ago. They came from the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. The Celtic people lived about 2,000 years ago in an area which we now call Ireland, the United Kingdom, and France. The festival of Samhain marked the end of summer, the harvest season, and the beginning of their new year. The Celtic people believed that on the night of October 31st, the ghosts of the dead returned to earth. They built huge bonfires and dressed in costumes to frighten the ghosts. The Celts also offered the ghosts good things to eat.

The modern customs of Halloween are similar to the customs of the Celtic people because many immigrants came to America and brought their beliefs and traditions with them. The carving of a Jack-O-Lantern is thought to come from the tradition of Irish children. They would carve potatoes or turnips and light them for their Halloween celebrations. The name Jack came from an Irish man who people thought was so wicked neither heaven or the devil wanted him. Jack is thought to have roamed the earth looking for a place to rest.

Trick or Treating is thought to have come from the English people when they celebrated the religious festival of "All Saints Day." On this day, the poor would beg for food and would be given "Soul Cakes" to pray for the souls of the relatives of rich people.

Halloween in America is celebrated on October 31st. The celebrations are held in towns, schools, churches, and homes. Most children still dress in costumes and continue to trick or treat in safe neighborhoods or attend festivals at churches or schools.

ANSWER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. The Celtic people lived _____.
 - a. 2000 years ago
 - b. in Spain
 - c. in America

2. Why is the modern celebration of Halloween similar to the customs of the Celtic people?
 - a. The Celtics lived in America.
 - b. The ghosts roamed the earth.
 - c. Immigrants came to America and brought their customs with them.
 - d. Many people do not celebrate Halloween.

3. The custom of trick or treating came from what group of people?
 - a. The Irish
 - b. The Spanish
 - c. The English
 - d. none of these

4. Why was Jack not granted permission to live in heaven or with the devil?
 - a. He was so wicked
 - b. He was too ugly.
 - c. He had potatoes .
 - d. none of these

5. Why were the poor people given "soul cakes"?
 - a. to keep from being hungry
 - b. to go to church
 - c. to pray for the relatives of the rich
 - d. none of these

6. Where are the celebrations of Halloween held today?
 - a. homes
 - b. churches
 - c. schools
 - d. all of these

7. Which of the following is NOT true about the Celtic people?
 - a. They celebrated by making Jack-O-Lanterns.
 - b. They dressed in costumes.
 - c. They built bonfires.
 - d. They offered the ghosts good things to eat.