



Hallowe'en

Hallowe'en is a popular festival in many countries all over the world, and every year it seems to get bigger. It's getting dark earlier and it's starting to get cold. Christmas is still a long way away. We need something to cheer us up and take our minds off the fact that winter is nearly here. Find out some more about the traditional festival of Hallowe'en.

The origins of the name *Dans la mythologie celtique irlandaise, **Samain**, prononcé /'sa: wɪn/, /'səʊ.ɪn/, ou /'səʊn/ (le mot s'écrit Samhain en Irlande, Samhuinn en Écosse et Sauin sur l'île de Man), est la fête religieuse qui célèbre le début de la saison « sombre » de l'année celtique (pour les Celtes, l'année était composée de deux saisons : une saison sombre et une saison claire). C'est une fête de transition*

/'keltɪk/ The festival of Hallowe'en has its roots in *Celtic* and Roman traditions. Over 2,000 years ago the Celts in Britain, Ireland and parts of France celebrated *Samhain* to mark the beginning of winter.

/'sa: wɪn/ When the Romans invaded, they merged this with *Feralia*, their celebration of the passing of the dead. As Christianity spread, the Church tried to replace these pagan feasts with official Church holy days. One of these was November 1st. It was called All Saints Day, or "All Hallows", and October 31st was known as "All Hallows' Eve", and then Hallowe'en.

Hallowe'en traditions

In the past there was a tradition called "souling". Poor people went around houses asking for food.

/'prɒmɪst/ In exchange, they *promised* to say prayers for the dead. People no longer go souling, but the habit has been transformed into a modern Hallowe'en game for children in America, who dress up as ghosts, witches and monsters and go around people's houses, asking for sweets. This game is called 'Trick or Treat'.

Witches



Hallowe'en wouldn't be fun without witches. Witches have always been part of popular folklore. Shakespeare's play "Macbeth" opens with three witches. A witch was someone - usually a woman - who had special powers and had dealings with the devil. The American town, Salem, in the state of Massachusetts, is famous for the "witchcraft trials", which took place there in 1692.

Pumpkins



The pumpkin has become a symbol of Hallowe'en. People empty a pumpkin, cut a face into the side, and put a candle inside to make a lamp. It's known as a Jack O'Lantern, from an Irish legend about a man called Jack, who made a deal with the devil.



Animals

Black cats, frogs, mice and spiders are just some of the animals associated with Hallowe'en. Generally, the more unpleasant the animal, the stronger the Hallowe'en connection. Nocturnal animals like bats are particular favourites, and if, as is the case with vampire bats, they like drinking blood, they are high on the Hallowe'en list.



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