**Halloween**

Though the origin of the word *Halloween* is Christian, the holiday is commonly thought to have pagan **roots** Halloween or Hallowe'en also known as All Hallows' Eve, that is, the night before [All Hallows' Day](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_Saints%27_Day), is a **yearly** celebration [observed in a number of countries](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halloween_around_the_world) on October 31, the **eve** of the [Western](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Christianity) [Christian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity) **feast** of [All Hallows (or All Saints)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_Saints%27_Day). According to many scholars, it was originally influenced by western European [**harvest** **festivals**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvest_festival) and [festivals of the dead](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Festival_of_the_Dead) with possible [pagan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paganism) roots, particularly the [Celtic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celts) festival of [Samhain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samhain)", which comes from the [Old Irish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Irish) for "summer's end". The Pagan holiday *Samhain*, that the *All Saints* holy day replaced, was also known as the *Day of the Dead*, the day when the [**souls**](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soul) of dead people came back to [Earth](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earth). The word *Halloween* was first used in the 16th century and represents a [Scottish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotland) variant of the fuller *All Hallows' Even*ing.

Nowadays Halloween is a [holiday](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holiday) in many English speaking countries. Children wear [**costumes**](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Costume) and they go to peoples' homes saying "[Trick](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trick) or [treat](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treat)!" to ask for [candy](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candy), [sweets](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweets) in the [United Kingdom](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom), or [lollies](http://simple.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Lollies&action=edit&redlink=1) in [Australia](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia). This practice originally involved a **threat**. In this case the threat could be explained as: "Give me a treat or I will play a trick on you." Children today usually do not play tricks if they do not get treats. However, some children still get up to [mischief](http://simple.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mischief&action=edit&redlink=1) (**pranks** or things to make fun of people; like putting toilet paper in trees; writing on windows with [soap](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soap) or throwing eggs at peoples' houses). People sometimes dress up as [ghosts](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghosts), [witches](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witch), [**goblins**](http://simple.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Goblins&action=edit&redlink=1) and other scary things for Halloween.

**A) Look up the meaning of the words in bold and find synonyms for them.**

**B) Read the passage and answer the following questions using your own words.**

1. How often does Halloween take place?
2. Did any pagan celebrations influence the Christian feast of All Saints?
3. What happened on Samhain?
4. When was the word Halloween first used? What are its origins?
5. How is Halloween celebrated nowadays?
6. What could happen if children don’t get “treats”?

