

## A brief history of Halloween traditions

When we think of Halloween, we often think of pumpkins, scary costumes and trick-or-treating. But do you know where these traditions come from? Watch the video to find out!

### Tasks

Do the preparation task first. Then watch the video and do the exercises. Remember you can read the transcript at any time.

#### Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

**Vocabulary**

- ..... to dress up
- ..... pumpkin carving
- ..... the Celts
- ..... a spirit
- ..... medieval
- ..... the Victorian era
- ..... creepy
- ..... a turnip

**Definition**

- cutting shapes into a pumpkin
- related to the Middle Ages (= the period in European history from about 600 to 1500 CE)
- a ghost
- to put on special clothes
- strange or unnatural and making you feel frightened
- the people who lived in ancient Britain (from about 800 BCE to 43 CE)
- a round root vegetable that is usually white at the bottom and purple at the top
- from or relating to the period of British history during the rule of Queen Victoria (1837–1901)

### Tasks

#### Task 1

Choose the best answer.

- Samhain is a \_\_\_\_\_ tradition.  
a. Celtic                                      b. Victorian                                      c. medieval
- It's believed that Samhain is a day when \_\_\_\_ can enter our world.  
a. aliens                                      b. spirits                                      c. vampires

3. Samhain was joined with the Christian festival of \_\_\_\_ to make All Hallows' Eve.
  - a. Easter
  - b. Christmas
  - c. All Saints' Day
4. The earliest version of trick-or-treating dates back \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. more than 50 years
  - b. more than 100 years
  - c. more than 500 years
5. An early version of trick-or-treating was called \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. spooking
  - b. souling
  - c. singing
6. The Celts used to wear scary costumes to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. frighten ghosts away
  - b. frighten their neighbours
  - c. have fun at parties
7. Irish people used to carve faces on \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. turnips
  - b. potatoes
  - c. carrots
8. In the 19th century, many Irish people moved to \_\_\_\_\_, where pumpkins were easier to grow.
  - a. India
  - b. America
  - c. Australia

## Task 2

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

pray	Celtic	spirit
food	costumes	medieval

1. The ..... tradition of Samhain is still celebrated today.
2. The tradition of trick-or-treating began in ..... England.
3. People were given ..... when they went from door to door.
4. They offered to sing or ..... for people's families.
5. Wearing scary ..... also comes from the Celts.
6. In Ireland, people carved turnips to scare away a ..... called Jack.

## Discussion

Is Halloween celebrated in your country? What do people do? Are there any other festivals at this time of year?

## Answers

### Preparation task

1. d
2. a
3. f
4. c
5. b
6. h
7. e
8. g

### Task 1

1. a
2. b
3. c
4. c
5. b
6. a
7. a
8. b

### Task 2

1. Celtic
2. medieval
3. food
4. pray
5. costumes
6. spirit