

Halloween

October 31

Halloween comes from an old Celtic holiday. The Celts marked the end of the harvest season. The word is a short form of the phrase, “All Hallows’ Eve.” In medieval times, poor people went door to door on the first day of November. They received gifts of food. In return, they would say prayers for the dead. This tradition has never been practiced in America.

People here celebrate with harvest parties. They wear costumes and go trick-or-treating. Children receive candy. People carve pumpkins.



Summary of Activities

Reading: Literature

Harvest Party—fictional story with a sequencing activity

Reading: Informational Text

The Many Uses for Pumpkin—nonfiction passage with comprehension questions

Writing

Stories Around the Bonfire—activity in which students write and share fall stories

Speaking & Listening

My Pumpkin—activity in which students share their pumpkin-carving steps with classmates

Vocabulary: bob, bonfire, harvest, pumpkin, roast



Name _____

Date _____

Harvest Party

Directions: Read the story below and on page 94. Then complete the activity on page 94.

Jenna dropped the tape and ran to answer the door. "Hi, Vivian, you're just in time to help me finish putting up streamers!"

Her friend came in and dropped her bag inside the living room as Jenna closed the front door. "I see." Vivian laughed. Strips of paper hung, trailing over the chair Jenna had used to reach higher on the wall. "Of course, I'll help."

Sighing with relief, Jenna held the tape as Vivian climbed up on the chair. Taller than Jenna, Vivian would do a much better job.

"What are we going to do tonight?" Vivian stepped off the chair, twisting a streamer. "Here, hold this." She handed the twisted paper to Jenna and moved the chair to another place along the wall.

"It's going to be such fun!" Jenna clapped her hands, dropping the streamer. "We're going to bob for apples and have popcorn. Mom is heating apple cider, and we'll tell scary stories with a flashlight. We can pretend we're sitting around a bonfire." The doorbell rang before Jenna could pick up the fallen decorations.

Beverly and Liz dropped their bags on the floor next to Vivian's. They clustered in the dining room, peeking into the kitchen. Jenna's stepfather and stepbrother hauled in tubs. They filled them with water and set apples floating on the surface.

"Looks good to me," Liz said. "When do we start?"

"Call the girls, Jenna," Mom said. "I think everyone is here." Jenna hollered down the short hallway for her two sisters to come out.

"Do we count Philip?" Beverly asked. "That would make seven of us total. Do you think seven is a lucky number?"

Jenna rolled her eyes. All her friends said her stepbrother, Philip, was cute. She had to admit, at least he wasn't a pest like Vivian's brothers.

They took turns dipping their faces into the cold water to bob for apples. "This is hard. I give up." Beverly sat back and threw up her hands.

Jenna was determined to get an apple, so she chomped down hard. The apple skittered across the water, and she used her chin to hold it next to the edge of the tub. "Got it!" She leaned back on her knees.

"Popcorn's ready," Mom said. She handed a large bowl to Vivian and followed her into the living room with a second bowl. "Jenna, please bring some napkins."

Earlier, Jenna and her sisters had scrunched up red, orange, and yellow tissue paper to make a pretend bonfire. "Is everyone settled?"

The girls found pillows and arranged themselves, giggling.

"You turned out the lights before I was ready!" Beverly complained.



Name _____

Date _____

Harvest Party *(cont.)*

Directions: Read the story beginning on page 93. Then complete the activity.

Jenna shook her head, although no one could see in the dark room. "No, I haven't touched the switch."

Liz jumped up, almost knocking over a bowl of popcorn. "Philip did it for a trick!"

"No, I'm over here." Philip spoke from the corner of the room by the front window.

Shrieks erupted.

"Girls, the lights have gone out. Do you have the flashlights handy?" Jenna's stepfather's calm tone quieted them for a moment.

"It's because it's Friday the thirteenth." Liz announced. "Someone or something has cut the electricity. After we tell stories, we can figure out the mystery."

Activity: Write the events of the story in the order they happened. After each event, write the name of one character who did something that affected the outcome.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____



Name _____

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The Many Uses for Pumpkin

Directions: Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

It may surprise you to learn that pumpkin is a fruit. In fact, giant pumpkins are the world's largest fruit. They are members of the squash family. Pumpkins first came from Central America. Now, they grow on every continent except Antarctica.

The Native Americans used pumpkins for many things. They cut long strips of pumpkin and roasted them over an open fire. Then, they dried the strips and wove them into mats. Native Americans used the seeds for food and medicine.

Colonists ate pumpkins. They cut off the tops. Then, they scooped out the seeds. They put in milk, spices, and honey. They baked the pumpkins in hot ashes.

Now, we make pumpkin pie. People use pumpkins to make soup, pie, bread, and cookies. Pumpkin can be put in ice cream and pancakes. It can be made into a spread for crackers.

In other countries, people eat pumpkin in different ways. Often, people eat pumpkin as a vegetable. Some people roast pumpkin with beef or other meat. Pumpkin can be eaten with chocolate, too.

People in Switzerland use pumpkin for many foods. They cook small balls of pumpkin and flour in boiling water. They also make salad oil with pumpkin seeds.

Almost all of a pumpkin is safe to eat. People cook the meat of the pumpkin. They roast the seeds. Pumpkin seeds make a good snack. It is safe to eat the flowers. Some people make salad with the leaves.

People feed pumpkin to animals. Elephants in zoos eat pumpkin. Pumpkin is a healthy food for chickens and goats.

Other people use pumpkin for medicine. Some people think it will get rid of freckles. Others think pumpkin will make skin soft. People from China use it as a cure for snakebites. They believe pumpkin takes away pain. In Mexico and China, pumpkin is made into flour. The flour is used in Japan and other countries.

Pumpkins grow on vines or bushes. People harvest them. Pumpkins can be stored. Keep them in a warm, dry place. They keep best with the stem still on.

Try something new! Find a way to eat some of the world's largest fruit.

1. Which part of the pumpkin is *not* safe to eat?
 - a. seeds
 - b. flowers
 - c. skin
2. What is the relationship between pumpkins and animals?
 - a. Pumpkin is a good food for some animals.
 - b. Animals do not eat pumpkins.
 - c. Animals are afraid of jack-o'-lanterns.
3. Underline the sentence(s) in the passage that describes non-food uses for pumpkin.



Name _____

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Stories Around the Bonfire

Directions: Read the passage. Then complete the activity.

Often, people tell stories at Halloween parties. They might be scary stories or funny stories. You can play a game in which each person adds something to a story. People might sit around a bonfire to tell stories. Long ago, people thought that bonfires kept evil away. Even today, it's nice to have the light and warmth from the fire on a cold, dark night. If the party is inside, you can sit near a fireplace. You don't have to sit around a real fire. You can even have a pretend bonfire to tell stories. The important thing is to have fun with your friends telling stories to each other.

Activity: Write a story that would be good to tell aloud to your friends. Then share your story with your classmates. Here are some writing prompt ideas:

- Write about something funny or scary that happened to you.
- Write a story about harvesting food from a garden or visiting a farm.
- Write about a fall activity, such as raking leaves or playing football.



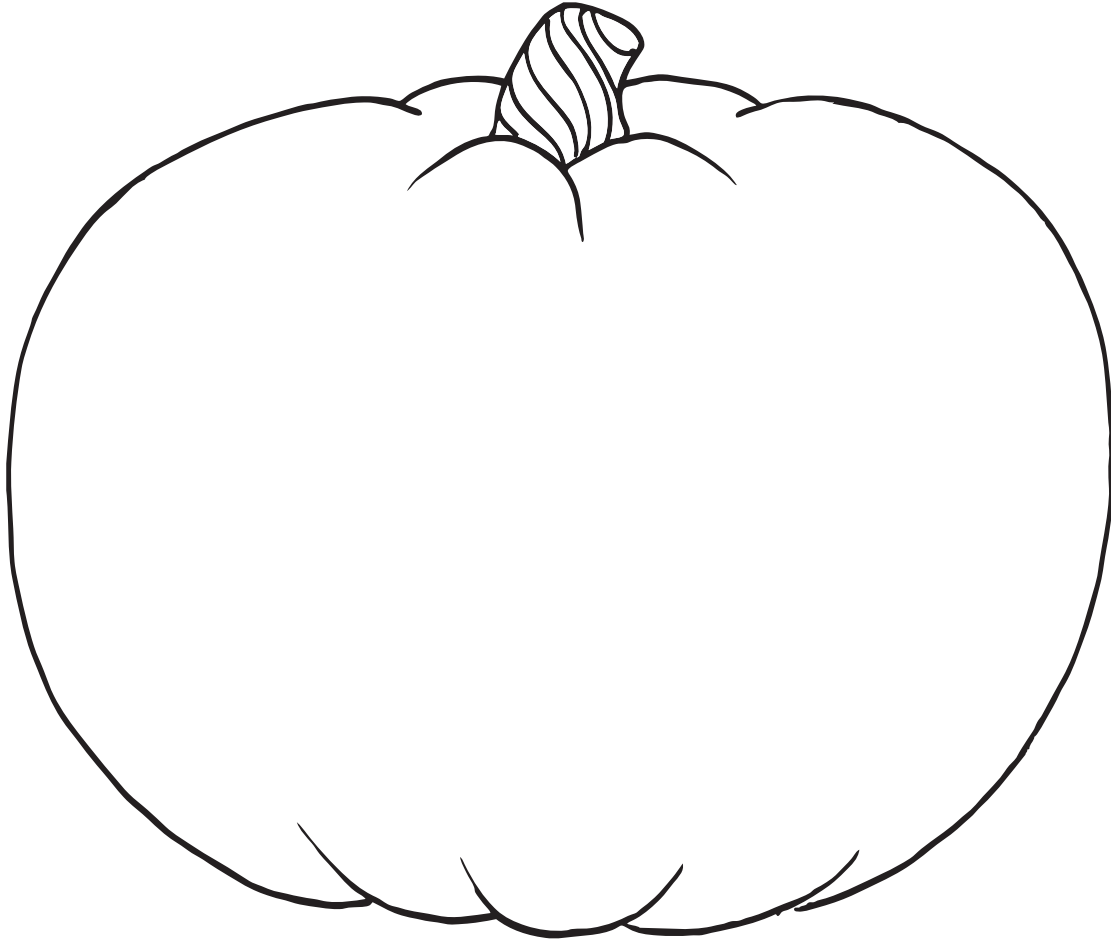
Name _____

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My Pumpkin

Directions: Think about how you would like to carve a pumpkin. Write your answers to the questions, and then read them out loud to a classmate.

1. What design will you have on your pumpkin? Draw your ideas on the pumpkin.



2. What steps will you take to carve your pumpkin? Write the steps in order.

3. How will you display your finished pumpkin?
