

Halloween Trivia

Pumpkins, costumes, and candy. Twenty questions about the history, traditions, and fun facts behi...

Name / Team:

Score:

1 What ancient Celtic festival is Halloween believed to have originated from?

- A. Beltane
- B. Samhain
- C. Lughnasadh
- D. Imbolc

2 What vegetable was originally carved into jack-o'-lanterns before pumpkins?

- A. Squash
- B. Turnips
- C. Beets
- D. Potatoes

3 What is the most popular Halloween candy in the United States?

- A. Candy corn
- B. Snickers
- C. Reese's Peanut Butter Cups
- D. M&Ms

4 What does the word 'Halloween' literally mean?

- A. Night of the dead
- B. Holy evening (All Hallows' Eve)
- C. Harvest festival
- D. Ghost night

5 In what decade did trick-or-treating become widespread in the United States?

- A. 1920s
- B. 1930s
- C. 1950s
- D. 1970s

6 What classic horror movie features a masked killer named Michael Myers?

- A. Friday the 13th
- B. A Nightmare on Elm Street
- C. Halloween
- D. Scream

7 How many pounds of candy corn are produced in the United States each year (approximately)?

- A. 10 million
- B. 35 million
- C. 100 million
- D. 5 million

8 Which country celebrates the Day of the Dead (Dia de los Muertos) around the same time as Halloween?

- A. Spain
- B. Brazil
- C. Mexico
- D. Philippines

9 What is a group of witches called?

- A. A pack
- B. A coven
- C. A circle
- D. A flock

10 What do you call a fear of Halloween?

- A. Arachnophobia
- B. Samhainophobia
- C. Nyctophobia
- D. Phasmophobia

11 What percentage of Americans say they celebrate Halloween?

- A. About 40%
- B. About 55%
- C. About 70%
- D. About 90%

Halloween Trivia

(continued)

12 In what century were black cats first associated with witchcraft and bad luck?

- A. 10th century
- B. 13th century
- C. 16th century
- D. 18th century

13 What is the most popular Halloween costume category for adults in the US?

- A. Superheroes
- B. Witches
- C. Zombies
- D. Vampires

14 Approximately how much money do Americans spend on Halloween each year?

- A. About \$3 billion
- B. About \$6 billion
- C. About \$10-12 billion
- D. About \$20 billion

15 What is the origin of bobbing for apples on Halloween?

- A. A Roman harvest festival honoring the goddess P...
- B. An English children's game from the 1700s
- C. A Celtic ritual for predicting the future
- D. An American invention from the 1800s

16 What is the name of the phobia that describes a fear of spiders?

- A. Entomophobia
- B. Arachnophobia
- C. Ophidiophobia
- D. Chiroptophobia

17 In the legend of the jack-o'-lantern, what was 'Stingy Jack' condemned to do?

- A. Haunt a castle forever
- B. Count every star in the sky
- C. Wander the earth with only a carved turnip lantern
- D. Guard the gates of the underworld

18 What candy bar brand uses the tagline 'Trick or Treat' in its Halloween marketing?

- A. Snickers
- B. Kit Kat
- C. Hershey's
- D. None of these specifically

19 What type of creature is a vampire traditionally said to be unable to see in?

- A. Water
- B. A mirror
- C. Photographs
- D. Windows

20 What is the world record for the largest pumpkin ever grown (approximate weight)?

- A. 1,000 pounds
- B. 1,500 pounds
- C. 2,000 pounds
- D. Over 2,700 pounds

Halloween Trivia — Answer Key

1. B Samhain

Samhain (pronounced 'sow-in') was a Celtic festival marking the end of harvest and the beginning of winter. The Celts believed the boundary between the living and dead became

2. B Turnips

In Ireland and Scotland, turnips and potatoes were carved into lanterns. When Irish immigrants came to America, they found pumpkins were larger and easier to carve.

3. C Reese's Peanut Butter Cups

Reese's Peanut Butter Cups consistently rank as the most popular Halloween candy in national surveys and sales data.

4. B Holy evening (All Hallows' Eve)

Halloween is a contraction of 'All Hallows' Eve,' the evening before All Saints' Day (November 1). 'Hallow' means 'holy' or 'saint.'

5. C 1950s

While the practice existed earlier, trick-or-treating became a mainstream American tradition in the 1950s, fueled by suburban growth and baby boom families.

6. C Halloween

John Carpenter's Halloween (1978) introduced Michael Myers and helped create the slasher film genre. The mask was famously made from a modified Captain Kirk mask.

7. B 35 million

About 35 million pounds of candy corn are produced annually. That is roughly 9 billion individual kernels, mostly consumed during the Halloween season.

8. C Mexico

Día de los Muertos is celebrated on November 1-2 in Mexico. Families build altars, visit cemeteries, and celebrate the lives of deceased loved ones with food, music, and marigolds.

9. B A coven

A group of witches is called a coven. The word comes from the Latin 'convenire,' meaning 'to come together.'

10. B Samhainophobia

Samhainophobia is the fear of Halloween, named after the ancient Celtic festival Samhain. It is related to other specific phobias like phasmophobia (fear of ghosts).

11. C About 70%

Surveys consistently show about 65-70% of Americans participate in Halloween activities, making it the second most commercially successful holiday after Christmas.

12. B 13th century

The association began in the 13th century when Pope Gregory IX issued a papal decree linking black cats to devil worship. The superstition grew during the witch trials of later centuries.

13. B Witches

Witches consistently rank as the most popular Halloween costume for adults in the United States, according to National Retail Federation surveys.

14. C About \$10-12 billion

Americans spend over \$10 billion on Halloween annually, covering costumes, candy, decorations, and greeting cards.

15. A A Roman harvest festival honoring the...

Bobbing for apples likely originated from a Roman festival honoring Pomona, the goddess of fruit and trees. When the Romans conquered Celtic lands, the traditions merged.

16. B Arachnophobia

Arachnophobia is the fear of spiders and is one of the most common phobias. Spiders became associated with Halloween partly because they spin webs in dark, abandoned places.

17. C Wander the earth with only a carved t...

According to Irish legend, Stingy Jack tricked the Devil twice. When he died, neither heaven nor hell would take him, so he was doomed to roam the earth with a coal inside a carved

18. D None of these specifically

While all major candy brands do Halloween marketing, no single brand owns the 'Trick or Treat' phrase. Hershey's, Mars, and Nestle all compete fiercely for Halloween candy sales, which

19. B A mirror

In traditional vampire folklore, vampires cast no reflection in mirrors. This is often attributed to mirrors historically being backed with silver, a 'pure' metal associated with warding off

20. D Over 2,700 pounds

The world record for the heaviest pumpkin has exceeded 2,700 pounds. Competitive pumpkin growing is a serious hobby with growers using specialized seeds and techniques.