

Pumpkins and Turnips?

When you hear the word Halloween the first things that might come to your mind are: candy, costumes, and spooky movies. But not a lot of people would say turnips, Ireland, and spirits. Why is that you ask, because, not that many people know where and when Halloween first originated. The surprising part is that we happily celebrate and enjoy this amazing holiday, but we don't take the time to find out how it began. Well, if you read this report you will find out. Here is the story of how Halloween began, if you dare to be brave and listen to it.

Halloween started in Ireland; it was originally called All Saints' Day, it was on November 1. Many Irish – Celts believed that on All Saints' Day, the spirits of died family members would come to possess the body of living people. If you were in school back then, you would get this day off. Sadly, we don't get it off anymore. But it was still a very meaningful day.

All Souls' Day followed on November 2. On this day many people prayed to their family members who had passed away. Some people put food outside so that their loved ones could come down and receive them. Some people would position a lantern near their window so that their families' souls could find their way home. There were many strange beliefs. This was a representation of one.

Costumes are a significant part of Halloween. I remember one year I put on a superb princess's dress and my mom did my hair all pretty. I looked and felt like a real princess. The best part was that I got a lot of candy that year. But how did we get costumes? In Ireland, men would dress up in a white robe and go door to door begging

for a feast. In Wales, kids would dress up as their opposite gender. From then on costumes became an enormous part of Halloween all over the world.

Another important tradition of Halloween is trick-or-treating. It started in the ninth –century. This European custom was called souling. This was when Christians would walk from village to village asking for some soul cakes. Soul cakes were square shaped bread with currants. Now, trick-or – treating is very popular in the United States. Many children in the U.S and many other parts of the world go trick-or-treating, and they all adore it.

Jack-O'-Lanterns are a fun activity that everyone can do. You carve a pumpkin however you want it to look. At my school we have a pumpkin contest. What you do is you adorn a pumpkin however you want it to look and the most creative and original get prizes. In Scotland and Ireland they would carve turnips and beets on Halloween. They named them Jack's Lantern, but then discovered that pumpkins worked finer than turnips. And so, they ended up calling them Jack-O Lanterns.

Now that I told you about the origins of Halloween, I expect that you will tell your friends and family so it can go on and on. This way we know about the holiday we all love and enjoy. Thank you for taking the time to listen to this and learn about it. Doesn't it feel great to know where the things you love come from? I know I adore knowing where things come from.