

October Traditions

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OCTOBER is rich with traditions that reflect the cultural and seasonal changes around the world. One of the most well-known traditions is HALLOWEEN, celebrated on October 31st, primarily in NORTH AMERICA and parts of EUROPE. Halloween is believed to have roots in the ancient Celtic festival of SAMHAIN, marking the end of the harvest season and the onset of winter. Over time, this pagan celebration merged with Christian observances like All Hallows' Eve. Modern Halloween is characterized by activities such as trick-or-treating, costume parties, carving pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns, and decorating homes with spooky themes. Ghosts, witches, and monsters are common symbols during this time, adding an element of frightful fun.



Spell: MODERN THEME SYMBOL

What month of traditions are we discussing in this lesson? OCTOBER

What is one of the most well known traditions? HALLOWEEN

When is Halloween celebrated? OCTOBER 31

What's one continent where Halloween is celebrated? NORTH AMERICA, EUROPE

Tell me another continent. ASIA, AFRICA, SOUTH AMERICA, ANTARCTICA, AUSTRALIA

Question Type Key

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Tell me one thing Halloween is now characterized by. TRICK OR TREATING, COSTUME PARTIES, CARVING PUMPKINS, DECORATING HOMES

What's one symbol of Halloween? GHOSTS, WITCHES, MONSTERS

What do you think of the Halloween tradition of dressing up in costumes?

In MEXICO and other parts of LATIN AMERICA, DIA DE LOS MUERTOS (Day of the Dead) is celebrated on October 31st through November 2nd. This tradition blends indigenous AZTEC customs with CATHOLICISM, honoring deceased loved ones through altars (OFRENDAS), marigold flowers, and offerings like food and sugar skulls. Families visit CEMETERIES to clean and decorate graves, and believe that the spirits of the dead return to enjoy the offerings left for them. While it coincides with Halloween, Día de los Muertos is more of a joyful remembrance rather than a spooky occasion, emphasizing the celebration of life and death in a colorful and festive manner.

Spell: DECORATE JOYFUL FESTIVE

Día de los Muertos translates to mean what? DAY OF THE DEAD

What country celebrates Day of the Dead? MEXICO

Day of the Dead combines Aztec customs with _____. CATHOLICISM

Where do families go to visit? CEMETERIES

What do families do while visiting the cemeteries? CLEAN GRAVES, DECORATE GRAVES

What's one thing families use as offerings? FOOD, SUGAR SKULLS

When does the celebration of the Day of the Dead end? NOVEMBER 2

Tell me in your own words the differences between Halloween and the Day of the Dead.

In GERMANY, the first Sunday in October is celebrated as OKTOBERFEST, a world-famous festival of beer, food, and BAVARIAN

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culture. Originally a royal wedding celebration in 1810, Oktoberfest has evolved into a massive cultural event that attracts millions of people from around the globe. Traditional Bavarian attire, such as LEDERHOSEN and DIRNDLS, is commonly worn, and attendees enjoy local food like pretzels, sausages, and roast meats. Beer, especially brewed according to Bavarian purity laws, is a central focus of the celebration. The festival often spans from mid-September into the first weekend of October.



What tradition takes place on the first Sunday in October? OKTOBERFEST

Where is Oktoberfest celebrated? GERMANY

Oktoberfest was originally celebrated in as what? ROYAL WEDDING

In what year? 1810

What's one type of Bavarian attire that might be worn? LEDERHOSEN, DIRNDLS

What kind of local foods are enjoyed at Oktoberfest? PRETZELS, SAUSAGES, ROAST MEATS

What is the central focus of the celebration? BEER

What month does the celebration begin? SEPTEMBER

What kind of attire would you wear to Oktoberfest? Why?

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In the Jewish community, SUKKOT, is observed in October, following the end of YOM KIPPUR. Sukkot, also known as the Feast of TABERNACLES, is a seven-day festival commemorating the Israelites' 40 years of wandering in the desert after their exodus from Egypt. During this time, Jewish families build temporary outdoor shelters called SUKKAHS, where they eat meals and, in some cases, sleep, to remember the dwellings their ancestors lived in. Sukkot is a joyful festival that celebrates the autumn harvest, focusing on gratitude for God's provision and protection.

Spell: FEAST OUTDOOR PROTECTION

What is observed in October in the Jewish community? SUKKOT

Sukkot is observed following the end of _____. YOM KIPPUR

Sukkot is also known as the Feast of _____. TABERNACLES

How long is the festival? 7 DAYS

What are the outdoor shelters called? SUKKAHS

What's one thing families do in sukkahs? EAT MEALS, SLEEP

Sukkot focuses on gratitude for God's what? PROVISION, PROTECTION

In the United States and CANADA, October brings COLUMBUS DAY and CANADIAN THANKSGIVING, respectively. Columbus Day, celebrated on the second Monday of October in the U.S., marks the arrival of CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS in the Americas in 1492. It's a controversial holiday today, with some celebrating Italian-American heritage, while others observe INDIGENOUS Peoples' Day, recognizing the historical and cultural impact on Native American communities. In contrast, Canadian Thanksgiving, observed on the second Monday of October, is a day of gratitude for the autumn harvest, similar to American Thanksgiving, but with less COMMERCIALIZATION and more emphasis on family gatherings.

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What is celebrated on the second Monday of October in the U.S.?

COLUMBUS DAY

When did Christopher Columbus arrive in the Americas? 1492

Because Columbus Day is controversial, what else do people celebrate on this day instead? ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE, INDIGENOUS

PEOPLES DAY

What does Canadian Thanksgiving emphasize? FAMILY GATHERINGS

In what month is Thanksgiving celebrated in the U.S.? NOVEMBER

What day of the week is Thanksgiving always celebrated on? THURSDAY

What's another holiday that's heavily commercialized? Why do you think that is?

Another tradition associated with October is the HARVEST FESTIVAL, celebrated in rural areas across the world. In places like the UNITED KINGDOM, Harvest Festival falls in October and is a time to give thanks for the crops and food produced throughout the year. Churches and communities hold special services and events where people donate food to those in need. It is a time for sharing, community, and gratitude, with strong ties to the AGRICULTURAL cycle and the importance of preparing for the winter months ahead.



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Spell: KINGDOM EVENT DONATE

What festival is celebrated in the United Kingdom? HARVEST FESTIVAL

Who holds special services and events for the Harvest Festival?

CHURCHES, COMMUNITIES

What is donated during the Harvest Festival? FOOD

The Harvest Festival has strong ties to the _____ cycle.

AGRICULTURAL

If you could create a holiday that would be celebrated globally, what would it be and what would it celebrate?

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