

Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Reading informational texts

Lesson Quick Codes for this set: LZ1763, LZ1764, LZ1765, LZ1766, LZ1767, LZ178

Common Core State Standards addressed: RI.4.1, RI.4.2, RI.4.4

Lesson Text: "The Great Chicago Fire" by Michael A. Signal

Assessment Text: "Ever Wondered How Halloween Got Started?" by Dr. Howard Bennett

Directions: *Today you will be taking a short test using what you have learned about reading nonfiction texts.*

- 1) **(RI.4.1)** Below you will see the title, a photograph, and caption from a nonfiction article. What do you think this article will be mostly about?



2007 PHOTO BY BILL O'LEARY/THE WASHINGTON POST

Halloween means costumes and trick-or-treating now, but its roots marked the end of the harvest.

→ EVER WONDERED how
Halloween got started?

- 2) **(RI.4.1)** Now read the article, “Ever Wondered How Halloween Got Started?”. As you read, keep track of your thoughts and questions below. (*Hint:* You may want to use these sentence starters as guides: “I wonder why...”, “Something I thought was cool was...”, “I want to learn more about...”)

- 3) **(RI.4.2)** What is the main idea of the paragraph below?

The **origin** of trick-or-treating is not well understood. Some people think it began with a custom called souling, when the poor went to people’s homes begging for soul cakes, round pieces of bread with currants. In return for treats, the beggars would pray to help the recently deceased (dead) enter Heaven.

- 4) **(RI.4.4)** Use context clues from the paragraph above to determine the meaning of the word “origin.” Rewrite the sentence below using your own definition.

5) What is the main idea of the article, “Ever Wondered How Halloween Got Started?”

6) **(RI.4.1)** Imagine that your teacher has asked you to quiz one of your classmates about information from the article, “Ever Wondered How Halloween Got Started?” Write down three questions that you could use to quiz a classmate. (*Hint*: you may want to use the question starters “who,” “what”, “where”, “why”, or “when” to help you get started)

7) Why do you think Dr. Howard Bennett wrote the article, “Ever Wondered How Halloween Got Started?” Use specific evidence and examples from the text to support your answer.

KidsPost



2007 PHOTO BY BILL O'LEARY/THE WASHINGTON POST

Halloween means costumes and trick-or-treating now, but its roots marked the end of the harvest.

➔ **EVER WONDERED** how Halloween got started?

Since Halloween is only five days away, I'm sure most of you have already picked out the costumes you plan to wear when you go trick-or-treating. I'm also sure your parents have stocked up on candy to satisfy the ghoulish creatures that come by for a tasty treat.

Although Halloween is one of the most popular holidays in the United States, it did not start out the way it is practiced today.

Halloween can be traced back more than 2,000 years to a Celtic festival known as Samhain (pronounced SAH-wen) that celebrated the end of the summer harvest season. The ancient Celts lived in Northern Europe, especially Ireland, Britain and France. (The "C" in Celtic is pronounced with a "K" sound.)

The Celts believed that the spirits of the dead roamed the towns and villages on the night of October 31. Because the Celts were superstitious, they feared that these spirits could create havoc by damaging crops, creating sickness and even taking over the bodies of the living. To ward off danger, the Celts lighted huge bonfires and dressed in animal hides to frighten away the evil spirits. Today people light up the night with creepy decorations and jack-o'-lanterns. And rather than parading around in animal hides, most kids

prefer to wear spooky costumes.

The origin of trick-or-treating is not well understood. Some people think it began with a custom called souling, when the poor went to people's homes begging for soul cakes, round pieces of bread with currants. In return for the treats, the beggars would pray to help the recently deceased enter heaven.

So how did Samhain turn into Halloween? Samhain was a pagan (nonreligious) celebration. As Christianity became dominant in Europe, the Catholic Church decided it didn't like people celebrating a non-Christian holiday. Around the year 800, the Church moved a spring holiday, All Saints' Day, to November 1. "Hallows" is another word for "saints," so the night before All Saints' Day became known as All Hallows' Eve. From there, it was just a hop, skip and a jump of the tongue for All Hallows' Eve to become Halloween.

It's interesting to imagine what the Celts might think of how their tradition is being carried on by costumed kids carrying plastic pumpkins filled with candy corn and M&M's.

— Howard Bennett

Howard Bennett, a Washington pediatrician and author of health-related books for kids, writes about gross things for KidsPost.