

Advertising Strategies

Testimonial – an ordinary person recommends the product, service, or idea.

Celebrity Endorsement – The endorsement of a product by a well-known person or organization, e.g., a famous actor endorsing a brand of clothing.

Transfer – The transfer of the qualities of one idea to those of another.

Halloween is a unique event on the calendar. It is not a holiday, so there is no day off to observe it. It is not connected with any religion, yet its notions of death and afterlife connect to many religions. Some people consider it to be great fun, while others consider it dangerous. There are huge promotions in stores, costumes, movies, and television specials. All of these characteristics make Halloween a very important and exciting phenomenon for students to understand and appreciate.

Bandwagon – The suggestion that everyone is doing it, so it must be the popular thing to do.

Haunted Media contains lesson and unit ideas for students of all ages, taking into consideration their differing intellectual and emotional maturities.

Facts and Figures – The implication that figures and statistics prove a point beyond dispute.

The unit invites students to demonstrate a large number of literacy and media expectations, including ethnographic research and writing.

Repetition – The constant statement of an idea in order to fix the product in a person's mind.

Background

Some schools or classrooms ban Halloween activities, while others celebrate it wholeheartedly. As is always the case, education helps people place Halloween into perspective. The writing team wanted to provide students with opportunities to explore the heritage and meanings of Halloween.

Halloween is a powerful experience for people of all ages, but represents one of North America's oldest and most significant rituals: an examination of spirituality, death, and afterlife. There are sensitivities involved in these concepts that teachers need to consider, while still exploiting the energy of the event for learning opportunities.

The guide contains opportunities to develop a wide range of literacy skills, cultural studies, and media literacy.

Glossary

Terms listed here should be introduced where appropriate.

Advertising Strategies – Methods used by advertisers to motivate potential buyers.

Commercial – A television or radio message designed to promote a product, service, or idea.

Flyer – A folded paper designed to promote a product, service, or idea.

Pleasure Value – The amount of pleasure derived, based on the prestige, usefulness, inclusion in a group, and/or sensory stimulation.

Position – Placing a message deliberately where it will be most heard by a target audience; e.g., sugared cereal commercials are often positioned between Saturday morning cartoons.

Product Placement – The placement of a product, or mention of the product, in a television show, e.g., having a leading character drink a specific soft drink or wear a name-brand sweater.

Income, and education, that the promotion or product is aimed to attract.

Internet Advertising – Advertising on the Internet, e.g., a survey manufacturer might recommend a specific brand of pens and paper.

Web Ads – Advertisements placed on web pages that come in two forms: pop-up ads appear on one side, and flow down the page.

Resources

Print

McDonald, Kathleen. *Kid Culture: Children and Adults and the World of Toys*. New York: Basic Books, 1991. ISBN 0-562-05943-7.

Worrest, Chris. *The Issues Collection: Popular Culture*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1993.

Worrest, Chris. *The Issues Collection: Popular Culture*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1993.

Worrest, Chris. *The Issues Collection: Popular Culture*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1993.

Websites

Badfads Museum. The fashion, collectible, activity, and event fads of the last 100 years. <www.badfads.com/home.html>

Beanie Babies fad won't go away. <www.highlandnj.com/news/html/NewsDocs/Beanie%20babies.html>

Fads Gone By. <www.nyerfire.com/fi/JackCraig/FADS.html>

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HAUNTED MEDIA



INTRODUCTION

Halloween is a non-denominational occasion that involves alternate identities, playful spirituality, and opportunities to explore media, and popular culture. An exploration of Halloween themes can result in highly motivating lessons which help meet the Language, Social Studies, and Arts expectations in an integrated and effective way.

Descended from a pagan European ritual that was used to acknowledge dead ancestors, Halloween emigrated and became a curious non-holiday that means different things to different people: it is one of very few ways that the repressed North American culture can talk about death; it playfully, but strongly, acknowledges spirituality in a culture that has become secularized, and it has become very contentious among those who see it as an evil occasion.

Media representations of Halloween abound, and provide opportunities to examine culture, language, and contentious issues while increasing students' understanding of media and marketing.

Teachers must be sensitive that, for both religious and economic reasons, some students will not want, or not be allowed, to participate in Halloween activities. Teachers should weigh the reasons for studying Halloween in an effort to value and include all students. Be aware that some students have had first-hand experiences of violence that might make talking about death, ghosts, etc., difficult.

Accommodations might include allowing students to study costuming rather than wearing costumes in a parade. For an example of a model for re-examining Halloween critically, see *Far From Home* by Robert Munsch.

PRIMARY—JUNIOR

1. Masks

a) Explore the uses of masks, starting with a KWL chart.

Discuss where students have seen masks, and why they think the people used them. Include masks used for service (firefighter), and those used for disguise (clown).

Consider how some masks make students feel happy while others do not. Identify the qualities of masks that create these responses. Invite students to make faces (as in frown, smile, etc.) to illustrate these qualities.

Bring some different masks (e.g., goalie, robber, firefighter, clown) to class, and invite students to try them on. Identify how students feel when wearing a mask (e.g., strong, powerful, having magic powers, beautiful, ugly, disguised), and compare those feelings to how they feel when they see someone ELSE wearing the mask.

• How do they feel as they REMOVE the mask (relieved or sad to be themselves again)?

b) Discuss the custom of wearing masks at Halloween. Brainstorm a list of different kinds of masks and disguises people can wear (e.g., full masks, half masks, wigs, beards, false noses, face paint, face putty, makeup).

Think/pair/share favourite disguises from past Halloween costumes.

Create a Mask Idea Book with instructions on how to create masks, and other disguises.

• Do the students wear masks or makeup when they go trick-or-treating? Why? (Some children are not allowed to wear masks for safety reasons. Some might wear masks over their eyes only. Some might dislike having masks over their faces.)

• Do they wear masks at any OTHER times? Why?

- Does their play sometimes involve masks?
- Does this imply the taking on of a personality other than their own?
- Why might children enjoy experimenting with other personalities?

c) Read about groups who use masks, and explore stories in which masks or disguises are used to transform one character into another (e.g., *The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids*, *Batman*, *Superman*, *Spiderman*, *Star Wars*, *Jacob Two Two Meets the Hooded Fang*, *Wolverine*, *X-Men*, *Lion King* (the play), *Animorphs*, and the many Aboriginal *Raven* stories.

Consider musicians who use face and body paint to enhance their performances.

• How do these enhancements add to the excitement or attraction of the performances?

Consider the recent practice of some sports fans who paint their faces as a sign of support for favourite athletes.

• How does the face paint change their identities and behaviours?

Create masks along with a story about the character portrayed in the mask. Discuss the qualities each child would like to portray in a mask.

Provide an opportunity for students to create play scenarios for their mask characters at school. These scenarios might remain informal, or might be recorded and made into storybooks or videos.

d) Discuss which of the masks in activity c) above would be most appropriate to wear for Halloween, and why.

Compare the qualities of student-made and store-bought Halloween masks. Imagine wearing the student-made masks for Halloween.

• Would the students feel good about this, or are there pressures on them to wear store-bought masks?