

CELEBRATIONS

Halloween

Teacher's notes

Age: Teenagers/Adults

Level: Intermediate (B1) - Upper intermediate (B2)

Time: 45 minutes +



Activity: In this lesson, students will:

1. do a Halloween word puzzle;
2. read a horror story;
3. write a horror story.

Language focus: vocabulary associated with Halloween; past simple, past continuous, past perfect

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student

Procedure

1. Ask students what special occasion is celebrated on 31st October (the answer is Halloween). Find out if, and how, Halloween is celebrated in your students' home countries. Do they know how it is celebrated in other countries too? Write key vocabulary on the board as it comes up, and model the correct pronunciation if necessary.
2. Hand out the worksheet. Ask students to look at the Halloween word puzzle worksheet. Pre-teach any new vocabulary from the definitions (broomstick, horns, carve, transparent, patch). Ask students to complete the puzzle alone or in pairs. When they have finished, check the answers as a class.

Key:

1. witch
2. vampire
3. devil
4. candy
5. pumpkin
6. ghost
7. pirate
8. bat
9. October
10. cemetery
11. mask
12. costume

3. Ask students if they have found the hidden words in the puzzle and point out, if they haven't, that the phrase 'Trick or treat' runs down the centre of the puzzle. Ask students if they know what this means. (This is what children say when they ring people's doorbells on Halloween. People give them sweets – the treat – or else the children will play a trick on them. It is traditional for the children to dress up in scary costumes when they go trick or treating.) Have students ever been trick or treating themselves?
4. Ask students to look at the Horror story worksheet. First, they read the Halloween horror story and put the sections in the correct order. When they have finished, check the answers as a class. You could ask students to read the story aloud.



LANGUAGE TIP: If you have time, ask students to identify which grammatical structures are used in the story (answer: past simple, past continuous, past perfect). Elicit the form and use of these tenses, making sure students are clear on how to use each one.

Key:

1. j
2. c
3. e
4. i
5. a
6. g
7. f
8. b
9. h
10. d

5. Explain to students that they are now going to write their own horror story in small groups, using four steps. Go through the steps, using the sample story to illustrate points.

Step 1: Set the scene

Describe where the story takes place and the events that lead up to it. Answer the questions: When did it happen? Where were you? Who were you with? What were you doing? What was the weather like? How were you feeling?

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(It happened last Friday. It was raining and I was walking home from the cinema alone. I had been to see the film Psycho.)

Step 2: Start to spook

Introduce some spooky elements to make the reader a little scared and uneasy. Answer the questions: What happened next? How did you feel? What did you do?

(I reached the crossroads and was waiting for the traffic lights to change when suddenly I heard a noise beside me. 'Who's there?' I called. No one answered, but I could feel someone or something watching me. I was very scared.)

Step 3: Get scary

Terrify the reader. Answer the question: What happened next?

(Then I heard a voice. 'I am going to kill you,' it said. Suddenly, my heart started beating faster and faster. The traffic lights changed to green and I started running across the road. The next thing I knew, a car was speeding towards me and I was flying through the air.)

Step 4: The end

End your story so that the reader knows that the horror can and will strike again. Answer the questions: Why did it happen? Why will it happen again?

(I woke up in hospital with a broken leg. They told me that the traffic lights had a malfunction and had caused the accident. I don't believe it was a malfunction. I know those traffic lights tried to kill me and I know they'll do it again.)

6. Students write their stories. Remind them that, if they need inspiration, they could use the vocabulary from the Halloween word puzzle to help them. If they are struggling, you could remind them of the questions that go with each step and write them on the board.
7. When students have finished writing their stories, each group can read them to the class. Set the scene, if possible, by placing candles in the classroom and turning off the lights! At the end, you could ask students to vote which was the scariest

story, or round off with a discussion about horror stories. Do they like them? Why/why not?



TECH TIP: To help illustrate the four steps, in preparation, you could write the steps and parts of the example story that illustrate each step in a 'movable' text box on an interactive whiteboard page or a PowerPoint slide. Read out part of the story from the teacher's notes and ask students to identify the correct step. Ask them to match them up on the board.