

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

To understand more about the customs and traditions of Halloween.

**CURRICULUM LINKS**

English: KS2 Drama 4b – to use character, action and narrative to convey a story in a play that is devised and scripted by the children.

Art and design: QCA Unit 6B 'What a performance' – to investigate headwear and costume in different cultures.

# Halloween

## What you need

Card to make masks and templates of two or three animal masks; yellow or orange paper for pumpkin lanterns; string, wool and paints; copies of traditional stories and fables; small tealights.

## Background

Halloween, on 31 October, is a very old celebration. It started when the Celts celebrated their new year with a festival called Samhain that marked the end of the season of the Sun – summer. The Celts thought that evil spirits came in the darkness and that the spirits of the dead would take on the form of animals. They would dress up in masks and animal skins, carry lanterns and light bonfires to keep the spirits away. Other Halloween traditions, many of which are more recent, include making pumpkin lanterns, apple bobbing (which is probably Roman), dressing up to avoid being recognised and 'trick or treat'. Nuts and apples were also used to tell fortunes and Halloween was sometimes known as Nutcrack Night or Snap Apple Night, when families would sit round fires telling stories.

## What to do

- Discuss with the children the background to Halloween and the different ways of celebrating it. It is important to talk about the problems that can be caused by trick and treating, especially with older people, and the dangers of going out on their own.
- Make animal masks using card. Use stronger card to make templates of two or three different animals. The children can then use the templates to make their own and decorate them using wool, string and paints.
- Use yellow or orange paper to make 2D pumpkin lanterns. Make these as fierce as possible. It will help to draw some shapes of eyes and mouths on the whiteboard.
- Read the children four or five traditional stories, such as fables or fairy stories.
- Ask them to work in groups of approximately six and give each group a copy of one of the stories.
- Each group should work out how to tell their story to rest of the class.
- Towards the end of the afternoon, light the small tealights (taking into account all health and safety regulations) and sit together, wearing the masks and telling the prepared stories.

## Differentiation

More able children will be able to develop their stories in more complex ways.

