

Halloween

October 31

Happy Halloween! Halloween is a fun holiday in which people, young and old, dress up in costumes, and go to parties and perhaps trick-or-treating for candy! During Halloween, you may see jack-o'-lanterns peering from porches, haunted houses, and haunted hayrides. Like many holidays, Halloween has its origins in both the traditions of the old world and in religion. It is sort of a combination of a Celtic harvest festival and a Catholic celebration called All Souls Day.



Summary of Activities

Reading: Literature

The Atherton Halloween Tradition—fictional story with a sequencing activity

Reading: Informational Text

A Brief History of Monsters—nonfiction passage with comprehension questions

Writing

Monster Texts—activity in which students write a series of text messages exchanged between two monsters the night before Halloween

Speaking & Listening

Share Monster Texts—Have students share their series of texts with classmates.

Vocabulary: immortal, infamous



Name _____

Date _____

The Atherton Halloween Tradition

Directions: Read the story below and on page 94. Then complete the activity on page 94.

It was 1990. Robert and his friends lived in a very small town in the Midwest called Atherton. The entire population of the town was about 3,000. In Atherton, everybody knew everybody else.

Most of the time, the kids of Atherton really liked living there—with one exception: Halloween. Every year at Halloween, they would hear about these big haunted houses where city kids could go to get a good holiday scare. But these places were all very far away from Atherton. One year, they did ask their parents if they would drive them, but 200 miles is a long way to go just to be spooked!

So the next Halloween, they all got together and decided that if they couldn't go to a haunted house, they would make a haunted house of their own.

Robert, Shelly, Tom, and Sally met to plan the haunted house. Immediately, they ran into a problem.

"We don't have a house to haunt!"

This was true. But one thing that Atherton had in large supply was cornfields. So, instead of having a haunted house, they decided to have a haunted field.

The first thing they did was get permission from Mr. and Mrs. Anderson to use one of their fields. They picked this field because it was the closest to the center of town.

Now, the corn in the fields in Atherton grew to be about 8 feet tall. So the next thing they did was get Mr. Greico, Tom's dad, to mow a very curvy, narrow path through the field.

They made a giant sign that they placed at the very beginning of the mowed path that said, "Atherton Haunted Field. Enter If You Dare!" Then they planned how they would scare their neighbors and friends out of their wits.

Atherton Haunted Field opened on October 30 at sunset. There was a long line of people waiting to get in. Robert worked the entrance. He let people in two by two, but was careful to keep them spaced apart so the path would not get too crowded. The other kids had already taken their places, hidden in various spots along the path.

The first two people in were Mr. and Mrs. Anderson. They walked haltingly along the path. Suddenly, a giant spider appeared right in front of them. Mrs. Anderson screamed. Shelly and Tom had put large rubber bugs on the ends of fishing polls and dangled them in front of visitors at just the right moment.

The Andersons continued on. Next, they felt rain and hail. Sally, who was hidden along the path, tossed out rice while her sister, Mary, sprayed water from a bottle.

Just as the Andersons got through that, a zombie jumped out from the high cornstalks right in front of them.



Name _____

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The Atherton Halloween Tradition *(cont.)*

Directions: Read the story beginning on page 93. Then complete the activity.

"Blahhhhhh!" it gnarled.

This time, Mr. Anderson screamed. He grabbed his wife's hand.

As the Andersons continued on their way, ducking spiders, ghosts, and vampires, they could hear the screams of others making their way along the path behind them. And if any stranger to Atherton had been driving through town that night, all they would have heard was a whole lot of townspeople screaming and laughing.

At the end of the evening, most folks gathered back at the Anderson house. They drank cider and ate baked potatoes, and everyone chatted about how much fun the haunted field was.

Robert, Shelly, Tom, and Sally were excited, too.

"We should do this every year!" Sally said.

And so they did. The four of them organized the Atherton Haunted Field every year until some of them moved away. But there were others to take over what had now become a tradition. The event grew and grew, until finally, instead of the kids from Atherton wanting to go somewhere else for Halloween, kids from somewhere else wanted to come to Atherton.

Activity: Use the graphic organizer to show the sequence of events in the story. The first box is completed for you.

<p>The kids in Atherton live too far away from the haunted house attractions to enjoy them.</p>	→	→	→
←	←	←	<p>↓</p>



Name _____

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A Brief History of Monsters

Directions: Read the passage. Then answer the questions on page 96.

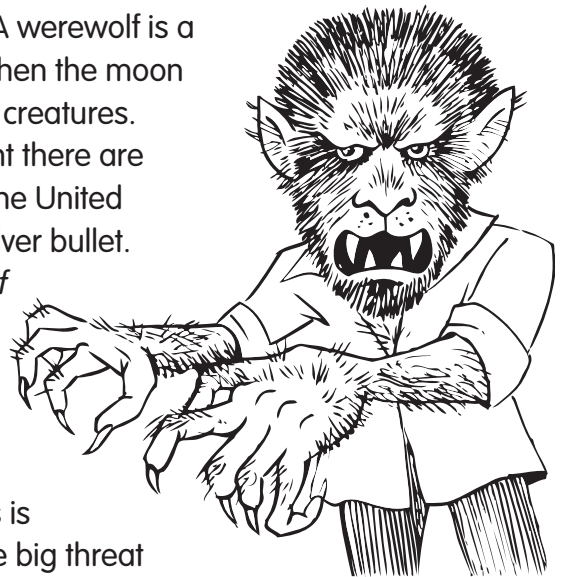
Halloween is the time of ghosts, goblins, and monsters of every kind. Here is a brief biography of some old-school, classic monsters. These creatures have been scaring people for centuries.

Frankenstein: The novel *Frankenstein* was written by the English author Mary Shelly. It was first published in 1818. The book tells the story of a mad scientist, Dr. Victor Frankenstein. He creates a monster out of the body parts of dead people. This is why the creature has bolts in the sides of his neck. The bolts are what is holding his head on top of his shoulders! Dr. Frankenstein does not set out to create a monster, but his experiment to make a man goes terribly wrong. The monster Frankenstein created has appeared in at least 65 movies, including *The Bride of Frankenstein* and *I Was a Teenage Frankenstein*.

Dracula: Dracula is another character that first appeared in a novel. Dracula was written by Irish author Bram Stoker and was first published in 1897. Count Dracula is a vampire. Vampires are monsters who are also called the “undead.” This is because they are neither alive nor dead. They are something in-between. Vampires are immortal. They can live forever. They survive by biting people’s necks and drinking their blood. They can only come out at night. The only way to vanquish a vampire is to drive a stake through its heart. Dracula has a starring role in at least 80 movies, including *Batman Fights Dracula*, *Taste the Blood of Dracula*, and *The Brides of Dracula*.

Werewolves: Ah Hooo! That’s the howl of the werewolf! A werewolf is a mythological creature that is a man by day, but by night, when the moon is full, he is transformed into a wolf. Werewolves are fierce creatures. Throughout the folklore of werewolves, people have thought there are various ways to get rid of one. In the werewolf folklore of the United States, the only way to kill a werewolf is to shoot it with a silver bullet. Some famous werewolf movies include *Teen Wolf*, *The Wolf Man*, and *American Werewolf in London*.

Zombies: Zombies, like werewolves, are creatures from mythology. Your basic zombie is a person who has died and, for reasons unknown, becomes reanimated. In other words, they can walk around and do a lot of damage. This is probably why they are often called “the walking dead.” The big threat with zombies is that they like to eat people. You can’t really kill a zombie because they are already dead. The only way to get rid of them is to clobber them in the head! Some well-known zombie movies include *Night of the Living Dead*, *Revenge of the Zombies*, and *White Zombie*.





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A Brief History of Monsters (cont.)

Directions: Read the passage on page 95. Then answer the questions.

1. Explain what Frankenstein and Dracula have in common.

2. What does *immortal* mean?

a. something that is dead b. something that can live forever c. something that drinks blood to survive

3. Which monster is associated with the moon?

a. werewolf b. Dracula c. zombie



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Monster Texts

Select two of the monsters that you have just read about. Pretend it is the night before Halloween. Work with a partner to write a series of text messages that are exchanged between these two infamous creatures.

[illegible]