



Halloween



Few holidays tell us as much of the past as Halloween. Its origins date back hundreds of years to the Celtic festival of Samhain, Lord of the Dead and Prince of Darkness.

The Celtic New Year began on November 1st, marking the beginning of winter. The Celts were the ancestors of the present-day Irish people.

As Christianity replaced the pagan religions, the church called November 1st All Hallows' Day. The evening before, October 31st, became All Hallows' Eve – later shortened to Halloween.

Halloween originated as a celebration connected with evil spirits. Witches flying on broomsticks with black cats, ghosts, goblins and skeletons are the symbols of Halloween.

Nowadays people don't believe in evil spirits. They mark this holiday by costumes parties.

Children like to visit houses and ask the traditional question: "Trick or treat?" If the people in the house give the children a "treat", usually money or sweets, then the children will not play a trick on them.

No Halloween party is complete without at least one scary story...

There was an old woman who was very lonely. Sitting in the kitchen one night, she said, "Oh, I wish I had some company." No sooner had she spoken than down the chimney tumbled two feet. The old woman's eyes bulged with horror. Then a body tumbled down, then two arms, and a man's head. As the old woman watched, the parts came together into a great, tall man. The man danced around and around the room. Faster and faster he went. Then he stopped, and he looked into her eyes. "What did you come for?" she asked in a weak voice. "What did I come for?" he said. "I came for YOU!"

At Halloween parties children play traditional games. One of the most popular is called Duck Apple.

Words:

Celts – кельты,
ancestors – предки,
pagan religion – языческая религия,
All Hallows' Day – День всех святых,
All Hallows' Eve – канун Дня всех святых,
"Trick or treat?" – "Угощайте, а не то подшутим",
Duck Apple – Ныряющее яблоко.