

Focus Question:

How did the tradition of carving jack-o'-lanterns begin, and how have jack-o'-lanterns changed over time?

Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational

A festive sight on doorsteps, on porches, and in windows, jack-o'-lanterns are popular Halloween decorations. *Jack-o'-Lanterns* provides students an introduction to the history of this tradition as well as a glimpse into the creative liberties people have taken over the years to create jack-o'-lantern masterpieces. The book can also be used to teach students how to discern fact or opinion and to identify synonyms and antonyms.

The book and lesson are also available for levels N and Q.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Ask and answer questions to understand text
- ☐ Determine fact or opinion
- ☐ Identify information provided by captions
- ☐ Identify initial consonant *st*-blend
- ☐ Recognize and use proper nouns as names of places
- ☐ Identify synonyms and antonyms

Materials

- ☐ Book: *Jack-o'-Lanterns* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Fact or opinion, proper nouns: names of places, synonyms and antonyms worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *carved* (v.), *cursed* (v.), *decorate* (v.), *design* (n.), *display* (n.), *stingy* (adj.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *forever* (adv.), *record* (n.), *without* (prep.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

Write the word *Halloween* on the board and read it aloud to students. Invite students to work in small groups to discuss what they know about Halloween. Provide each student with a blank sheet of paper. Have students close their eyes and invite them to visualize an image of Halloween, such as trick-or-treating or a decorated home. Have students open their eyes and illustrate their visualization. Invite students to share their drawings in small groups and then with the class. Point out that in many of the students' drawings, jack-o'-lanterns are depicted. Explain to students that they will be reading a book about the history and tradition of jack-o'-lanterns.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *Jack-o'-Lanterns*. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy:

Ask and answer questions

Explain to students that engaged readers ask and answer questions while they are reading and that one way to organize this information is with a KWLS chart. Create a KWLS chart on the board. Have students share what they already know about jack-o'-lanterns and record this information in the *K* section of the chart. Invite students to review the cover and the photographs in the book to develop questions about

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

the book. Record their questions in the *W* section of the chart.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Fact or opinion

- Write the words *Fact* and *Opinion* on the board and read them aloud to students. Explain to students that a fact is a detail that is true and can be proven and an opinion is a belief or judgment about a subject. Point out that books can contain both facts and opinions.
- Model how to discern facts and opinions. Use your class as an example, such as the following: *Room 204 is a second-grade class. Second-graders are the kindest students. Second grade is more fun than third grade.* Invite students to work in small groups to decide whether each statement is a fact or an opinion and how they know. Record each statement on the board under the correct heading.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the “Words to Know” box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about jack-o'-lanterns. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *What is a jack-o'-lantern?* (level 1) page 4
- *How does an old Irish story help us understand the history of jack-o'-lanterns?* (level 1) page 5
- *How have jack-o'-lanterns changed over time?* (level 2) pages 4, 7, and 8

- *What are the steps in creating a jack-o'-lantern?* (level 2) pages 9–11
- *How are jack-o'-lanterns used to make artistic displays?* (level 2) pages 12–14
- *Why are jack-o'-lanterns still a part of Halloween traditions?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Captions

Explain that captions are words that accompany photographs and illustrations in a book and that give the reader more information. Have students turn to page 7 and locate the caption. Read the caption aloud as students follow along. Explain that captions often provide additional information that the author wants the reader to know about a topic or explain how the author feels about a topic. Have students work in small groups to review the captions on pages 8 and 9. Invite them to discuss why the author chose to include each caption. Have groups share their findings with the class.

Skill Review

- Refer back to the KWLS chart on the board and invite students to share any answers they found to their questions posed before reading the book. Record this information in the *L* section of the chart. Ask students what new questions they developed while reading and record this information in the *W* section of the chart. Point out that the *S* section of the chart is for information that they still want to know about jack-o'-lanterns.
- Model how to discern fact or opinion.
Think-aloud: *This book is telling me about the history and tradition of jack-o'-lanterns. Some of the sentences in the book are stating facts, and some are sharing the author's opinion. For example, on page 8, I read: About 1.5 billion pounds of pumpkins are grown in the United States each year. I know this is a fact because it can be checked or confirmed. Determining fact or opinion is one way for me to better understand what I read.*
- Model how to complete the **fact-or-opinion worksheet**. Have students determine whether each sentence is a fact or an opinion.

After Reading

Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: Fact or opinion

Review the fact-or-opinion worksheet that students completed. Have students share their work in groups.

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided to be used for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers should include the following: *The tradition of carving jack-o'-lanterns came from Europe, where people would carve faces in vegetables and place a candle inside to keep away ghosts. When the tradition was brought to the United States, people began to use pumpkins. Over time, people became more creative with their jack-o'-lantern designs, and there are even festivals in which these masterpieces are displayed.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Phonics: Initial consonant st-blend

- Write the word *stingy* on the board and read it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /st/ sound aloud. Then, run your finger under the letters in the word *stingy* as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students to identify which letters represent the initial consonant /st/ sound in the word *stingy*.
- Repeat with the word *step*. Ask students how the words *stingy* and *step* are the same (*they both contain the initial consonant /st/ sound*).
- Write the following words on the board, leaving out the initial consonant st-blend: *stick*, *still*, *stamp*, *stack*, and *stand*. Invite volunteers to come to the board and add the initial consonant st-blend to each word and read the word aloud.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students work with a partner to reread the book and circle all the words containing the initial consonant st-blend. Review students' findings as a class.

Grammar and Mechanics:

Proper nouns: Names of places

- Review or explain that a *noun* is a word that names a person, place, or thing. Invite students to give examples of common nouns and list them on the board. Point out that some nouns name specific people, places, and things and that they are called *proper nouns*. Use the common nouns listed on the board to generate examples of proper nouns.

- Explain that proper nouns can name specific places. Write the following common nouns on the board: *school*, *city*, *street*. Have students work with a partner to identify a proper noun for each common noun. Invite each group to share their findings with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students reread pages 12 through 14. Have them underline each proper noun. Review students' findings as a class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **proper-nouns-names-of-places worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Synonyms and antonyms

- Write the word *big* on the board and read it aloud. Ask students to suggest words that have a similar meaning (*huge*, *giant*). Explain that a word that means the same or almost the same as another word is called a *synonym*. Ask students to suggest a word that means the opposite of *big* (*tiny*, *little*). Explain that a word that means the opposite of another word is called an *antonym*. Write the words *synonym* and *antonym* on the board and read them aloud.
- Model how to locate the word *big* in a thesaurus. Have students work in small groups and provide each group with a thesaurus. Write the following words on the board and have each group use the thesaurus to identify a synonym and antonym for each: *slow*, *old*, *late*.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the word *sleepy* on the board and read it aloud. Have students work independently to use a thesaurus to identify a synonym and antonym. Have students share their findings with their partner and invite their partner to give a thumbs-up signal if the synonym and antonym are correct.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **synonyms-and-antonyms worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.