

# Close Reading

Plus Writing Activities

Halloween Is... By Gail Gibbons



Teaching About Holidays through

Reading, Comprehension, Vocabulary,  
Posters, and Reflection

Qiang Ma



# Happy Halloween

## A Fall Celebration

### October 31

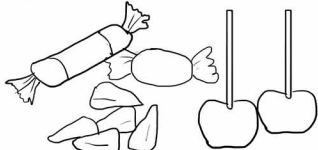
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Scary time of year:  
Evil spirits roamed the earth, casting spells and playing tricks on people.



People decorate with Halloween symbols.

People carve pumpkins.



Halloween parties and treats



"Trick or treat!"

People dress in costumes.



# BOO!



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# BOO!



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ F: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Halloween Close Reading Organizer

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## Things to remember

## Colors to mark the passage:

- Highlight the title in yellow.
- Underline topic sentence in green.
- Circle the important words about Halloween in red.
- Use close reading symbols throughout text.

## CLOSE reading symbols:

- Check Mark(✓) – understands story
- Star (\*) – something is important
- Exclamation mark (!) – something new, something that is surprising
- Question mark (?) – unsure, don't understand it

The main idea of this passage is to \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever heard about Halloween?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ F: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Halloween Close Reading Organizer

Title: Halloween Is...

## Things to remember

- Highlight the title in yellow.
- Underline topic sentence in green.
- Circle the important words about Halloween in red.
- Use close reading symbols throughout text.

The main idea of this passage is to explain Halloween holiday.

What have you learned?

I learned that the word Halloween was combined from All Saints' Day and Halloween's Eve.

## Halloween

Halloween started from many ancient beliefs and customs. It is celebrated on October 31. In ancient times, people feared the coming of winter. They were afraid the sun they worshipped would be killed by the darkness of the longer nights. It was a scary time of year. They believed witches, goblins, ghosts, and other spirits roamed the earth, casting spells and playing evil tricks on people. To avoid being recognized as humans when they left their homes after dark, some people wore costumes and masks to disguise themselves as fellow spirits. Others made big bonfires to scare away the evil spirits. Years later, November 1 became a church holy day called All Saints' Day, or All Hallows'. The evening before, October 31, was called All Hallows' Eve. People continued some of the old customs. Over time, All Hallows' Eve was shortened to Halloween.

Halloween is about pumpkins and decorations. Many people like to carve pumpkins. They put candles or lights inside them. When they are lit, the pumpkins glow. Decorations are seen everywhere. Cornstalks, pumpkins and gourds decorate homes and other places. Many symbols of Halloween are seen in homes, schools, windows, and porches.

Halloween is about masks and costumes. Many people make-believe some people are ghosts or witches. They wear costumes and masks. Some people like to be scary. Halloween is about ghosts, black cats, and skeletons. Throughout history, people have been afraid of the night sky guided, it seemed, by a mysterious power. What people didn't understand was that they feared. At one time, people believed that cats had magical powers and that witches' cats were black. They even thought witches could turn into cats. Skeletons were scary. They reminded people of ghosts, evil spirits, and the dead. Today they are used to scare people and have fun.

Halloween is about "Trick or treat". In the past times, some mischievous children would go from house to house dressed in costumes, asking for a "treat" and threatening a "trick" if they didn't get one. That's how the expression "Trick or treat!" began. Today people have fun when Halloween trick-or-treaters come to their homes. They enjoy seeing the different costumes. Trick-or-treat bags are filled with Halloween treats.

## Halloween

**TDQ #1** Halloween started from many ancient beliefs and customs. It is celebrated on October 31. In ancient times, people feared the coming of winter. They were afraid the sun they worshipped would be killed by the darkness of the longer nights. It was a scary time of year. They believed witches, goblins, ghosts, and other spirits roamed the earth, casting spells and playing evil tricks on people. To avoid being recognized as humans when they left their homes after dark, some people wore costumes and masks to disguise themselves as fellow spirits. Others made big bonfires to scare away the evil spirits. Years later, November 1 became a church holy day called All Saints' Day, or All Hallows'. The evening before, October 31, was called All Hallows' Eve. People continued some of the old customs. Over time, All Hallows' Eve was shortened to Halloween.

**TDQ #2** Halloween is about pumpkins and decorations. Many people like to carve pumpkins. They put candles or lights inside them. When they are lit, the pumpkins glow. Halloween decorations are seen everywhere. Cornstalks, pumpkins and gourds decorate homes and other places. Many symbols of Halloween are seen in homes, schools, windows, and porches.

**TDQ #3** Halloween is about masks and costumes. Many people make-believe some people are ghosts or witches. They wear costumes and masks. Some people like to be scary. Halloween is about ghosts, black cats, and skeletons. Throughout history, people have been afraid of the night sky guided, it seemed, by a mysterious power. What people didn't understand was that they feared. At one time, people believed that cats had magical powers and that witches' cats were black. They even thought witches could turn into cats. Skeletons were scary. They reminded people of ghosts, evil spirits, and the dead. Today they are used to scare people and have fun.

**TDQ #4** Halloween is about "Trick or treat". In the past times, some mischievous children would go from house to house dressed in costumes, asking for a "treat" and threatening a "trick" if they didn't get one. That's how the expression "Trick or treat!" began. Today people have fun when Halloween trick-or-treaters come to their homes. They enjoy seeing the different costumes. Trick-or-treat bags are filled with Halloween treats.

✓ ☆ ! ?

## Text Dependent Questions

Where did Halloween started from? Give at least one example.	
Which day of the year is Halloween on?	
What activities do people do to celebrate Halloween?	
Explain the expression "Trick or treat!"	

## Text Dependent Questions

Where did Halloween started from? Give at least one example.	Halloween started from many ancient beliefs and customs. For example, people believed witches, goblins, ghosts, and other spirits roamed the earth, casting spells and playing evil tricks on people.
Which day of the year is Halloween on?	Halloween is on October 31.
List two activities people do to celebrate Halloween.	Many people like to carve pumpkins. They put candles or lights inside them. When they are lit, the pumpkins glow. Halloween decorations are seen everywhere. Cornstalks, pumpkins and gourds decorate homes and other places. Many symbols of Halloween are seen in homes, schools, windows, and porches.
Explain the expression "Trick or treat!"	In the past times, some mischievous children would go from house to house dressed in costumes, asking for a "treat" and threatening a "trick" if they didn't get one.

## Vocabulary

cast	
spell	
disguise	
mysterious	
mischievous	
treats	

## Vocabulary

cast	throw, send out, form, give off
spell	curse, trick
disguise	disguise, mask
mysterious	strange, odd, mysterious
mischievous	naughty, playful, ill-behaved
treats	goodie, feast, joy, pleasure, delight

## Getting Started: Halloween Close Reading

1. It is suggested that you prepare the following items.

Items Needed	Teacher	Students
Book: Halloween Is... by Gail Gibbons	V	
Scissors		
Vocab Poster	Teacher can blow the original black and white sample into a poster.	
Info Organizer	V	V
Blank Paper for Drawing on Day 1	V	V
1 Reading Passage	V	V
1 Text Dependent Questions Set	V	V
Vocabulary	V	V
2 Halloween Black Line Drawings (with/without labels)	V	
2 Halloween Color Drawings (with/without labels)	* Teacher can blow the original black and white sample into a poster and color it.	* Students may create the poster in groups by using teacher's sample.
Teacher's Finished Sample Works 1 Halloween Color Drawing with labels 1 Vocab Poster with Post-it notes 1 Info Organizer completed • 1 Reading Passages with marked answers • 1 Text Dependent Questions Set with answers • 1 Vocab Sheet with answers	* I tried to make it as easy as possible to copy so that you can easily make it for yourself and your students. I tried to make it as easy as possible to copy so that you can easily make it for yourself and your students.	
Sharpie, Crayons/Markers	V	V
Post-It	*	

V: must, \*: optional

2. Read the lesson plan.
3. Look at the finished sample works included.
4. Photocopy 8 page package (1 Empty page for Halloween Drawing, 1 Info Organizer, 1 Reading Passage, 1 Text Dependent Questions Set, and 1 Vocab Sheet) for students. Make an extra set for the teacher to use.
5. The lesson is designed as cross curricular learning for ELA, Social Science/World Holidays/Halloween, and Fine Arts using close reading and GLAD strategies.

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I draw all the clipart myself for all the products in my store.

Thank you so much and I hope you enjoy this lesson.

