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Episode #109

Celebrate Halloween
just like an American (rep)

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Hi, everyone!

I'm Georgiana, founder of [SpeakEnglishPodcast.com](https://speakenglishpodcast.com). My mission is to help YOU to speak English fluently.

In today's episode:

- I'll be talking about one of the most celebrated holidays in the United States: **Halloween**. After that, you'll practice your **speaking** with a new mini-story, while enjoying my new Question & Answer story.

Very well. Let's get started!

Halloween is a holiday celebrated on the last day of October. I would say it's very popular because everybody's excited about it, especially children.

The word Halloween comes from an old English expression, "All Hallows' Eve," and it means **the day before All Saints' Day**.

Children of all ages really love Halloween because they can **dress up** in **funny costumes** and knock on their neighborhood doors shouting "Trick or Treat!". The neighbors usually give them candies.

The meaning of the phrase "Trick or Treat" is interesting. In this context, "**treat**" means **getting the candies**, and "**trick**" implies the **consequence of not getting the sweets**. It's like an innocent **threat** children make. Of course, kids get really excited when they knock on stranger's doors in their neighborhood.

Since Halloween originated as a celebration connected with evil spirits, the most common symbols are **witches flying on broomsticks, ghosts, skeletons, black cats**, etc. The **black color** is one of the traditional Halloween colors.

Of course, **pumpkins** are also a Halloween symbol. I'm sure you've seen them in movies. People empty pumpkin and put a candle inside to make a lamp.

How do you make a **Halloween pumpkin**?

- The first step is hollowing out the pumpkin.
- After we use a keyhole saw to cut the hole.

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- When using a **candle** for illumination, you can cut the hole in the pumpkin's **top**.
- For **electric lights**, make the hole **in the bottom or side** so you can hide the cord.

The Halloween pumpkin is called Jack-O'-Lantern. It's common to see jack-o'-lanterns on doorsteps decorations before and on Halloween.

The name comes from an **Irish legend** about a man named Jack. He was so **ungenerous** that when he died, he couldn't enter heaven, but he couldn't go to hell either because he had **told jokes about the devil**. As a result, Jack had to walk and walk with a lantern until the **Day of Judgment**.

Here's what a typical family does at Halloween:

- They decorate their homes. Americans spend about 5 billion dollars every year.
- They buy costumes. A costume is not cheap. It can cost \$30 or more.
- They buy plenty of candy, and of course, they eat it.
- Kids go "trick or treating." In most towns, it's only allowed from 3pm until 5pm because it gets dark quickly.

Very well, now you know a bit more about this beautiful holiday. Maybe next time, you'll carve your own Halloween pumpkin and celebrate Halloween just like an American!

Mini-Story

(practice your speaking)

Awesome! Now let's practice with a short question-and-answer exercise, which is a method that I use in my [English courses](#).

Sometimes I call it a conversation simulator because you practice your English like in a real conversation.

Here's how it works: I give you information and ask simple questions. After each question, there is a pause where you can answer. After the pause, I give you a correct answer for you to compare.

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Are you ready? Let's go!

My name's Jack, and I walk every night in the World of Spirits.

Are you, Jack?

Yes, I'm Jack.

Do you walk every day or every night?

Every night. I walk every night.

When do you walk?

At night. I walk at night in the World of Spirits.

Do you walk in the World of Elves?

No, no. I don't walk in the World of Elves. I walk in the World of Spirits.

What's your name?

Jack. My name's Jack.

Ok Jack, so, you walk in that World of Spirits on Tuesdays and Fridays, right?

No, no. I don't walk on Tuesdays and Fridays. I walk every night.

And where do you walk?

In the World of Spirits. I walk there.

When I died, I couldn't enter Heaven because I was very ungenerous.

Did you die?

Yes, I did. I died. I'm not alive.

Are you alive or dead?

Dead. I'm dead. I am a soul.

Could you enter Heaven?

No, I couldn't. I couldn't enter Heaven.

Who couldn't enter Heaven?

Me. Myself. I couldn't enter Heaven. I was very ungenerous.

Why couldn't you enter Heaven?

Because I was ungenerous. I liked having money, and I hated spending it.

Did you enter Heaven?

No, I didn't. I didn't enter Heaven because I was ungenerous.

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Funnily enough, I couldn't enter Hell either because I had made some jokes about the Devil.

You couldn't enter Heaven, but could you enter Hell?

No, neither. I couldn't enter Hell either. I couldn't enter Heaven nor Hell.

Was it "funnily enough" that you couldn't enter Hell?

Yes. It was strange, or surprising, I couldn't go there.

Didn't you enter Hell because you had made some jokes about the Devil?

Yes. I didn't enter Hell because I had made some jokes about the Devil.

Had you made jokes about yourself?

No, no. I hadn't made jokes about myself. I had made jokes about the Devil.

Had you made stories about the Devil before you died?

Not stories. I had made jokes about the devil before I died.

Why didn't you enter Hell?

Because I had made jokes about the Devil. That was the reason.

So, my fate is to wander with a lantern until the Day of Judgment.

Is your fate to sell lanterns?

No, no. That's not my fate. My fate is to wander with a lantern until the Day of Judgment.

Till when do you have to wander?

Till the Day of Judgment. I have to wander till the Day of Judgment.

Do you have to wander with a lantern?

Yes. I have to wander with a lantern.

What do you have to bring with you? A lantern? A torch?

A lantern. Not a torch. I have to bring with me a lantern.

Do you have to wander or run?

Wander. I don't have to run. I am not in a hurry. I have to wander. That's my fate.

Perfect! It's the end of this spooky mini-story.

Can you see how many questions you can answer? It's like talking to another person in English. Now imagine a whole story told this way. It's incredible how much you can learn using this method.

If you want to get hours of audio with mini-stories and points of view lessons, I'd like to recommend to you my **Fluency Course**.

You can get it at fluency.SpeakEnglishpodcast.com

Well, that's it for today.

Happy Halloween everyone!

Bye! Bye!



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