

# *A different Halloween*

The coronavirus pandemic has changed our way of life. This year Halloween has been celebrated differently. But what is Halloween? Why do we celebrate it?

Halloween is a festivity celebrated each year on October 31<sup>st</sup>. The tradition originated with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. Samhain was a celebration of the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the coldest half of the year. It was believed that on that day, the souls of the dead returned to their homes, so people dressed in costumes and lit bonfires to ward off spirits. Today Halloween is considered a holiday for dress-up and fun, especially for children.

On Halloween day, children wear costumes and go from house to house on what is known as trick or treating. During this celebration, children meet homeowners and ask for treats like candy. The child asks the homeowner; "trick or treat"? If the person who answers the door doesn't give the child or children treats, then a trick is played on the homeowner. This year we couldn't do trick or treating nor having a Halloween party with our friends. We had to stay at home with our family.

In Catalonia, on October 31<sup>st</sup>, there is another celebration too, called 'castanyada'. During this celebration, families eat roasted chestnuts, sweet potatoes, and 'panellets'. The weekend of the 'castanyada', 4th ESO students sell chestnuts to raise money for the end-of-year trip, but this year nothing could be done.

I hope next year both Halloween and Castanyada can be celebrated as usual!

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