

## Multi-Level VOCABULARY-IN-CONTEXT Reading: **SAMHAIN, THE FIRST HALLOWEEN**

INSTRUCTIONS: Can you figure out the meanings of new or difficult vocabulary items without a dictionary? **HIGH-BEGINNING LEVEL:** After you read this selection, do the vocabulary-matching exercise on the next page. **INTERMEDIATE-AND-ABOVE LEVEL:** In your own words, explain the numbered words and phrases in CAPITAL LETTERS—like **SAMHAIN, CENTURIES, OBSERVANCE, ANCIENT, WAS DERIVED FROM, AS FOLLOWS, FEAST, THE DEAD, PAGAN(S)**, etc. The context clues for the items in the reading are underlined. To check your guesses, substitute your synonyms for the items in context. Do the sentences still make sense?

### **SAMHAIN, THE FIRST "HALLOWEEN"**

Where the modern festival of Halloween first come from? <sup>1</sup>**CENTURIES** (hundreds of years) before the birth of Christ, today's <sup>2</sup>**OBSERVANCE** began with the <sup>3</sup>**ANCIENT** <sup>4</sup>**CELTS**. Its celebration <sup>5</sup>**WAS DERIVED FROM** Samhain, the very old fire festival of the <sup>6</sup>**ORIGINAL** Celtic peoples long, long ago. One of the first Irish-English dictionaries defines Samhain <sup>7</sup>**AS FOLLOWS** (like this): "the <sup>8</sup>**FEAST** of <sup>9</sup>**THE DEAD** in <sup>10</sup>**PAGAN** and Christian times. It <sup>11</sup>**SIGNALLED** the end of the <sup>12</sup>**HARVEST** and the <sup>13</sup>**INITIATION** of the winter <sup>14</sup>**SEASON**."

<sup>15</sup>**IN OTHER WORDS**, Samhain—pronounced "Sow-in" (Sow rhymes with cow.)—was a religious festival for people no longer living. Its <sup>16</sup>**CELEBRANTS** were <sup>17</sup>**PAGANS**, believers in many gods and goddesses, <sup>18</sup>**PARTICULARLY** nature <sup>19</sup>**DEITIES** instead of one creator and ruler of the <sup>20</sup>**UNIVERSE**. That is to say, the religion of the people that <sup>21</sup>**ORIGINALLY** observed Samhain was <sup>22</sup>**PAGANISM**—not Judaism, Islam, or Christianity; they didn't <sup>23</sup>**WORSHIP**, love, or honor one <sup>24</sup>**SUPREME BEING**. Samhain made known the end of the crop-gathering time and the beginning of the cold, dark time of year. Why was this an especially <sup>25</sup>**SIGNIFICANT** event? Because the Celts were a pastoral people <sup>26</sup>**AS OPPOSED TO** agricultural. In other words, they were <sup>27</sup>**SHEPHERDS** instead of farmers. At the <sup>28</sup>**CLOSE** of summer, their lives changed <sup>29</sup>**DRASTICALLY** (a lot). They had to bring their <sup>30</sup>**CATTLE** (cows, bulls, and oxen) and sheep down from the <sup>31</sup>**PASTURES** in the grass-covered hills. Rather than being outside, people began to <sup>32</sup>**GATHER** in their houses on long winter nights. They came together for story-telling.

What did all this have to do with a festival of the dead? The ancient Celts did not believe in the Christian idea of <sup>33</sup>**HEAVEN AND HELL**. Instead of these places for the good and the bad to live for <sup>34</sup>**ETERNITY** (forever), they had the <sup>35</sup>**CONCEPT** of a land of <sup>36</sup>**ETERNAL** happiness with no end. They believed the <sup>37</sup>**BOUNDARY** or line between the world of the living and the world of the dead was weakest or thinnest at the end of summer and the <sup>38</sup>**START** of winter. At this time, the spirits of the dead (<sup>39</sup>**GHOSTS**) could easily cross over the <sup>40</sup>**BORDER**.

## High-Beginning *VOCABULARY-IN-CONTEXT MATCHING* Exercise

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Did you figure out the meanings of the new or difficult vocabulary items from the context clues in the **SAMHAIN, THE FIRST HALLOWEEN** reading? The items are listed in the left columns below, with their parts of speech—(N)oun, (V)erb, (ADJ)ective, and ADV(erb). To match them with the explanations (definitions) on the right, write the letters *a-uu* on the lines.

1. <u>e</u> <b>CENTURIES</b> (N, plural)	a. <u>people no longer living</u>	21. ____ <b>ORIGINALLY</b> (ADV)	aa. in the <u>first</u> place; in the <u>beginning</u>
2. <u>h</u> <b>OBSERVANCE</b> (N)	b. <u>very old; long, long ago</u>	22. ____ <b>PAGANISM</b> (N)	bb. <u>one creator and ruler of the universe</u>
3. ____ <b>ANCIENT</b> (ADJ)	c. <u>came from</u>	23. ____ <b>WORSHIP</b> (V)	cc. <u>pastoral people; caretakers of sheep</u>
4. ____ <b>CELTS</b> (N, plural)	d. <u>celebration; festival with a lot of food</u>	24. ____ <b>SUPREME BEING</b> (ADJ + N)	dd. <u>important</u>
5. ____ <b>WAS DERIVED FROM</b> (V + ADJ + Prep.)	e. <u>time periods of hundreds of years</u>	25. ____ <b>SIGNIFICANT</b> (ADJ)	ee. <u>a lot; very; extremely</u>
6. ____ <b>ORIGINAL</b> (ADJ)	f. <u>first</u>	26. ____ <b>AS OPPOSED TO</b>	ff. <u>cows, bulls, and oxen</u>
7. ____ <b>AS FOLLOWS:</b>	g. <u>the Celtic people or peoples</u>	27. ____ <b>SHEPHERDS</b> (ADJ)	gg. <u>end</u>
8. ____ <b>FEAST</b> (N)	h. <u>religious festival</u>	28. ____ <b>CLOSE</b> (N)	hh. <u>come together</u>
9. ____ <b>THE DEAD</b> (N)	i. <u>relating to paganism</u>	29. ____ <b>DRASTICALLY</b> (ADV)	ii. <u>instead of; rather than</u>
10. ____ <b>PAGAN</b> (ADJ)	j. <u>made known</u>	30. ____ <b>CATTLE</b> (N)	jj. <u>grass-covered hills</u>
11. ____ <b>SIGNALED</b> (V, past)	k. <u>beginning; start</u>	31. ____ <b>PASTURES</b> (N, plural)	kk. <u>beginning; initiation; the opposite of end</u>
12. ____ <b>HARVEST</b> (N)	l. <u>like this:</u>	32. ____ <b>GATHER</b> (V)	ll. all time without <u>beginning</u> or <u>end</u>
13. ____ <b>INITIATION</b> (N)	m. <u>gods and goddesses</u>	33. ____ <b>HEAVEN AND HELL</b> (compound N)	mm. <u>line; border</u>
14. ____ <b>SEASON</b>	n. <u>time of year</u>	34. ____ <b>ETERNITY</b> (N)	nn. <u>with no end; lasting forever</u>
15. ____ <b>IN OTHER WORDS</b> (Prep. + N)	o. <u>believers in many gods and goddesses</u>	35. ____ <b>CONCEPT</b> (N)	oo. <u>a religion: not Judaism, Islam, or Christianity</u>
16. ____ <b>CELEBRANTS</b> (N, plural)	p. people at <u>celebrations</u>	36. ____ <b>ETERNAL</b> (ADJ)	pp. <u>love or honor; believe in (used for gods)</u>
17. ____ <b>PAGANS</b> (N, plural)	q. <u>that is to say</u>	37. ____ <b>BOUNDARY</b> (N)	qq. <u>spirits of the dead</u>
18. ____ <b>PARTICULARLY</b> (ADV)	r. <u>crop-gathering time</u>	38. ____ <b>START</b> (N)	rr. <u>places for the dead to live for eternity</u>
19. ____ <b>DEITIES</b> (N, plural)	s. known <u>world</u>	39. ____ <b>GHOSTS</b> (N, plural)	ss. <u>idea</u>
20. ____ <b>UNIVERSE</b> (N)	t. <u>especially</u>	40. ____ <b>BORDER</b> (N)	tt. <u>boundary line</u>

## Multi-Level *FILL-IN-THE-BLANK VOCABULARY* Exercise

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Which vocabulary items might fit in the blanks of this reading selection? **HIGH-BEGINNING LEVEL:** Possible words for the lines are at the bottom of the page in mixed-up order. **INTERMEDIATE-AND-ABOVE LEVEL:** From the context and meaning of the reading content, try to think of and figure out an appropriate word or phrase for each blank. There may be more than one "correct" response for some lines. Make sure that each of your choices has the correct spelling and grammatical form for the context. Can you give reasonable explanations for them?

### **HALLOWEEN SYMBOLS & CUSTOMS**

Halloween is certainly not a <sup>1</sup> new holiday. In fact, our modern-day version of the <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ has its <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ in one of the oldest celebrations in <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_. How did it first <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_? Many, many <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ ago in northern France and <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (now England, Scotland, and Ireland) there lived an <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ people called the Celts. The Celts <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ nature and many deities; the <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ of the sun was their favorite. These farmers and <sup>11</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ believed that "he" made the <sup>12</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ grow, including food for their <sup>13</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, sheep, and other <sup>14</sup> \_\_\_\_\_. Every <sup>15</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ 1st, the Celts celebrated the <sup>16</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ with a festival. This event <sup>17</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ the end of the "<sup>18</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ of the sun" (the summer). To this day, many traditional Halloween <sup>19</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ are related to the harvest; some examples are corn, potatoes, and <sup>20</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

But where did the Halloween <sup>21</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ related to "the season of <sup>22</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ and cold <sup>23</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ from? On the <sup>24</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ before their new year, the Celts <sup>25</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, the sun god became a prisoner of Samhain, the Lord of the Dead and Prince of Darkness. Samhain <sup>26</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ together all the dead people. These <sup>27</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ took on different <sup>28</sup> \_\_\_\_\_. The <sup>29</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ spirits were cats. Even today, some <sup>30</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ people still believe that a black cat brings bad <sup>31</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

**Possible vocabulary for the blanks: (Paragraph 1)** ancient, animals, apples, begin, cattle, centuries, crops, god, Great Britain, harvest, history, marked, new, November, occasion, origins, season, shepherds, symbols, worshipped. **(Paragraph 2)** believed, called, come, customs, darkness, evening, forms, ghosts, luck, most evil, superstitious.

## ***Answer Key:*** Vocabulary Skills Activities on pages 48-53

INSTRUCTIONS: These *Answer Key* pages may be duplicated by instructors and/or learners. Orally and/or silently, participants can compare these answers to their responses to the items. in the *VOCABULARY-IN-CONTEXT* Reading (**SAMHAIN, THE FIRST HALLOWEEN** on page 48), the *VOCABULARY-IN-CONTEXT MATCHING* Exercise (page 49), the *FILL-IN-THE-BLANK* Exercise (**HALLOWEEN SYMBOLS & CUSTOMS** on page 50), and the RELATED-WORDS CHART (page 53). Beginning-level learners might want to do some of the exercises in pairs or small groups: one person can look at the answers and give hints or help to the other(s) in doing the exercise.

*\*CHALLENGE:* Can you make exercises of your own with vocabulary items related to **HALLOWEEN** or other interesting topics? You can follow the models. If you duplicate them for classmates, don't forget to produce an *Answer Key* for your exercise(s). The charts can be for your own learning and research, of course.

### Correct Answers to the *VOCABULARY-IN-CONTEXT* Reading and *MATCHING EXERCISE: SAMHAIN, THE FIRST HALLOWEEN* (pages 48-49).

Note that the items in CAPITAL LETTERS in the *MATCHING EXERCISE* are the same as the items in the reading to be figured out in context. The underlined context clues of the reading appear in the right-hand lettered column of the exercise.

- |      |      |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
|------|------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. e | 5. c | 9. a  | 13. k | 17. o | 21. aa | 25. dd | 29. ee | 33. rr | 37. mm |
| 2. h | 6. f | 10. i | 14. n | 18. t | 22. oo | 26. ii | 30. ff | 34. ll | 38. kk |
| 3. b | 7. l | 11. j | 15. q | 19. m | 23. pp | 27. cc | 31. jj | 35. ss | 39. qq |
| 4. g | 8. d | 12. r | 16. p | 20. s | 24. bb | 28. gg | 32. hh | 36. nn | 40. tt |

### Correct Answers to the *FILL-IN-THE-BLANK* Vocabulary Exercise: **HALLOWEEN SYMBOLS & CUSTOMS** (page 50).

Note that there are several possible correct and appropriate words or phrases for most of the blanks. Alternative choices are in parentheses. There are also possibilities not included in this *Answer Key*.

- (Paragraph 1)
- |                                   |  |  |                             |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. new (recently created)         | 2. holiday (occasion, festival)          |  |                             |
| 3. origins (beginnings)           | 4. history (the world)                   | 5. begin (start, get started)                                  |                             |
| 6. centuries (years, decades)     | 7. Great Britain (the British Isles)     |  |                             |
| 8. ancient (very old)             | 9. worshipped (adored, honored, revered) | 10. god (deity)  |                             |
| 11. shepherds                     | 12. crops (grass, plants)                | 13. cattle (cows, oxen)  |                             |
| 14. animals (livestock)           | 15. November                             | 16. harvest (season, end of summer, beginning of winter, fall) |                             |
| 17. marked (made known, signaled) | 18. season (time, months)                | 19. foods (treats, symbols)                                    | 20. apples (pumpkins, nuts) |
- (Paragraph 2)
- |                                  |                               |   |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 21. customs (practices, symbols) | 22. darkness (death, endings) |   |
| 23. come                         | 24. evening (eve, night)      | 25. believed (thought, had the idea that) |
| 26. called (brought, gathered)   | 27. ghosts (spirits, people)  | 28. forms (shapes)                        |
| 29. very bad (most evil, worst)  | 30. superstitious (fearful)   | 31. luck (fortune)                        |