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ABSTRACT

This work focused on how a technological strategy, a WebQuest, can develop the four language skills. This study comprised two parts. The first one included a field research regarding the use of WebQuests and the second one involved a development of three lessons based on WebQuests. For the initial part, a survey and interview were employed. Through these surveys it was found that WebQuests were not well-known among teachers. The interview showed that WebQuests are important strategies for students when learning a foreign language. Therefore, in the last part of this study, three lessons based on WebQuests were prepared to provide teachers with models that can be used with low levels. The purpose of these lessons was to integrate the four language skills.

Key words: WebQuests, Skills, Technology, English



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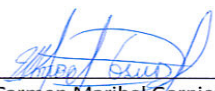
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FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA, LETRAS Y CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN

CARRERA DE LENGUA Y LITERATURA INGLESA

“INTEGRATING SKILLS BY MEANS OF WEBQUESTS
TO LEARN ENGLISH”

Tesina previa a la obtención del Título
de Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación
en la Especialización de Lengua y
Literatura Inglesa.

Tutor: Mst. Ana María Calle

Autoras: Cecilia Fernanda Faicán Baculima

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2012



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AUTHORSHIP

The ideas, opinions, and comments specified in this document are the sole responsibility of its authors, Cecilia Fernanda Faicán and Carmen Maribel Garnica.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, sisters and nephews who supported me with their comprehension patience and encouragement. They have been my inspiration for carry out this goal. I expect you can always be proud of me.

Cecilia

This thesis is dedicated to God who is source of wisdom, patience, and infinite love. It is also dedicated to my family who with love, dedication and tireless effort led me every day towards achieving this dream.

Maribel



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research is to provide authentic material to support the development of the language skills with the integration of technology into the classroom by means of WebQuests. This research focuses on students of high school in order to involve them in real life experiences. This work contains four chapters.

The first chapter mentions in detail the problem, the justification and the objectives of this work. Thus, it provides general information about the topic.

The second chapter deals with teaching English through technology, specifically with WebQuests. A WebQuest is “an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the internet” (Dodge qtd. in March 2). Also, this chapter discusses the importance of the integration of the skills into the classroom.

The third chapter provides information about the methodology used to collect data. Interview and surveys were used to get information about teachers' knowledge regarding WebQuests.



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The fourth chapter provides an analysis of the results of the interview and surveys. In addition, this chapter presents some activities which were developed through the use of WebQuests integrating the four language skills in the learning process.

Conclusions and recommendations are presented in the last chapter.



CHAPTER I

PROBLEM

1.1. Topic

The topic of this research is Integrating Skills by Means of WebQuests to Learn English, and its purpose is to provide authentic material to support the development of the skills with the integration of technology into the classroom by means of WebQuests. This research focuses on high school students of Third of *Bachillerato*.

1.2. Description of the problem

According to our experience as teachers, students sometimes are not motivated to learn English. We are not often sure how to make our classes more interesting; therefore, stimulating lessons are appreciated by students as well as by teachers who find that the students retain more of what they have been taught with these types of classes. Technology is definitely a relevant device for young learners who are used to utilize it all the time.



However, it seems that teachers do not use technology. Therefore, it is important to find out whether teachers use it or not in their classrooms. In other words, it is important to see what teachers are actually doing in regards with the use of technology in their English classes.

1.3. Justification

We have chosen this topic because we have seen the necessity of incorporating a new tool in the classroom to increase students' interest in learning. Thus, students will develop and improve the use of English. WebQuests involve cooperative learning where students have to work on projects in groups. Projects are an excellent way to involve Internet in learning by WebQuests. This is a way to engage students' curiosity and desire to learn.

We have to incorporate new techniques in our classroom to keep students motivated and entertained while they learn. In this work, we propose that through the use of technology students in high school can have more relevant and meaningful learning because technology gets students' attention, participation and involvement in lessons. A very effective way to do that is through the use of WebQuests.



1.4. Objectives

1.4.1. General Objective

- To provide authentic materials to support the development of the language skills by means of WebQuests

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

- To give students tasks which allow them to use their imagination and problem-solving skills
- To incorporate WebQuests in the language classroom
- To use WebQuests to integrate skills

1.5. Research Questions

- What do teachers know about WebQuests?
- How can we integrate skills through WebQuests into the English classroom?
- What elements does a WebQuest involve?
-



CHAPTER II

Literature Review

This literature review includes scientific information, which will be useful and relevant to the topic “Integrating skills by means of WebQuest to learn English.” Nowadays, there are several websites that offer English lessons online and there are also many people, especially young persons, who prefer this medium of learning. For this reason, it is important to introduce new tools through technology to motivate students to learn English. In this study a WebQuest can contribute as an effective learning tool that attracts students' imagination and motivation. The following topics are related with the integration of the technology in English lessons as well as the development of the four skills through the use of WebQuests.

2.1. Teaching English through technology

To teach English with technology involves employing technological tools to assist the language learners. Warschauer and Meskill state that “The computer is a powerful tool for this process ... frequently taking



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place in an online environment” (11). The same authors point out that new technologies prepare students to be successful in academic, vocational, or personal life” (11).

“Education as a professional field is constantly changing. The most interesting and important innovation in education in recent years is the widespread introduction of computers into schools, colleges and universities” (Zheng, Perez, Williamson and Fligare 295). Also, the development of Internet is also changing the way people teach and learn (Hill and Hannafin et al. in Zheng et al 295).

According with the article “Technology for Learning and Serving Vision Education for the Future-Anytime, Anywhere”, Wendy Allison et. al state that “technology will be incorporated into the classroom which will help students develop skills such as critical thinking”(5).

Moreover, there are some beliefs for using technology in education. Allison et al state the following as the most important ones:

Technology allows people to better serve the diverse learning needs of our student population and prepare them for career pathways that lead



to workforce success. [Also] proficient use of technology supports the development of process skills such as flexibility, adaptability, critical thinking. Technology provides a system that helps students and teachers work together to support educational outcomes and increases support for emerging instructional strategies. (5)

One of these instructional strategies is the WebQuest which can be used to support the development of the language skills. Therefore, it is important to define the term “WebQuest.”

2.2. What is a WebQuest?

“The WebQuest has been widely adopted in classrooms in more than 40 states in the USA, and in 10 countries and regions worldwide, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Hong Kong, Germany, New Zealand” (Zheng, Perez, Williamson and Fligare 296).

Bernie Dodge defined the term WebQuest in 1995, as “an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the Internet” (Dodge qtd. In March 2).



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In 1995, Dodge and a graduate student, Tom March, were curious about how to use the Internet, how to exploit the emerging Internet technology to create meaningful online learning opportunities. Thus these authors started creating WebQuests. “Since 1995, [March] regularly produced new WebQuests...conducted workshops and experimented with ways...to extend the understanding of what facilitates effective web-based learning.” (March 1). He came up with the following definition of WebQuests in 2007:

A WebQuest is a scaffolded learning structure that used links to essential resources on the World Wide Web and an authentic task to motivate students’ investigation of an open- ended question, development of individual expertise, and participation in a group process that transforms newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuests inspire students to see richer thematic relationships, to contribute to the real world of learning, and to reflect on their own meta-cognitive processes (March 2).



Considering these previous ideas, it can be seen that WebQuests are important tools that help students not only learn information, but develop their cognitive skills.

After this introduction and definition about WebQuests, it is important to describe the constituent parts of a WebQuest.

2.2.1. Parts of a WebQuest

Fiedler, in an article called “WebQuests: A Critical Examination In Light of Selected Learning Theories” states that a WebQuest consists of an Introduction, Task, Process, Resources, Evaluation and Conclusion.

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to introduce the central topic and to describe briefly the task. Generally the introduction, in order to engage students, “focuses on relevant past experiences or future goals.” (Fiedler 4)



Task

According to Dr. Dodge (qtd. in Fiedler) “the task is the most important section of a WebQuest because it describes what students will do in the WebQuest (4). Fieldler also states that “tasks are often the assignments and creation of a product.”(4). Oral presentations, debates, role-plays, dialogues or other oral activities can be part of a task.

Process

Fiedler explains that “the Process section of a WebQuest details the steps to follow by students in the assigned task” (4). In other words, it explains clearly what students will do to complete the task. The same author lists, “in explicit detail, the resources needed and the scaffolding steps required to complete the project. Scaffolding tools such as visual organizers and advice on completing certain activities is often available in the process section” (Fiedler 4-5).



Resources

This section consists on a list of resources that students will need to complete the task. Therefore, students will find the pre-selected links to surf on the web which will help them to focus on the topic without wasting time (Fiedler 5).

Evaluation

Fiedler states that the Evaluation section of a WebQuest describes how the students' performance will be evaluated; it often has a form of a rubric. Rubrics are essential for the evaluation of the students work, "and describe indicators reflecting a variety of proficiency levels" (Fiedler 5).

Conclusion

The Conclusion section of a WebQuest summarizes what students will have acquired by completing the WebQuest. It often provides opportunities to extend their thinking (Fiedler 5-6).



After a brief explanation about WebQuests, it can be seen that they can be used in all fields of education. In this study, the focus is on learning English through WebQuests. Now, it is necessary to know about the importance of the integration of the skills into the classroom.

2.3. Integration of the four language skills

Nowadays, we frequently use more than one language skills for communication. According to Gower, Phillips and Walters:

“In real life the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are generally integrated than occurring in isolation. When taking part in a conversation, for example, we both listen and speak; when we fill in a form we read and write and taking notes from a lecture involves listening and writing. Often the use of one skill leads one naturally from another –we often read a novel or see a film and talk about it later to a friend. In lessons, as in real life, skills are often integrated-with one activity leading on to another.”(85, 86)



Therefore, when students learn a language, they should be exposed to all the skills because they offer positive opportunities to students. Through the integration of skills students get interested and motivated because they can see language as a whole. When a teacher provides exercises using the four skills, students get to practice using the same language through all the skills which will help them to retain the new language or vocabulary better. Another advantage of integrating skills is that it may help teachers to make the lessons dynamic, involving the students in diverse interactive activities. Moreover, a vivid and effective communicative class is through the integration of the four language skills, in which the teacher needs to establish a positive atmosphere, plan appropriate activities, encourage learners and deal with problems. Finally, it is necessary to use an effective technique to incorporate the four skills; a good way to do this is through WebQuests.

2.3.1. Classification of the language skills

2.3.1.1. Receptive Skills

Listening and reading are the receptive skills. "Receptive skills are the ways in which people extract meaning from the discourse they see or



hear” (Harmer 246). It means that the reader or listener get information from other sources. In other words, people, in our case, students receive information from the outside world.

Listening

Listening is the ability to recognize and understand what others are saying. That is important in the second language. Wallace, Stariba and Walberg argue that “Listening skills are essential for learning since they enable students to acquire insights and information, and to achieve success in communicating with others.” (13)

According to our experiences listening has been considered as a secondary skill because sometimes teachers do not provide enough resources and opportunities to develop this skill; for example, when we were high school students, we hardly ever listened to any target language material. It’s clear that teachers should provide materials such as dialogues and others activities that help students develop this skill.



Reading

Reading involves comprehending written materials. Geyser points out that “Reading is a 'receptive skill' that should be done individually, as opposed to reading out aloud. It is however important to remember that students read at different speeds and in very different ways.” This means that students develop this skill independently comparing to others skills. Also, reading can help build vocabulary.

According to Gower, Phillips and Walters (95) the following are basic reading skills that are useful for students:

Skimming is used to quickly gather the most important information, or 'gist' of the text

Scanning is used to find a particular piece of information.

Extensive Reading and Intensive Reading are important reading sub skills, but in this study, our activities are based only in skimming and scanning.



2.3.1.2 Productive Skills

Speaking and writing are the productive skills which make students write or speak, and transmit information and develop the habit of communication.

Speaking

Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. Geyser argues that “Speaking is considered by learners as one of the most difficult skills as it involves real-time processing which means that learners don't have much time to formulate what they want to say and how to say it.” Also, this author mentions that students usually do not speak because they are afraid of doing it; therefore, they do not trust themselves when speaking. That is why we think teachers should also provide with opportunities to students in which they can practice speaking and build their confidence when doing so. In our own experience as high school students, we almost never had the opportunity to speak. Teachers should plan carefully the activities to make students speak.



Writing

Writing is the talent to express thoughts in written form. According to Gower, Phillips and Walters “Writing is often not as important to many students as speaking and it tends to get rather neglected in many classes... It is useful to consider what types of writing your students may want or need to do- in other words, the reasons they may have for writing” (113). It is also important to consider the level of students. This study is intended for beginners. Therefore, students will only practice phrases and sentences when writing.

In conclusion, the computer and Internet are changing the development of different educational fields. English is one of them. As we have seen, when learning English, it is important to provide students with situations in which they can use all the language skills. WebQuests offer opportunities to use all these elements: computer, internet and language skills. Considering these important facts, we should analyze what is happening in our context. The next chapter attempts to address this situation.



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Basic Methodology

To answer the first question about teachers' knowledge regarding WebQuests, field research was conducted through the use of an interview and surveys. An interview to an expert and a survey to five teachers were applied. Some of these teachers work in institutes and others in high schools. The purpose of using the interview and the survey was to get more information about our topic through the teacher's experiences and opinions regarding the use of technology in the English classroom.

3.2. Interview

An interview to an expert, an English teacher of the Language Department of the University of Cuenca, was conducted to examine the use of the WebQuests in the English classroom integrating the skills. A questionnaire of ten questions was used (see appendix 1).



Through this interview we could get information about the importance of use technology in the classroom; besides, we could confirm that WebQuests are useful for students. Thus, the expert gave her opinions and suggestions. She stated that WebQuests are good resources to improve English by integrating the skills in the classroom in our days. Consequently, this interview was positive for our research because it confirmed the importance of using WebQuests in the classroom.

3.3. Survey

The purpose of applying the survey was to get to know the teachers' knowledge about WebQuests. A questionnaire of five statements using wh-questions, multiple choice questions, and yes/no questions was used (see appendix 2). The purpose was to find out the interests of the teachers about the use of technology and their knowledge regarding WebQuests.



CHAPTER IV

Analysis and Interpretation of Results

The results of the interview and survey were interpreted through qualitative and quantitative analysis.

4.1. Interview

The purpose of our interview was to get information such as opinions and experiences referred to our research and clarify our doubts and our research questions. Our interviewee explained to us that technology brings real life examples making learning more relevant and meaningful. As a result, students pay attention and participate in lessons. She argued that the Internet is a good tool for learning a foreign Language. Also, she emphasized that the use of WebQuests in the English classroom improves English because they provide students with several activities about a specific topic.

Moreover, the expert said that a WebQuest is a good resource that helps students learn a language; however, it should not be the unique



resource to be used because it depends on how it is used. So we agree with her answers because through WebQuests students have strong connection with real world; however, they should be combined with other activities.

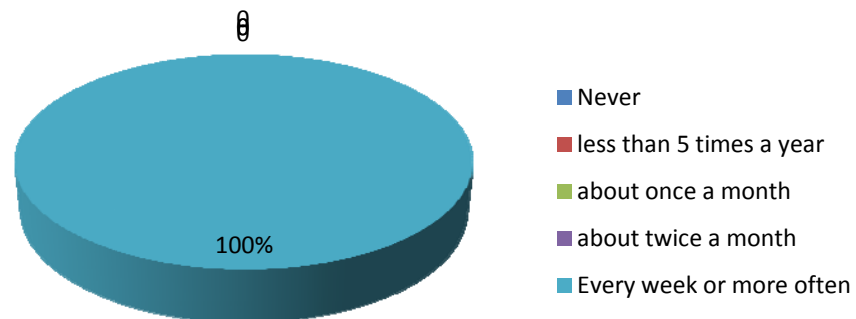
In conclusion, the interview confirmed the importance of using Internet and WebQuests in the classroom. She argued that the use of WebQuests is an excellent way to involve Internet in learning. Thus, pupils could discover Internet as an alternative source of information. Besides, she claimed that WebQuests are suitable for students as a way to engage their curiosity and desire to learn.

4.2 Survey

The purpose of this survey was to find out the interests of the teachers about the use of technology and their knowledge regarding WebQuests. Through this survey we obtained real information about the use of technology into the English classroom and the use of WebQuests as a technique to improve the English language integrating the skills. The results of the survey are indicated below.



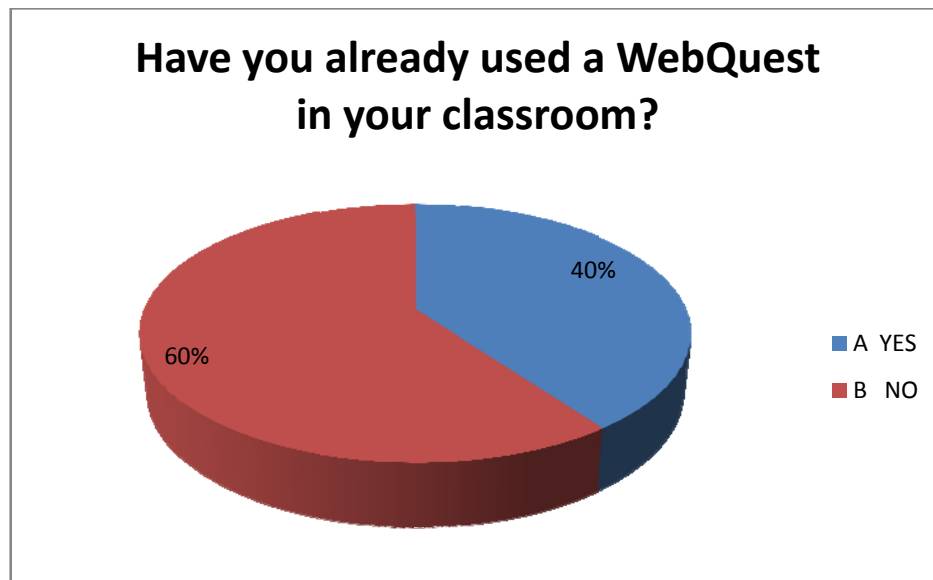
To what extent do you use online learning resources with your learners, apart from asking them to refer to online information ?



Graph 1. Survey: Question 1.

Source: Authors

We observed a positive attitude of the teachers towards the use of online learning because a 100% of teachers answered that they use technology either “every week” or “more often” technology.



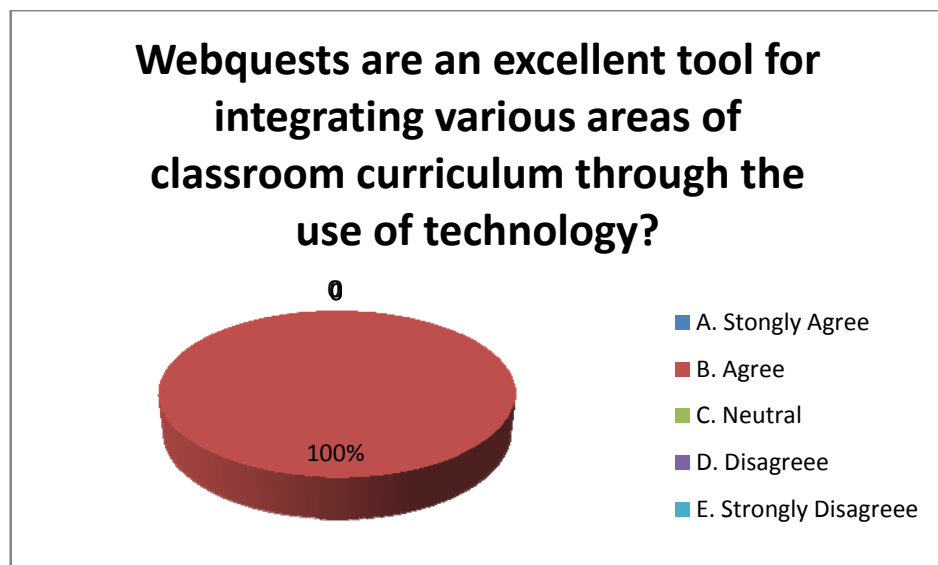
Graph 2. Survey: Question 2.

Source: Authors

In connection with the next question related to the use of WebQuests in the classroom, we found that it is not a common tool because 60% of the teachers answered that they did not use it. They mentioned that they used other techniques to reinforce what their students had been studying in class. Also, they stated that they did not have time to use them, and classroom sizes were obstacles to apply this tool. On the other hand, 40% of teachers responded with positive answers stating that they had previously used WebQuests in order to create meaningful online learning.



They also claimed that WebQuests are excellent tools for integrating various areas of classroom curriculum.



Graph 3. Survey: Question 3.

Source: Authors

In connection with the third question, all the teachers agreed with the idea that WebQuests are excellent tools for integrating various areas of classroom curriculum. Consequently, we observed a positive answer about the integration of WebQuests to the learning process.



What do you like most about WebQuests?

This question attempted to find out about the reasons of using WebQuests. For this question we provided different alternatives and different degrees of preference (see appendix 2). Most of the teachers showed positive reasons of using Webquests. Among the most important reasons are that WebQuests are good because they are fun and creative for learners. Other teachers claimed that these tools are positive for students because they develop internet skills. Finally, 60% of the teachers agreed that Webquests are easy to use, but 40% of them said they were not very easy to use.



Graph 4. Survey: Question 5.

Source: Authors



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In connection with the last question we observed a positive attitude of the teachers because a 100% of teachers answered that they would recommend WebQuests to others.

In conclusion, this survey gave positive results because it confirmed how useful WebQuests could be when learning English. Therefore, it is relevant to design contents to teach English using WebQuests. The following part of this chapter provides lessons which can be used with high school students of Third of Bachillerato.

4.3. Lesson based on WebQuests

After having a clear idea of what a WebQuest involves and how it can be used to integrate the language skills, it is important to illustrate and demonstrate its use through the following lesson plans.



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4.3.1 Lesson One:

WebQuest Christmas Around the World¹



Introduccion

Through this WebQuest you will learn about Christmas customs and traditions around the world while having fun.

Task

- Teacher gives a list of links and information about Christmas in other countries.
- Students work in groups.
- Students research a country and find information about how that country celebrates Christmas.

¹ This WebQuest is adapted from Lillie Large and Shelly Taylor. This figure below was taken from www.photopin.com. The rest of the figures were also taken from this site which is an open source.
Cecilia Faicán & Maribel Garnica



- Students complete a chart with the information obtained about a country.
- Students use the http://www.nmia.com/~nmcm/santa_names.htm(see appendix 3) to name for Santa in the following countries: and answer question below.
- Students create a PowerPoint presentation to explain to the class how each different country celebrates Christmas.

Process

- As a group, students need to choose a country to research and complete the following chart (below)
- Tasks will be divided among group members:
 - Member 1: The decorations and the tree
 - Member 2: the gift giver
 - Members 3: type of food
- After, students read carefully the link of the country that they selected
- After that, students have read, they have to complete the following chart with the information obtained.



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Christmas around the World

Data Sheet

NAME OF COUNTRY	
THE DECORATIONS AND THE TREE	
THE GIFT GIVER	
TYPE OF FOOD	

NAMES:

.....

- Then each group talks about the chosen country and the other groups listen and take notes about it. For example:

- Put the name for Santa in the following countries:

1. - Brazil _____

2. - England _____

3. - France _____

4. - Germany _____

5. - Italy _____

6. - Russia _____



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Resources

CHINA

<http://www.plymouth.k12.wi.us/parkview/elem%20libraries/Themes/Christmas%20Traditions/China3.htm> (See appendix 4)

FRANCE

<http://www.plymouth.k12.wi.us/parkview/elem%20libraries/Themes/Christmas%20Traditions/France3.htm>(see appendix 5)

GERMANY

<http://www.plymouth.k12.wi.us/parkview/elem%20libraries/Themes/Christmas%20Traditions/Germany3.htm>(see appendix 6)

ITALY

<http://www.plymouth.k12.wi.us/parkview/elem%20libraries/Themes/Christmas%20Traditions/Italy3.htm>(see appendix 7)

MEXICO

<http://www.plymouth.k12.wi.us/parkview/elem%20libraries/Themes/Christmas%20Traditions/Mexico3.htm>(see appendix 8)



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Evaluation

The evaluation will be based on:

- Participation of all group members in all tasks: 20%
- Oral and Visual presentation: 30%
- Understanding of general concepts connected with
- Personal contribution and creativity: 25%
- Use of web-based resources: 25%

Conclusions

Through this WebQuest student use the Internet as a look for information. Students worked with another person and joined efforts. Students learned how people from different countries celebrate Christmas.



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4.3.2. Lesson Two:

WebQuest on Singers²



In this WebQuest students will learn about singers around the world. They will work in groups.

Introduction

Young people all over the world have his/her favorite singer. I have chosen some famous singers and I hope you learn some new information about them.

In this WebQuest, you will have the opportunity to discover new things about a famous singer. Also, you will have the opportunity to express

² This WebQuest was adapted from Mora, Rocio.



your opinion on your choice of the singer and get to surf the net in search of information about him/her.

Task

- Make groups of three.
- Each member of the group will be responsible for a different task:
- Biographer (someone who does research on the celebrity's personal life)
- Critic (a person who researches the celebrity's professional career)
- Graphic designer (who is in charge of the PowerPoint design, creating the format and including texts, images, pictures, etc.)
- Students choose one singer from the list provided by the teacher.
- Surf the Net, in order to find more information on the chosen singer. This will be given by your teacher and it may be one of these: Britney Spears, Lady Gaga and Justin Bieber.
- Each member will complete a general worksheet about the chosen singer. Members of the group will discuss the information recorded in their worksheets.
- Finally, each group will talk about their PowerPoint presentation to the rest of the class.
- Each group will have from three to five minutes per group to do that.
- Each member of the group will present a different part. This part will be



about the information each member researched on. For example: the biographer may talk about the singer's place of birth.

•The PowerPoint presentation has to include the following sections:

- Personal Life
- Professional career
- Hobbies

Steps to create your Power Point presentation:

- In the first slide include the singer's name, a picture and the names of all the members in your group.
- In a second slide write a brief outline of the contents of your presentation
- Create one slide for each aspect of the outline.
- Create two more slides to place at the end. References will be included in this first slide and an expression of gratitude (like Thanks for your attention!) in the second one.

Process

In the following WebQuest, you will cooperate with your partner and use the resources on the Internet to prepare the presentation of your singer.



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Follow these steps:

Step 1

- Talk about the singer you have chosen with your group. Try to get some general ideas and write them down. You can do it by asking and answering these questions:
- What do you know about him/her?
- What do you think this person is doing now?

Step 2

- Keep in mind what your responsibility is to start working.

Step 3

- Explore the websites in Resources. Keep the necessary information by taking notes.

Step 4

Now share the information and discuss it with the rest of the group so that you can complete your worksheet. You can find this worksheet below.



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WORKSHEET

Our singer is _____

Where is he/she from? _____

How old is he/she? _____

When is his/her birthday? _____

Is he/she married? Does he/she have any children? _____

What does he/she do? _____

Does he/she succeed in his/her career? _____

Is he/she currently working? _____

What is he/she doing now in his/her job? _____



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Step 5

- Discuss with your group and choose the best features for your singer.

Step 6

- Give all the information to the graphic and discuss which pictures, clips, etc. to include.

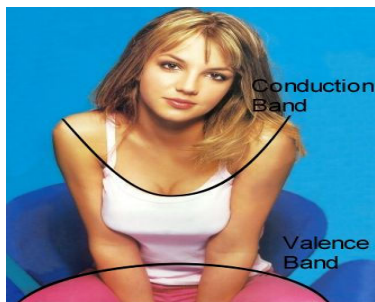
Step 7

- Finally, decide which part each member of the group will present to the rest of class.

Resources

Here you have a list of useful websites to complete your task.

Britney Spears



For the graphic designer:

<http://photopin.com/search/britney-spears>

For all the members:

<http://www.famouspeople.co.uk/b/britneyspears.html>(see appendix 9)



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Lady Gaga



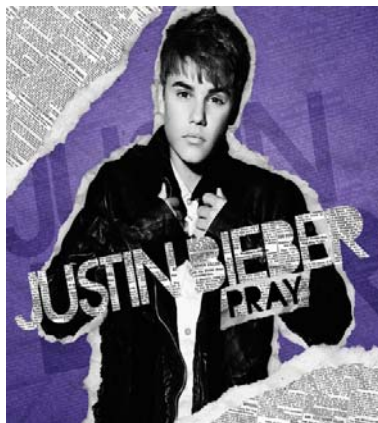
For the graphic designer:

<http://photopin.com/search/lady-gaga#>

For all the members:

<http://www.biography.com/people/lady-gaga-481598>(see appendix 10)

Justin Bieber





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For the graphic designer:

<http://photopin.com/search/justin-bieber>

For all the members:

<http://www.biography.com/people/justin-bieber-522504>(see appendix 11)

Evaluation

The evaluation will be based on:

- Participation of all group members in all tasks: 20%
- Oral and Visual presentation: 30%
- Understanding of general concepts connected with
 - Personal contribution and creativity: 25%
 - Use of web-based resources: 25%

Conclusion

So all you have to do now is go out and surf the net, go to the library and get started on your project work.



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4.3.3. Lesson Three:

WebQuest Halloween³



Introduccion

Halloween is a holiday celebrated in the United States on October 31. Have you heard about this holiday? Have you seen about picture (Jack-O-Lantern).Through this webQuest you will know more about Halloween.

Task

- Students will have to make a PowerPoint presentation about Halloween.
- Students work in groups of four members

³ This WebQuest was adapted from Alvarez Javier Martin.
Cecilia Faicán & Maribel Garnica



•From a variety of resources, each group will chose one of the following topics

- The origins of Halloween
- Jack-O-Lantern History
- Trick or Treating History
- Carving a Pumpkin
- Symbols of Halloween

Process

•Tasks will be divided among group members:

•Each the group looks for specific information and make a brief

Summary

- Group 1 Origin of Halloween.
- Group 2: Jack-O-Lantern History
- Group 3: Trick or Treating History (make a brief summary about it.)
- Group 4: Carving a Pumpkin (make a brief summary about it.)
- Group 5: symbol of Halloween

•Students examine and analyse the information that they have found.

•Discuss with their group what they have gotten and explain the



information to their partners.

- Then each group talks about of the resources that chosen and the other groups listen and take notes about it.

Resources

Origins of Halloween

<http://www.history.com/topics/halloween>(see appendix 12)

Jack-O-Lantern History

<http://www.pumpkinnook.com/facts/jack.htm>(see appendix 13)

Carving a Pumpkin

http://www.pumpkin carving101.com/pumpkin_carving_history.html

(see appendix 14)

Trick or Treating History

<http://www.thingsthatgoboo.com/halloween/halloweentrick.htm>

(see appendix 15)

Symbols of Halloween

<http://www.crossroad.to/images/Halloween/Halloween-symbols.htm>

(see appendix 16)



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Evaluation

The evaluation will be based on:

- Participation of all group members in all tasks: 20%
- Oral and Visual presentation: 30%
- Understanding of general concepts connected with
 - Personal contribution and creativity: 25%
 - Use of web-based resources: 25%

Conclusions

Through this WebQuest student use the Internet as a look for information.

Students worked with another person and joined efforts.

Students learned how people from different countries celebrate Christmas.



CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

In connection with the first research question which dealt with teachers' knowledge about WebQuests, it can be concluded that, even though WebQuests have been around for many years, are still unknown or not widely used in our context. However, teachers claimed that WebQuests are useful when learning a language.

Answering the second research question about the integration of the four skills, it can be observed that this can actually be done. The three lessons presented in the previous chapter confirmed this fact. WebQuests can be perfectly adapted by teachers.

Responding the third research question regarding the elements of a WebQuest, it is easy to see that this strategy uses a sequential procedure that clearly shows students what to do. The elements and procedure of a WebQuest are indicated in the Literature Review and are applied in the lessons of Chapter four.



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Taking all these elements into account and reflecting on our general objective, we can conclude that a WebQuest is a good strategy to support the development of the language skills into the classroom. WebQuests definitely provide students with authentic material which, at the same time, increases students' motivation engaging pupils to learn English. The lessons presented in the previous chapter can easily be incorporated to a real English classroom. Nowadays, young people use Internet for other purposes. Teachers can encourage them to use it when learning English.

Through the three lessons designed in chapter four, we showed that the four skills can be integrated. Therefore, students are provided with tools to develop language as a whole.

It is important to mention that when we were designing our lessons by means of WebQuests, we could see that many teachers of many subjects used them to provide interesting lesson to their students. We highly recommend using them even though they require a long time when creating them.

We recommend reading this project because it offers important information about the use of WebQuests as a tool to learn English.



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Through WebQuests we have seen that it is possible to integrate the skills. Also, students can explore the World Wide Web and create their own knowledge. Besides they develop critical thinking skills which will help them in their future.



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Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey

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INTEGRATING SKILLS BY MEANS OF WEBQUESTS TO LEARN

ENGLISH

The purpose of this survey is focus on the importance of intergrating the four language skills in the English class through WebQuests. How they offer valuable opportunities to develop foreign language skills in an enhanced environment which promotes cooperative and autonomous learning in the EFL class.

Mark with an X the best option for you.

- 1. What extent do you use online learning resources with your learners, apart from asking them to refer to online information?**



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- Never _____
- less than 5 times a year _____
- about once a month _____
- about twice a month _____
- Every week or more often _____

Circle your answer according with the question and explain your answer.

2. Have you already used a WebQuest in your classroom?

A. YES

B. NO

WHY? _____

Mark with an X the best option for you.

3. WebQuests are an excellent tool for integrating various areas of classroom curriculum through the use of technology.



- A. _____ Strongly Agree
B. _____ Agree
C. _____ Neutral
D. _____ Disagree
E. _____ Strongly Disagree

Mark with an X the best option for you.

4. What do you like most about WebQuests?

1. Very poor 2. Poor 3. Ok 4. Good 5. Very good

Fun and creative for learners	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Develop skills in using the internet	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ease to use	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Mark with an X the best option for you.

5. Would you recommend WebQuests to others?

_____ Yes
_____ No
_____ Maybe



Appendix 2: Questionnaires

Interview

- 1- How important do you think that technology is to teach English?
- 2- Do you think that technology is an important tool to motivate students?
- 3- Do you think that through technology English Language can have integration?
- 4- What resources do you need in your classroom?
- 5- Do you think that students can develop the skills through the use of Internet?
- 6- What is a WebQuest?
- 7- Do you think that students can learn the English Language doing WebQuests?
- 8- Are WebQuests an effective way to integrate skills?
- 9- Can you suggest good sites where you can find WebQuests?
- 10- Do you think that teachers should work with authentic material such as: WebQuests?



Appendix 3

Santa's Other Names

A list of some of Santa Claus' names includes:

- Austria - Christkind
- Belgium and the Netherlands - Noel, Saint Nicholas, Christkind and Black Pete
- Brazil - Papa Noel
- Denmark - Julinisse
- England - Father Christmas
- Finland - Old Man Christmas
- France - Pere Noel or le Petit
- Germany - KrissKingle, Christkind or Saint Nicholas
- Italy - Befana
- Japan - Santa Kurohsu
- Mexico - Three Kings
- Poland - Star Man or Wise Men
- Spain - Three Kings
- Russia - Basbouschka



Appendix 4

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS IN CHINA

Merry Christmas is [Sheng Dan Kuai Le](#) or Ye Dan Kuai Le in Chinese.

In China, only about one percent of the people are Christians, so most people only know a few things about Christmas. Because of this, Christmas is often only celebrated in major cities such as Shanghai and Beijing. Some people go carol singing, although not many people understand them or know about the Christmas Story. Jingle Bells is a popular Carol in China!

People who are Christians in China go to special services. Going to Midnight Mass services has become very popular

The Decorations and the Tree

Christians in China celebrate by lighting their houses with beautiful paper lanterns and decorating their Christmas trees, which they call "Trees of Light," with red paper chains for happiness, paper flowers, and paper lanterns. They may display bowls of oranges and tangerines, which symbolize wealth and good fortune.



The Gift Giver

Chinese Children hang muslin stockings and await a visit from Santa Claus, whom they call Dun Che Lao Ren (dwyh-chuh-lau-oh-run) which means "Christmas Old Man."

Since the vast majority of the Chinese people are not Christian, the main winter festival in China is the Chinese New Year. Many people exchange gifts at the New Year. Following tradition, very expensive, special presents are given only to close family members. Token gifts are given to friends and distant relations. Children especially enjoy their gifts of new shoes and hats. New Year's Eve and the first three days of the new year are observed as a public holiday, although this break sometimes lasts up to a week. Movie theaters and major restaurants are essentially the only businesses open during the holiday. People return to work between the fifth and eighth days of the new year, but the holiday atmosphere lasts through the Lantern Festival, on the 15th day of the first lunar month.

The Food

It is a time when children receive new clothing, eat luxurious meals, receive new toys, and enjoy firecracker displays. An important aspect of the New Year celebration is the worship of ancestors. Portraits and paintings of ancestors are



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brought out and hung in the main room of the home. Traditional meals of fish and dumplings and taro cakes are eaten.



Appendix 5

CHRISTMAS IN FRANCE

Merry Christmas - Joyeux Noel

Celebrating Christmas in France reminds everyone of the very first Christmas. It is usually a holiday for the children, while New Year's celebrations are for the adults.

The Decorations

Family celebrations begin with the decoration of the Christmas tree a few days before Christmas; candles and lights, tinsel and many colored stars are attached to it. On Christmas Eve when the children are asleep, little toys, candies and fruits are hung on the branches of the tree as a supplement to the gifts Pere Noel (Santa Claus) has left in the shoes before the fireplace.

About a week before Christmas, the family sets up the creche (manger scene). In the creche, they place Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels, and the farm animals. Baby Jesus is left out of the creche until the family returns from the Christmas Eve midnight mass. The Three Wise Men are added to the creche on Jan. 6th, the Epiphany.



The Tree

The Christmas tree has never been very popular in France. In Southern France, a log is burned in people's homes from Christmas Eve until New Years Day. A long time ago, part of the log was used to make the wedge for the plough as good luck for the coming harvest.

The Gift Giver

On Christmas Eve, candles are lit around the creche. A Yule log is lit and carols are sung. The children place their shoes in front of the fireplace, so that Pere Noel can fill them with gifts. Pere Noels French partner is Pere Fouettard, father spanker, and he will "reward" bad children with a spanking. The adults give each others presents on New Year's Day.

At midnight everyone attends the Christmas mass. Churches and cathedrals, large and small, are magnificently lit and echo the joyful melodies of carols and bells. Many churches have a crèche or manger. Sometimes a real infant was placed on the hay of the manger during the mass.

The Food

After midnight mass on Christmas Eve, the family returns home and has the grand feast of the season, which is called le reveillon. Le reveillon is a very late



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supper held after midnight mass on Christmas Eve. The menu for the meal may be of stuffed turkey or goose, ham, salads, oysters, cake, fruit, and wine. The French make a traditional Yule log-shaped cake called the buche de Nol, which means "Christmas Log."



Appendix 6

CHRISTMAS IN GERMANY

Merry Christmas -FrohlicheWeihnachten

The Decorations

In Germany, the Christmas season begins with Advent. A wreath of evergreens with four red candles is displayed in the home. One candle is lit on each Sunday before Christmas and last on Christmas Eve. Children count the days until Christmas using an Advent calendar. They open one window each day and find a Christmas picture inside.

The Tree

Decorating the tree is an important part of the Christmas celebration. In many homes, the children are not allowed to see the tree until Christmas Eve. One of the parents decorates the tree with ornaments, lights, and tinsel, the German people also hang cookies (shaped like people, animals, hearts, or stars) on the branches. A golden angel is placed at the very top of the tree. Under the Christmas tree, the family arranges a manger scene to depict the stable that Jesus was born in.



On Christmas Eve the children go to bed but are woken up at midnight by their parents and taken down to the room that had been locked. The door is opened and they see the tree all lit up, with piles of parcels on little tables.

The Food

On Christmas Eve families go to church, then feast on a large dinner of roast goose or duck (stuffed with apples), Christstollen or "stollen" (Christmas bread) and marzipan candy.

After dinner, the children are allowed to eat the candies and the cookies that are hung on the tree. Some families also have a gingerbread house covered with candies, cookies and tiny decorations.

The Gift Givers

Christmas preparations often begin on the eve of December 6th. People often set aside special evenings for baking spiced cakes and cookies, and making gifts and decorations. Little dolls of fruit are traditional Christmas toys. December 6 is Nikolaustag, St. Claus (Nicholas) day, children leave a shoe or boot outside the door Dec.5 and the next morning you find presents (if you are a good kid) or a rod (if you were bad).



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Children leave notes with St. Nicholas, telling him what they want. Children believe gifts are brought by the Christ Child (called Christkindl). The gifts are opened on Christmas Eve.

Merry Christmas from Germany



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Appendix 7

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS

IN ITALY

Italians say BuonoNatale! or "Happy Birthday" for Christmas.

Christmas is a very religious time in Italy.

A manger scene (presipio) is set up in each home.

The Tree and Decorations

In Italy, as in many Latin speaking countries, the nativity scene (presepio) is the center of decoration for Christmas. Guests kneel before it and musicians sing before it. The scene is often set out in the shape of a triangle. It provides the base of a pyramid-like structure called the ceppo (this takes the place of a Christmas tree). This is a wooden frame arranged to make a pyramid several feet high. Several tiers of thin shelves are supported by this frame. It is entirely decorated with colored paper, gilt pine cones and miniature colored pennants. Small candles are fastened to the tapering sides. A star or small doll is hung at the apex of the triangular sides. The shelves above the manger scene have small gifts of fruit, candy and presents. The ceppo is in the old Tree of Light tradition which became the Christmas tree in other countries.



The Christmas season is filled with much singing and music. The streets, shops and homes are decorated. Fruit shaped decorations are seen everywhere.

The Food

For twenty-four hours before Christmas people fast (do not eat). This is followed by Christmas Eve dinner called a Cennone. This feast includes fish (no meat), pasta, vegetables, fresh fruits and special sweets and cakes.

Special prayers and church services called "novena" last for nine days prior to Christmas. Mass is celebrated on Christmas morning.

The Gift Giver

In certain parts of Italy the children hang their stockings near the head of the bed. An old lady is supposed to visit each child and leave sweetmeats or coal in the stocking (depending whether the child has been good or bad.)

Italian children believe that La Befana flies from house to house on a broomstick, slides down the chimney and fills the stockings of the good children with gifts, but leaves a lump of coal for the bad children.



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The Legend of La Befana

A woman was busily sweeping her house when the Three Wise Men came to her door. They said they were seeking the new King who was born in Bethlehem. When they asked her to show them the way, she replied that she was much too busy. Later, she felt sorry that she had not helped the Wise Men, so she set out after them. She searched and searched, but she never found them. Because La Befana felt so bad, she continues to travel throughout the country at Christmas time, searching for the Christ Child.

The Epiphany (Feast of the Three Kings), on January 6th, is the last day of Christmas celebrations.



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Appendix 8



Feliz Navidad!

Say Merry Christmas in Spanish: FelizNavidad

In Mexico, the Christmas celebration begins nine days before December 25 with Las Posadas (Dec. 16th). During this time the people in the town go to a different home each night. At each home the story of Mary and Joseph seeking shelter at the inn is acted out. When the owner of the house finally learns who his guests are, he jubilantly throws open the doors and bids them welcome. All kneel around the manger scene or "Nacimiento" and offer songs of welcome, Ave Marias and a prayer.

Link to the traditional [song](#) sung at the Las Posdas



The Tree

Santos or creche figures are an important part of a Mexican Christmas. The figures are used to recreate the nativity scene at the town's church. Some families decorate a small Christmas tree or arbolito (little tree), it is often an artificial one, a bare branch cut from a shrub collected from the countryside.

At midnight, on Christmas Eve, all the people in the town make a grand procession to the church to lay gifts before the manger and to celebrate Midnight Mass.

On Christmas Eve, at midnight the birth of Christ is announced with fireworks, ringing bells and blowing whistles. Devout worshipers surge into churches to attend the famous "Misa de Gallo" or "Mass of the Rooster."

The Decorations

During Christmas time the poinsettia flower is very popular. There is a legend that the poinsettia plant formed miraculously one Christmas Eve from a little girl's only gift to the baby Jesus at her church's midnight service; a bunch of weeds. Also popular, are luminarios. These are small, decoratively cut paper bags lit with small candles.



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The Food

Following Mass, families return home for a tremendous dinner of traditional Mexican foods. Common foods are the , "tamales," rice, "atole" (a sweet traditional drink) and "menudo," which is said to be more sobering than strong coffee.

The evening is rounded out with the opening of gifts and, for the children, piñatas and luces de Belen (sparklers). As these happy family gatherings generally last into the wee hours, December 25th is set aside as a day to rest.

Piñatas are a fun part of the Christmas celebration. Piñatas are figures made out of clay or paper-mache decorated with paper. Children use a stick to try to break the pinata. When one child breaks the piñata, all the children are rewarded with a "rainfall" of candy and small toys.

The Gift Giver

The Christmas season continues in Mexico through Epiphany, which is called Día de los Reyes (Three Kings Day). Echoing the arrival in Bethlehem of Wise Men bearing gifts for the baby Jesus.



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Children throughout Mexico anxiously await waking up January 6 to find toys and gifts left by the Reyes Magos (Magi). In some regions it is customary to leave out shoes where treasures may be deposited by the visiting Wise Men.

A special treat served on this day is the Rosca de Reyes--a crown-shaped sweet bread decorated with jewel-like candied fruits. Tiny figures of babies are hidden in the dough before baking. There is much excitement as each partaker cuts his or her own slice, for whoever gets a piece containing a baby is obliged to host another party on or before Candlemas, February 2, when Mexico's holiday season finally comes to an end.



Appendix 9

Britney Spears biography

Britney Jean Spears (born December 2, 1981) is an American pop singer. Her career encompasses chart-topping records, high-profile advertising and a foray into acting. She is now considered an American cultural icon recognized throughout the world, but has also been the subject of controversy surrounding the sexuality of her music and image.

Biography

Born in McComb, Mississippi and raised in Kentwood, Louisiana, Spears first came to fame as a member of the Disney Channel's New Mickey Mouse Club in the 1993 and 1994 seasons.

Her castmates on the show included Justin Timberlake and Joshua Chasez (who later became members of the pop band NSYNC), Keri Russell (star of the TV show *Felicity*), Christina Aguilera, also a pop singer, and actor Ryan Gosling. Spears dated Timberlake for about five years.



...Baby One More Time

Her first album on Jive Records, ...Baby One More Time, debuted in the number one spot on the U.S. Billboard Charts in early 1999, and also topped the charts in the UK. The single of the same name was also a number one hit in many countries, and was accompanied by a music video in which Spears wore a schoolgirl outfit and danced down a high-school corridor.

Spears broke the record for the youngest artist, at age 17, to have their first single debut at #1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. (This record was broken in 2004 by 13-year-old JoJo, whose single "Leave (Get Out)" debuted at #1.)

Spears also broke the record for the youngest artist, at age 17, to have their first single and first album debut simultaneously at #1 on the Billboard charts. Spears still holds this record. The album "...Baby One More Time" is to date the greatest-selling album by a teenager.

In 2000, Spears was nominated for two Grammy awards: Best Female Pop Vocal Performance for the single "...Baby One More Time", and Best New Artist. She did not receive either award.



Oops!... I Did It Again

Her followup album, *Oops!... I Did It Again*, released on May 16, 2000, also debuted at number one, and was a similarly huge hit. It sold over 1.3 million units its first week in the U.S., making it the fastest-selling album by a female artist. The album sold 9 million units in the U.S. and 19 million worldwide.

Following the success of her first two albums, Spears' career skyrocketed, and a multimillion-dollar music, film, advertisement, concert and TV-special "industry" sprang up around her. Her most popular ads were for Pepsi, for which she earned a reputed \$7-\$8 million. In 2003 there was media speculation that the soft drink behemoth were planning to replace Spears with Destiny's Child frontwoman Beyoncé Knowles. This speculation turned out to be false, and Spears has gone on to sponsor other Pepsi products.

In 2001, Spears was again nominated for two Grammy awards: Best Pop Vocal Album for *Oops!...I Did It Again* and Best Female Pop Vocal Performance for the single of the same name. She did not receive either award.



Britney

Her next album, *Britney*, was released on November 6, 2001, and debuted at number one in the charts. The first single "I'm A Slave 4 U" was produced by The Neptunes, and its R'n'B stylings heralded the starlet's attempt to grow with her audience, young and old. Over 4 million copies of *Britney* were sold in the United States alone, and the album went on to sell over 12 million copies worldwide. While the album was very much a hit by anyone else's standards, these figures are low in comparison to the sales of her other albums.

In 2002, Spears starred in a movie, *Crossroads*, which reached number two in the box office charts. Songs from the album *Britney* appeared in the film. Spears' performance was poorly received by critics and she netted herself a Razzie Award for worst performance of 2002. In June 2002, Spears branched out as a restaurateur with the opening of a New York City eatery, NYLA, but the venture was not a success and the restaurant closed in 2003. In September 2002, she took a break from the spotlight, and in 2003 many music industry critics speculated that her career was in decline. Over the course of her first three albums, Britney Spears had sold approximately 54 million



copies worldwide.

In 2003, Spears was nominated for two Grammy awards yet again: Best Female Pop Vocal Performance for "Overprotected", and Best Pop Vocal Album for Britney. She did not win either award.

In the Zone

Her fourth album, *In the Zone*, was released on November 18, 2003. Jettisoning the Max Martin produced synth pop of her earlier releases, the album took in lesser-known producers such as RedZone as well as such big names as Moby and R. Kelly. Spears co-wrote eight of the album's thirteen songs. *In the Zone* rose straight to the top of the album charts in its debut week. Spears is the only female in music history to have her first four albums debut at No. 1. After an opening performance in which she kissed Madonna at the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards in August, Madonna was also featured on the album's first single, "Me Against the Music". The single only reached No. 35 on the Hot 100, but was a No. 1 hit in other countries.

On January 3, 2004, Spears married her childhood friend Jason Allen Alexander



at The Little White Wedding Chapel on the Las Vegas Strip in Las Vegas, Nevada. The couple promptly arranged for an annulment, which was granted on January 5, ending their 55-hour marriage. Following the wedding, Spears released the second single from *In the Zone*, "Toxic", which became a worldwide hit and a No. 1 hit in over twenty different countries. The single occupied the No. 1 slot in the US for four consecutive weeks.

In March, she embarked on her fourth world tour, "The Onyx Hotel Tour", which grossed over \$34 million dollars and was seen by over 600,000 fans in North America and Europe. Meanwhile, the album's third single, "Everytime", was starting to receive radio play. While the song only reached No. 15 on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart, it was a No. 1 hit overseas in such countries as the UK and Australia. In June, she cancelled the remaining dates of her tour after injuring her knee during the filming of a video for her fourth single, "Outrageous". Shortly after returning from hospital, Spears, 22, announced her engagement to dancer Kevin Federline, 26. Federline was formerly linked with actress Shar Jackson, with whom he has two small children.

In August, Spears won the Choice Single award for "Toxic" at the Teen Choice Awards. She has also been nominated for four Video Music Awards, including



Best Female Video and Best Video Of The Year. Since its release In the Zone has sold close to three million copies in the United States, and over six million copies worldwide.

In September 2004, Forbes estimated Spears' net worth at \$123 million.

On the night of September 18, 2004, Spears married Federline before 20-30 guests in a private non-denominational ceremony at a residence in Studio City, California. Spears wore an off-white dress and Federline wore an off-white tuxedo. The men and women attending the ceremony wore light blue and pink sweatsuits respectively. The legitimacy of the marriage was initially questioned, but on November 18, 2004 a representative of the Los Angeles County registrar's office confirmed that Spears and Federline did file their marriage license with the county within ten days of their ceremony and were therefore legally married.

Curious Fragrance Line

Spears released her first fragrance, "Curious" in September 2004. The fragrance is doing very well so far, reputedly out-selling many big names.



Greatest Hits: My Prerogative

Spears released her first greatest hits collection, *Greatest Hits: My Prerogative*, on November 9, 2004. The album debuted at #4 in the US charts, selling 255,000 copies in its first week. Spears also notched up the biggest selling first week for a greatest hits compilation by a female artist in UK chart history (115,341 copies), smashing the first week sales of previous high profile collections from Whitney Houston, Madonna, Kylie Minogue, Celine Dion, Mariah Carey, Janet Jackson and Shania Twain. The collection includes "...Baby One More Time", "Oops...I Did It Again" and "Toxic", as well as two new songs and a cover of Bobby Brown's "My Prerogative".

Controversy

Spears' success has rested on a mixed fanbase. Millions of prepubescent girls became enthusiasts for her work, adopting her as an idol. It also appears that many young adult males are also fans. Writers on popular music for the mainstream press, however, have generally been dismissive of Spears' music, considering it to be commercial and shallow.



Some parents of young daughters have ambivalent or even negative feelings towards Britney Spears. To many critics, the singer has combined a very "sexy" public image with a major marketing "play" for the hearts, minds and pockets of prepubescent girls, often as young as seven or eight. The sexualization of such girls is arguably a trend that is visible elsewhere in popular culture, for example in the film and fashion industries.

Some parents take the view that their daughters deserve a chance to participate fully and happily in the pleasures of childhood before being led into an early emotional adolescence. There is also an open question as to whether young children are ready for the often complicated feelings that come with sexual maturity. Lastly, parents may worry that Britney Spears provides an unrealistic role model for their daughters' life and career plans.

In October 2003, Maryland First Lady Kendel Ehrlich, the wife of Governor Robert Ehrlich, was criticized for saying that she would like to "shoot Britney Spears" in an address to a domestic violence conference. After her comments made national headlines, she was forced to apologize.



The sexual iconography of Britney Spears once again became a topic of debate as a result of her 2003 semi-nude photo spread for the men's magazine, Esquire. Prompted by this, Playboy reportedly offered the star over a million dollars to pose nude for their magazine. Spears has publicly declined the offer.

While young girls seldom address this debate in the same terms as their parents, many are divided on whether they consider Britney Spears appealing, especially in the light of more recent developments in her career.

For her part, Spears has responded to their concerns by stating that she is "not their babysitter. It's the parents' responsibility. If you don't like it, turn the T.V. off. The only person I want to be a role model is to my sister, Jamie Lynn." (From ABC's Primetime interview with Diane Sawyer).

The criticisms leveled against Spears are similar to those Madonna received at the start of her career. Indeed, Madonna's early fans belonged to a similar demographic to Spears' current fanbase. Spears' show-stealing kiss with Madonna received much media attention, as have her her recent marriages. Her provocative image and seemingly down-to-earth personality have contributed



greatly to her success.

In common with a number of other popular female figures in show business, Britney Spears' private life has attracted considerable media attention. Indeed, some people feel that she has courted it by cultivating, in her early years at least, a chaste, God-fearing and "wholesome" image somewhat at odds not only with the traditional pressures, temptations and opportunities of "pop 'n' roll" but with the increasingly sexualized content of her own songs. Regardless of where the responsibility for the gossip industry surrounding the pop star lies, Spears' public response has been to repeatedly express regret and resentment at the intrusive media coverage.

Trivia

Britney Spears' sister, Jamie Lynn or simply Jamie Spears, is currently starting a career as an entertainer in the Nickelodeon show, All That. Her brother, Bryan Spears, is her co-manager. Britney's parents, Lynne and Jamie, have divorced.

One of Spears' best friends, Jenny, was in the unsuccessful girl-group Innosense. Spears was also a member of the group, but left and debuted as a



solo artist before the band released their first record. One of her closest friends is Felicia Culotta, her assistant.

In May 2004 Spears had a Hebrew tattoo (???) inked into the nape of her neck. She was under the impression that it meant "new era", while a more scholarly reading would be "protection". A source said, "She's taken Kabbalah pretty seriously and this was a big deal for her." This echoes a similar incident in 2003 when Spears was informed by her friend, actress Taryn Manning, that her hip tattoo (the Japanese Kanji character ?) read "strange" rather than "mysterious".

Spears publicly declared that she was a virgin early in her career, but after her split from Justin Timberlake he revealed that this was no longer true. Spears has been quoted as saying, "I thought he was the one".

"...Baby One More Time" is the 24th best selling single of all time in the UK.

Her favorite colors are baby blue and pink.

Albums

1999: ...Baby One More Time #1 US, #4 UK

2000: Oops!...I Did It Again #1 US, #2 UK



2001: Britney #1 US, #4 UK

2003: In the Zone #1 US, #13 UK

2004: Greatest Hits: My Prerogative #4 US, #2 UK

Singles

...Baby One More Time

"... Baby One More Time" — December 1998; #1 US, #1 UK

"Sometimes" — June 1999; #21 US, #3 UK

"(You Drive Me) Crazy" (The Stop Remix) — September 1999; #10 US, #5 UK

"Born To Make You Happy" — January 2000 (Europe only); #1 UK

"From The Bottom Of My Broken Heart" — January 2000 (U.S. only); #14 US

Oops!...I Did It Again

"Oops!...I Did It Again" — April 2000; #9 US, #1 UK

"Lucky" — August 2000; #23 US, #5 UK

"Stronger" — November 2000; #11 US, #7 UK

"Don't Let Me Be The Last To Know" — March 2001; #12 UK

Britney

"I'm A Slave 4 U" — September 2001; #27 US, #4 UK

"I'm Not A Girl, Not Yet A Woman" — December 2001; #2 UK

"Overprotected" (Europe — Album Version) — December 2001; #4 UK



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"Overprotected" (U.S. — Darkchild Remix) — March 2002

"Boys" (Co-Ed Remix featuring Pharrell Williams) — July 2002; #7 UK

"I Love Rock 'N Roll" (Europe only) — November 2002; #13 UK

In the Zone

"Me Against The Music" (featuring Madonna) — October 2003; #35 US, #2 UK

"Toxic" — January 2004; #9 US, #1 UK

"Everytime" — April 2004; #15 US, #1 UK

"Outrageous" — June 2004

Greatest Hits: My Prerogative

"My Prerogative" — September 2004; #3 UK

Acting

1990s: Ruthless! (Off-Broadway)

1993/1994: The New Mickey Mouse Club (Television)

1999: Longshot (Movie/Cameo)

2000: The Simpsons "The Mansion Family" (Television) (Herself)

2002: Crossroads (Movie/Lead Actress)

2002: Austin Powers in Goldmember (Movie/Cameo)



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Appendix 10

Lady Gaga biography

Lady Gaga was born Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta on March 28, 1986, in Yonkers, NY. She attended New York University's Tisch School for the Arts but left to find creative expression. She wrote songs for other artists until being discovered by R&B singer Akon. Her debut album, *The Fame*, was a huge success, and the single "Poker Face" topped charts in almost every category, in almost every country.

Early Life

Singer. Born Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta on March 28, 1986, to Cynthia and Joseph Germanotta. Germanotta, now known as Lady Gaga, is an international pop star born in Yonkers, New York.

Gaga learned to play the piano by the age of four. At the age of 11, she was accepted to the Juilliard School in Manhattan, but instead attended a private Catholic school in the city. She continued studying music and performing, writing her first piano ballad at the age of 13 and holding her first performance at the age of 14 in a New York nightclub. The self-dubbed "Lady Gaga" (she has attributed the inspiration for her name to the Queen song, "Radio Ga-Ga") was



granted early admission to New York University's Tisch School of the Arts at the age of 17 - one of only 20 students in the world to receive the honor of early acceptance. While there, she studied music and worked on her songwriting skills. She later withdrew from school in order to find creative inspiration. To make ends meet, she took three jobs - including a stint as a gogo dancer - while she honed her performance-art act.

Professional Debut

In 2005, Lady Gaga was briefly signed by Def Jam Records, but was dropped just months after signing. Being dropped by the label propelled the singer to perform on her own in clubs and venues on New York City's Lower East Side. There, she collaborated with several rock bands, and began her experimentation with fashion.

In 2007, at the age of 20, Lady Gaga began work at Interscope Records as a songwriter for other groups on the label, including Britney Spears, New Kids on the Block, and The Pussycat Dolls. R&B singer Akon discovered Gaga while she was performing a burlesque show she called "Lady Gaga and the Starlight Revue," which she had created to make a name for herself. Impressed, he signed the performer to his label under the Interscope umbrella, Kon Live. Through 2007 and 2008, Lady Gaga wrote and recorded her debut album, *The*



Fame. The record was received positive reviews and popular success in the United States. With the help of her own creative team, "Haus of Gaga," the performer also began to make a name for herself internationally.

Commercial Breakthrough

Lady Gaga's debut single, "Just Dance," was released to radio in early 2008 to both popular and commercial acclaim. The song was then nominated for a Grammy in the category of Best Dance Recording in 2008. The song lost to Daft Punk's "Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger," but this didn't keep Gaga from reaching No. 1 on the mainstream pop charts in January 2009. The second single off of her album, "Poker Face," earned Lady Gaga even more success. The song topped singles charts in almost every category, and in almost every country. Both songs were produced by Akon's affiliate RedOne, who co-wrote most of Lady Gaga's album.

Most recently, Lady Gaga opened for the newly reformed New Kids on the Block. She also collaborated with the group on the song "Big Girl Now" from New Kids on the Block's album *The Block*. She is now headlining on The Fame Ball Tour, and has announced plans to tour with Kanye West in the very near future.

Appendix 11



Justin Bieber biography

Born March 1, 1994, in Stratford, Canada to a single mother, Justin Bieber took second place in a local talent competition but turned into a YouTube phenomenon. He signed a record contract with Usher and became the first solo artist to have four singles enter the Top 40 before the release of a debut album. His record "My World" has gone platinum in several countries. He lives and works in Atlanta.

Childhood

Pop star Justin Bieber was raised by a single mom in the small town of Stratford. Bieber, whose debut album *My World* hit stores in November 2009, is a true overnight success, having gone from an unknown, untrained singer whose mother posted YouTube clips of her boy performing, to a budding superstar with a big-time record deal, all in just two years.

Bieber always had an interest in music. His mother gave him a drum kit for his second birthday and, as he tells it, he was "basically banging on everything I could get my hands on."

But it was an obscure talent contest in his hometown, in which the 12-year-old Bieber finished second that put him on the road to superstardom. As a way to



share his singing with family, Justin and his mom began posting clips of Bieber performing covers of [Stevie Wonder](#), [Michael Jackson](#), and Ne-Yo on YouTube.

Within months, Justin was an Internet sensation, with a large following of fans, and an eager manager arranging for the teenager to fly to Atlanta to consider a record deal. There, Bieber had a chance meeting with Usher, who eventually signed the young singer to a contract.

Career Highlights

Bieber's first single, "One Time," went certified platinum in his native Canada shortly after its release in May 2009. His album *My World* matched that success, selling more than 137,000 copies within a week of hitting stores. Bieber broke into the *Billboard* Top 10 in early 2010 with "Baby," which also featured Ludcris. Bieber soon released *My World 2.0* (2010), which offered his growing fan base ten new songs.

In 2011, Bieber took to the big screen in the concert documentary *Never Say Never*. His fans crowded movie theaters to catch him in action on stage and get a glimpse of his life behind the scenes. The movie, which eventually earned more than \$73 million at the box office, also had guest appearances by [KanyeWest](#), [Miley Cyrus](#) and Bieber's musical mentor Usher. That same year,



Bieber released an album featuring his own take on such holiday classics as "All I Want For Christmas Is," his duet with [Mariah Carey](#).

Bieber had his biggest hit single to date in April 2012 with "Boyfriend." The song appears on his latest album *Believe* released in June.

Personal Life

Teen idol Justin Bieber broke the hearts of many of his young female fans in 2010 when he started dating television actress and singer [Selena Gomez](#). It hasn't been easy for Gomez to be Bieber's girlfriend. She has been accosted by some of his devoted followers. There were even death threats against her posted on Twitter after the pair was photographed kissing while on vacation in 2011.

While still only in his teens, Bieber has survived his first public scandal. A woman filed suit against Bieber in 2011, claiming that he was the father of her child. But a DNA test proved that the young pop star was not the father and the woman dropped her lawsuit. Bieber sang about the scandal in the song "Maria."



Appendix 12

Ancient Origins of Halloween

Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced sow-in). The Celts, who lived 2,000 years ago in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom and northern France, celebrated their new year on November 1. This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death. Celts believed that on the night before the new year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred. On the night of October 31 they celebrated Samhain, when it was believed that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth. In addition to causing trouble and damaging crops, Celts thought that the presence of the otherworldly spirits made it easier for the Druids, or Celtic priests, to make predictions about the future. For a people entirely dependent on the volatile natural world, these prophecies were an important source of comfort and direction during the long, dark winter.

To commemorate the event, Druids built huge sacred bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes. When the celebration was



over, they re-lit their hearth fires, which they had extinguished earlier that evening, from the sacred bonfire to help protect them during the coming winter.

By 43 A.D., the Roman Empire had conquered the majority of Celtic territory. In the course of the four hundred years that they ruled the Celtic lands, two festivals of Roman origin were combined with the traditional Celtic celebration of Samhain. The first was Feralia, a day in late October when the Romans traditionally commemorated the passing of the dead. The second was a day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple and the incorporation of this celebration into Samhain probably explains the tradition of "bobbing" for apples that is practiced today on Halloween.

On May 13, 609 A.D., Pope Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon in Rome in honor of all Christian martyrs, and the Catholic feast of All Martyrs Day was established in the Western church. Pope Gregory III (731–741) later expanded the festival to include all saints as well as all martyrs, and moved the observance from May 13 to November 1. By the 9th century the influence of Christianity had spread into Celtic lands, where it gradually blended with and supplanted the older Celtic rites. In 1000 A.D., the church would make November 2 All Souls' Day, a day to honor the dead. It is widely believed today that the church was attempting to replace the Celtic festival of the dead with a



related, but church-sanctioned holiday. All Souls Day was celebrated similarly to Samhain, with big bonfires, parades, and dressing up in costumes as saints, angels and devils. The All Saints Day celebration was also called All-hallows or All-hallowmas (from Middle English Alholowmesse meaning All Saints' Day) and the night before it, the traditional night of Samhain in the Celtic religion, began to be called All-hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween.

Halloween Comes to America

Celebration of Halloween was extremely limited in colonial New England because of the rigid Protestant belief systems there. Halloween was much more common in Maryland and the southern colonies. As the beliefs and customs of different European ethnic groups as well as the American Indians meshed, a distinctly American version of Halloween began to emerge. The first celebrations included "play parties," public events held to celebrate the harvest, where neighbors would share stories of the dead, tell each other's fortunes, dance and sing. Colonial Halloween festivities also featured the telling of ghost stories and mischief-making of all kinds. By the middle of the nineteenth century, annual autumn festivities were common, but Halloween was not yet celebrated everywhere in the country.



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In the second half of the nineteenth century, America was flooded with new immigrants. These new immigrants, especially the millions of Irish fleeing Ireland's potato famine of 1846, helped to popularize the celebration of Halloween nationally. Taking from Irish and English traditions, Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today's "trick-or-treat" tradition. Young women believed that on Halloween they could divine the name or appearance of their future husband by doing tricks with yarn, apple parings or mirrors.

In the late 1800s, there was a move in America to mold Halloween into a holiday more about community and neighborly get-togethers than about ghosts, pranks and witchcraft. At the turn of the century, Halloween parties for both children and adults became the most common way to celebrate the day. Parties focused on games, foods of the season and festive costumes. Parents were encouraged by newspapers and community leaders to take anything "frightening" or "grotesque" out of Halloween celebrations. Because of these efforts, Halloween lost most of its superstitious and religious overtones by the beginning of the twentieth century.

By the 1920s and 1930s, Halloween had become a secular, but community-centered holiday, with parades and town-wide parties as the featured entertainment. Despite the best efforts of many schools and communities,



vandalism began to plague Halloween celebrations in many communities during this time. By the 1950s, town leaders had successfully limited vandalism and Halloween had evolved into a holiday directed mainly at the young. Due to the high numbers of young children during the fifties baby boom, parties moved from town civic centers into the classroom or home, where they could be more easily accommodated. Between 1920 and 1950, the centuries-old practice of trick-or-treating was also revived. Trick-or-treating was a relatively inexpensive way for an entire community to share the Halloween celebration. In theory, families could also prevent tricks being played on them by providing the neighborhood children with small treats. A new American tradition was born, and it has continued to grow. Today, Americans spend an estimated \$6 billion annually on Halloween, making it the country's second largest commercial holiday.

Today's Halloween Traditions

The American Halloween tradition of "trick-or-treating" probably dates back to the early All Souls' Day parades in England. During the festivities, poor citizens would beg for food and families would give them pastries called "soul cakes" in return for their promise to pray for the family's dead relatives. The distribution of soul cakes was encouraged by the church as a way to replace the ancient practice of leaving food and wine for roaming spirits. The practice, which was



referred to as "going a-souling" was eventually taken up by children who would visit the houses in their neighborhood and be given ale, food, and money.

The tradition of dressing in costume for Halloween has both European and Celtic roots. Hundreds of years ago, winter was an uncertain and frightening time. Food supplies often ran low and, for the many people afraid of the dark, the short days of winter were full of constant worry. On Halloween, when it was believed that ghosts came back to the earthly world, people thought that they would encounter ghosts if they left their homes. To avoid being recognized by these ghosts, people would wear masks when they left their homes after dark so that the ghosts would mistake them for fellow spirits. On Halloween, to keep ghosts away from their houses, people would place bowls of food outside their homes to appease the ghosts and prevent them from attempting to enter.

Halloween Superstitions

Halloween has always been a holiday filled with mystery, magic and superstition. It began as a Celtic end-of-summer festival during which people felt especially close to deceased relatives and friends. For these friendly spirits, they set places at the dinner table, left treats on doorsteps and along the side of the road and lit candles to help loved ones find their way back to the spirit world. Today's Halloween ghosts are often depicted as more fearsome and malevolent,



and our customs and superstitions are scarier too. We avoid crossing paths with black cats, afraid that they might bring us bad luck. This idea has its roots in the Middle Ages, when many people believed that witches avoided detection by turning themselves into cats. We try not to walk under ladders for the same reason. This superstition may have come from the ancient Egyptians, who believed that triangles were sacred; it also may have something to do with the fact that walking under a leaning ladder tends to be fairly unsafe. And around Halloween, especially, we try to avoid breaking mirrors, stepping on cracks in the road or spilling salt.

But what about the Halloween traditions and beliefs that today's trick-or-treaters have forgotten all about? Many of these obsolete rituals focused on the future instead of the past and the living instead of the dead. In particular, many had to do with helping young women identify their future husbands and reassuring them that they would someday—with luck, by next Halloween—be married. In 18th-century Ireland, a matchmaking cook might bury a ring in her mashed potatoes on Halloween night, hoping to bring true love to the diner who found it. In Scotland, fortune-tellers recommended that an eligible young woman name a hazelnut for each of her suitors and then toss the nuts into the fireplace. The nut that burned to ashes rather than popping or exploding, the story went, represented the girl's future husband. (In some versions of this legend,



confusingly, the opposite was true: The nut that burned away symbolized a love that would not last.) Another tale had it that if a young woman ate a sugary concoction made out of walnuts, hazelnuts and nutmeg before bed on Halloween night she would dream about her future husband. Young women tossed apple-peels over their shoulders, hoping that the peels would fall on the floor in the shape of their future husbands' initials; tried to learn about their futures by peering at egg yolks floating in a bowl of water; and stood in front of mirrors in darkened rooms, holding candles and looking over their shoulders for their husbands' faces. Other rituals were more competitive. At some Halloween parties, the first guest to find a burr on a chestnut-hunt would be the first to marry; at others, the first successful apple-bobber would be the first down the aisle.

Of course, whether we're asking for romantic advice or trying to avoid seven years of bad luck, each one of these Halloween superstitions relies on the good will of the very same "spirits" whose presence the early Celts felt so keenly.



Appendix 13

History of the Jack O'Lantern



The Irish brought the tradition of the Jack O'Lantern to America. But, the original Jack O'Lantern was not a pumpkin. The Jack O'Lantern legend goes back hundreds of years in Irish History. As the story goes, Stingy Jack was a miserable, old drunk who liked to play tricks on everyone: family, friends, his mother and even the Devil himself. One day, he tricked the Devil into climbing up an apple tree. Once the Devil climbed up the apple tree, Stingy Jack hurriedly placed crosses around the trunk of the tree. The Devil was then unable to get down the tree. Stingy Jack made the Devil promise him not to take his soul when he died. Once the devil promised not to take his soul, Stingy Jack removed the crosses and let the Devil down.

Many years later, when Jack finally died, he went to the pearly gates of Heaven and was told by Saint Peter that he was too mean and too cruel, and had led a miserable and worthless life on earth. He was not allowed to enter heaven. He then went down to Hell and the Devil. The Devil kept his promise and would not

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allow him to enter Hell. Now Jack was scared and had nowhere to go but to wander about forever in the darkness between heaven and hell. He asked the Devil how he could leave as there was no light. The Devil tossed him an ember from the flames of Hell to help him light his way. Jack placed the ember in a hollowed out Turnip, one of his favorite foods which he always carried around with him whenever he could steal one. For that day onward, Stingy Jack roamed the earth without a resting place, lighting his way as he went with his "Jack O'Lantern".

On all Hallow's eve, the Irish hollowed out Turnips, rutabagas, gourds, potatoes and beets. They placed a light in them to ward off evil spirits and keep Stingy Jack away. These were the original Jack O'Lanterns. In the 1800's a couple of waves of Irish immigrants came to America. The Irish immigrants quickly discovered that Pumpkins were bigger and easier to carve out. So they used pumpkins for Jack O'Lanterns.



Appendix 14

THE HISTORY OF PUMPKIN CARVING



Without a doubt the most recognizable symbol of Halloween is a pumpkin carved into a jack-o-lantern. To understand the origins of how pumpkin carving began and what it really means we must first take a look at the holiday itself. How long has Halloween been around? Have there always been pumpkins carved? Here are some answers!

For most of the general population it is known as Halloween and is a night for dressing up, telling ghost stories, having spooky parties, trick-or-treating and pumpkin carving. What most people don't know is that Halloween is actually based on an ancient Celtic holiday known as Samhain (pronounced "sow wan"), which means "summer's end".

It was the end of the Celtic year, starting at sundown on October 31st and going through to sundown November 1st. It was a night to honor loved ones that had



passed on since the veil between their realm and ours is at it's thinnest on that night.

Celebrated for centuries by the Celts of old, Witches and many other nature based religions, it is the most magical night of the year. It is the Witches' New



Year, and the Last Harvest. Although the religious significance of it has passed for the general public, Halloween is a "magical" night for all!



On this magical night, glowing jack-o-lanterns, carved from turnips or gourds, were set on porches and in windows to welcome deceased loved ones, but also to act as protection against malevolent spirits. Burning lumps of coal were used inside as a source of light, later to be replaced by candles.

When European settlers, particularly the Irish, arrived in American they found the native pumpkin to be larger, easier to carve and seemed the perfect choice for jack-o-lanterns. Halloween didn't really catch on big in this country until the late 1800's and has been celebrated in so many ways ever since!



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Pumpkins are indigenous to the western hemisphere and were completely unknown in Europe before the time of Columbus. In 1584, the French explorer Jacques Cartier reported from the St. Lawrence region that he had found "gros melons", which was translated into English as "ponpions," or pumpkins. In fact, pumpkins have been grown in America for over 5,000 years. Native Americans called pumpkins "isquotersquash."

Did you know that pumpkins are not a vegetable - they are a fruit! Pumpkins, like gourds, and other varieties of squash are all members of the Cucurbitaceae family, which also includes cucumbers, gherkins, and melons



Appendix 15



TRICK-OR-TREATING

Trick-or-treating is the most widely recognized Halloween *tradition*. It is an activity in which children go from house to house asking for treats (i.e. candy) with the question, "Trick or treat?" *Trick-or-treating* is done with children donning [Halloween costumes](#) and it is one of the main traditions of Halloween. It has become socially required that if one lives in a neighborhood with children to purchase candy in preparation for trick-or-treaters.

Trick-or-treating declined in the late 1970s and early '80s with the tainted candy scare. Hospitals even got involved offering free x-ray scans of [Halloween candy](#). This turned out to largely be an urban legend and trick-or-treating is making somewhat of a comeback



THE HISTORY OF TRICK-OR-TREATING

The American tradition of "*trick-or-treating*" probably dates back to the early All Souls' Day parades in England. During the festivities, poor citizens would beg for food and families would give them pastries called "**soul cakes**" in return for their promise to pray for the family's dead relatives.

The distribution of soul cakes was encouraged by the church as a way to replace the ancient practice of leaving food and wine for the returning spirits on Halloween night. The practice, which was referred to as "**going a-souling**" was eventually taken up by children who would visit the houses in their neighborhood and be given ale, food, and money.

The tradition of dressing in costumes and masks on Halloween finds its roots in both European and Celtic history. On Halloween, when it was believed that ghosts came back to the earthly realm, people thought they would encounter the ghosts if they left their homes. Therefore, to avoid being seen by these ghosts, people would wear masks when they left their homes after dark so that the ghosts would mistake them for fellow spirits



TRICK-OR-TREATING FACTOIDS:

- Kids' favorite candy stops are homes that offer “**anything made with chocolate**” (68 percent) followed by **lollipops** (9 percent), **gummy candy** (7 percent) and **bubble gum or chewing gum** (7 percent). (Reported by National Confectioners Association)
- The National Confectioners Association reported in 2005 that *80 percent* of adults in America planned to give out candy to trick-or-treaters, and that *93 percent* of children planned to go trick-or-treating.
- For its historic neighborhood gatherings and holiday spirit, National Confectioners Association also crowned **Boston** the 2006 Trick-or-Treat Capital of the United States.
- Kids' **least** favorite items to get in their trick-or-treat bags were **fruit** and salty snacks like **chips** and **pretzels**.



Appendix 16

Halloween Symbols

Halloween is not just innocent entertainment. It's symbols and practices breathes new life into the dark rituals and symbols of past civilizations. Many of its symbols are universal; they are familiar to people in many parts of the world. Yet, each cultural group sees the images from its own perspectives.

1. To one group, they symbolize various forms of death: physical and spiritual, scary or affirming.
2. To another, they point to the innocuous thrills and titillations that go with what they believe to be little more than a fun, fantasy world.
3. To a third group, they represent genuine evil -- the lures of an occult world view manipulated by [Satan](#), who now as always masquerades as "an angel of light." In other words, the meaning depends on a person's beliefs and world view.

The symbols below include images from Aztec religious art, from Magic the Gathering cards, from a Japanese Sailor Moon comic book, from a Dungeons & Dragons manual and from ads for Halloween treats and costumes. This mix shows the global popularity of these symbols and reminds us that, while



Halloween clashes with God's guidelines, it fits the world and human nature very well.

That's why the mastermind behind this spiritual war keeps using the same tactics through the centuries. Satan's main strategy has always been to tempt people to love what God hates, prompt them to pursue his enticing path, and deceive them into thinking that his "new" way is as good, or even better, than the old ways God has shown us. Since his strategies don't change, God's warning in Proverbs 14:12 is as relevant now as it was in King Solomon's days:

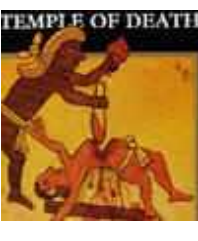
"There is a way *that seems* right to a man, but its end *is* the way of death."

(Proverbs 14:12)

Most people follow the masses, and the masses follow the media -- especially when it promotes thrills and adventures that feed the lust for forbidden thrills.

The occult has always focused on gory images of violence, death and destruction. We see it in today's media, music, and movies. As people become desensitized to occult violence and horror, the images in popular entertainment grow increasingly and indescribably evil. Yet, this is old news. Thousands of years ago, God warned us, **"All those who hate Me love death."** (Proverbs 8:36)



	BATS: They eat mosquitoes and cause little harm, but these small nocturnal mammals have a bad reputation because of their infamous cousin, the vampire bat. The only mammal that feeds on blood, this native of Central and South America uses sharp incisor teeth to cut the holes needed to suck blood from its victim. No wonder bats have been linked to death, vampires and occult rituals in the West. But in the East, they often represent good luck.
	BROOMSTICK: Now more exciting than ever because of Harry Potter and his high-flying Firebolt, it has been linked to witchcraft and magic for centuries.
	BLACK CAT: This picture from a Sailor Moon comic book serves as a reminder of the universal blending of symbols. Like Japan, Western superstitions link the black cat to the world of "white" spells and magic as well as to darker occultism. Notice the moon-shaped symbol of goddess spirituality on the forehead of Sailor Moon's popular talking cat.
	BLOOD: The bloody knives, victims, and vampires featured in today's popular games, movies and Halloween parties show the timeless allure of gore and violence. The Celts, like other ancient cultures, believed that the gods that controlled the forces of nature craved blood sacrifices -- human or animal. This picture shows an Aztec priest lifting the heart he just cut from the chest of a living sacrifice. It could as well have been a Mayan priest or any other devotee of the cruel forces from the world of the occult.
	EYE: If you waited past midnight at your local bookstore for the fourth Harry Potter book, you may have received a spooky eye that looked like this Halloween cookie. Perhaps it belonged to Mad Moody, the "black arts" teacher at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Similar eyes were featured in ghost stories, horror movies, and the religious art of countless cultures long before Harry Potter appeared on the scene. (See Skull)
	FIRE: Has symbolized warmth and protection as well as death and destruction to cultures around the world. During Samhain, the Druids used it for protection against bad spirits and for ritual sacrifices (both animal or human) to their gods. This Magic the Gathering card states: "Conjured from the bowels of hell, the fiery wall forms an impassable barrier, searing the soul of any creature attempting to pass...." <i>Not a very nice thought!</i>



	GHOSTS: A universal symbol for departed spirits and occult visitations. These cookies, like the ghost-shaped sweets served at Mexico's Day of the Dead celebrations, tend to minimize the reality of spiritual warfare in post-Christian America. The decorative ghosts may be cute, but to the countless victims of demonic bondage and oppression, the spirit world is no joke.
	GRAVESTONE: Christians may see it as a memorial to those who died, but others see it as an exciting symbol of death -- and as the place where the world of the living meets the world of departed spirits. Since Halloween, like the Mexican Day of the Dead, celebrates visits from the spirit world, these gravestone cookies fit both feasts.
	PUMPKIN: On the British isles, the scary face of the jack-o-lantern was used to frighten away evil spirits and cast a "spell of protection over the household." The Celts carved the frightening faces into gourds or turnips, not the American pumpkin.
	SKULLS, BONES & SKELETONS: Symbols of death, disease and the shortness of earthly life. The skull & crossbones -- whether pictured on a bottle of poison or emblazoned on the black flag of a pirate ship -- raised fear of death. This detail from a Tibetan painting shows Yama, the Buddhist Lord of Death, with five skulls over his head. (Remember the Hindu goddess Kali who wore a necklace of skulls below her bloody teeth and tongue.) Notice the bulging eyes and the curving line which shows the upper edge of a Buddhist Wheel of Life.
	SPIDER and WEB: To many earth-centered cultures the spider and its web symbolized the weaving of life and the cyclical ways of nature. But in the context of Halloween, it points to dark, scary places, haunted by ghosts and hidden from light and dust mops.
	HARRY POTTER'S LIGHTNING BOLT SCAR: From Norway's Vikings to Japanese Shintoist, pagans around the world have worshiped the gods of thunder with awe and dread. The lightning bolt continues to represent mysterious and frightening forces. The lightning bolt scar on Harry's forehead marks him as a wizard of unusual power and sends him warnings when danger approaches. Along with a purchase of the fourth Harry Potter book, many fans received lightning bolt stickers for their own foreheads, marking them as informal members of Harry Potter's worldwide fan club.



WITCH: The meaning and implication of witch and witchcraft have changed with the centuries. To many, it still means an old crone with moles and straggly hair casting evil spells on children and silhouetted in front of a full moon on her broomstick. But a more realistic image shows feminist or environmental activists (men or women) who seek wisdom and self empowerment from a contemporary blend of the world's earth-centered religions -- Hinduism, Native American Spirituality, European witchcraft, etc.. Whether they join groups such as the Bay Area Pagan Assemblies in California or the Pagan Federation in England, they are proud to be called Pagan, Witch or Wiccan. They share a common interest in spells, magic ("white", not black) and full moon rituals -- all set in a framework of a new cosmology based on a personal or impersonal pantheistic goddess. (See [A Twist of Faith, Chapter 2](#))



WIZARD: A master of occult knowledge and powers who uses timeless and universal rituals, magic formulas and spells to connect with the spirit world and manipulate its forces. His role and prestige corresponds to that of the shaman or witchdoctor in animist tribes, the priest or guru of New Agers, or the Druids who led the Celts in spiritual matters while advising in political matters. This picture shows today's blending of the cultures. Like a Native American medicine man, the wizard carries ceremonial feathers in a cluster below his waist, while his hand holds a rod that resembles a peace pipe embellished with feathers.