



Halloween – Michael Henderson

I'm sure you all know and have heard of Halloween before. But have you ever wondered what Halloween is like in America? Today let's talk about it!

I think the biggest Halloween difference between Japan and America is trick-or-treating. Trick-or-treating is when young children wear costumes and walk to many houses around their neighborhood. They will ring the doorbell (呼び鈴) and yell "trick-or-treat!", with the owner of the house giving the children candy! Children will often use big trick-or-treat bags, but common alternatives (代わりに) are big pillowcases. The best place to trick-or-treat are in rich neighborhoods where people give BIG candy bars!

For some reason, there is a big fear in America that people will poison (毒を入れる) or put razors in children's candy. Even though this almost never happens, many parents will still check their children's candy before they eat it. I think it's from the media scaring people.

Other common traditions are Halloween parties and decorating houses. People go crazy decorating their homes on Halloween, so it's fun to drive around and see all the decorations (飾り). Americans also love getting creative with Halloween parties, and often make Halloween themed food and desserts!

Carving pumpkins is another big tradition. We cut open the pumpkin and take out all the innards (中身) and seeds. Then we carve out (彫る) a design on the front and put a candle inside. The finished result is called a Jack-O-Lantern! We often roast (焼く) the seeds afterwards and eat them as a snack!

Birthday Parties – Katelyn Sondereker

Whenever I smell candle smoke, I think of birthdays. When I was little, my mom would make homemade birthday cakes in the shape of a teddy bear or a sailboat. My parents would give us presents and we would open them one by one. I always remember birthdays being full of happiness.

Birthdays in America are usually celebrated with big parties. Typically, children in elementary school have birthday parties that they invite their classmates and family members to. The parties often have fun games and a theme (like superheroes or princesses or Disney movies) and the decorations (飾り), food, and cake will match the theme. Once the candles are lit, everyone sings "Happy Birthday" and the person whose birthday it is makes a wish (お願いごとをする) and blows out the candles. But you cannot tell anyone what you wished for, or it won't come true!

When children get older, like in middle school and high school, birthday parties are smaller because they only invite their close friends to celebrate their birthday. In university, I usually celebrated my birthday by eating a nice dinner and having cake with just my family. Instead of a birthday party, my friends at university would individually spend time with me and give me small gifts and birthday cards to celebrate.

Like most things in America, how people celebrate birthdays will be different for each person. Because my family always celebrated birthdays in a big way, to this day birthdays are a very important time for me to show people that I love and care about them.

How do you celebrate birthdays in Japan? Come talk to us about it!

A house in America on Halloween



A racecar themed kids' birthday party



_____ year(s) old

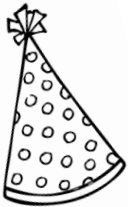


_____ year(s) old



_____ year(s) old

How old do you think Kate is?



Each picture is from a **different birthday**.
How old do you think she is in each picture?



Come tell Kate-sensei your guesses!
If you are right, you will get a PRIZE!

Did you take pictures with us at Bunkasai?!



We both had so much fun at Bunkasai! We were amazed by all your hard work and spectacular performances! As we were walking around, we stopped and talked with many students, and took lots of photos. But afterwards, we realized we had no idea what the photos looked like! So, if you have any photos with us, please let us know!!! We would love to see them. 😊

If you want to send us the photos, we can add you to the ALT & Students group on Classi. Please let us know so we can add you to the group.



Also, as always, if you want to talk to us in-person, you can always write your names on the ALT whiteboard outside the teacher's room!



Happy Halloween!