The Halloween Quiz for Work

Twenty-four questions in four rounds, built for an office that wants the costumes but not the gore. Nothing here needs a horror habit or a strong stomach.

4 rounds · 24 questions · about 35 min

How to run it

1. Print one host sheet for yourself and one team answer sheet per table. The host sheet has the answers on it — keep it face down.
2. Four to five people per team works best. Mix departments, or the quiz quietly turns into a meeting.
3. Read each question out loud twice, then give about forty seconds. Rounds two and four go faster than the others.
4. Teams swap sheets at the end of each round and mark each other while you read the answers out. One point each, twenty-four in total.
5. Round four is true or false, so a team that has fallen behind can still come back — worth saving it for last.

ROUND 1 — Old customs

Where the things the office is about to do actually came from.

1. Halloween falls on the evening before which Christian feast?

- **A** **All Saints' Day**
- B Candlemas
- C Michaelmas
- D All Souls' Day

Answer: A — All Saints' Day

Worth adding: All Saints' Day is 1 November. All Souls' Day follows on 2 November, which is why the three days are often treated as one season.

2. In medieval Britain, the poor went door to door at this time of year offering prayers for the dead in return for what?

Answer: Soul cakes

Worth adding: Small spiced cakes, each one said to be a soul freed from purgatory. The custom was called souling, and it is the nearest ancestor of trick or treat.

3. Which US state grows by far the most pumpkins?

- A Ohio
- B Texas
- **C** **Illinois**
- D California

Answer: C — Illinois

Worth adding: Most of them never see a carving knife: they are grown for canned pumpkin, much of it processed around Morton, Illinois.

4. Which British night of fireworks comes just five days after Halloween?

A St Andrew's Night
B Twelfth Night
C Burns Night
D Bonfire Night

Answer: D — Bonfire Night

Worth adding: 5 November, Guy Fawkes Night. In much of Britain it was the bigger autumn event until Halloween caught up.

5. Candy corn is striped in which three colours?

Answer: Yellow, orange and white

Worth adding: From the wide end to the tip. It has been made in the United States since the 1880s.

6. What is the fear of spiders called?

A Agoraphobia
B Arachnophobia
C Claustrophobia
D Acrophobia

Answer: B — Arachnophobia

Worth adding: From the Greek arachne. Agoraphobia is open or crowded places, claustrophobia small spaces, acrophobia heights.

ROUND 2 — Songs and characters

The ones that come out of the cupboard every October.

7. Who sang the 1962 novelty hit Monster Mash?

A Alice Cooper
B Ray Parker Jr.
C Screamin' Jay Hawkins
D Bobby "Boris" Pickett

Answer: D — Bobby "Boris" Pickett

Worth adding: He did the vocal as an impression of Boris Karloff, hence the nickname. Ray Parker Jr. is the Ghostbusters theme.

8. Which actor delivers the spoken verse at the end of Michael Jackson's Thriller?

A Vincent Price
B Boris Karloff
C Bela Lugosi
D Christopher Lee

Answer: A — Vincent Price

Worth adding: Recorded in a couple of takes, and by most accounts he was paid a flat fee rather than a share.

9. "Who you gonna call?" is the hook of the theme from which film?

A Beetlejuice
B Ghostbusters
C Casper
D The Addams Family

Answer: B — Ghostbusters

Worth adding: Ray Parker Jr., 1984. It went to number one in the United States.

10. In The Addams Family, what is the name of the disembodied hand?

A Lurch
B Itt
C Thing
D Pugsley

Answer: C — Thing

Worth adding: Lurch is the butler, Cousin Itt is the one made entirely of hair, and Pugsley is the son.

11. What is the name of the van in Scooby-Doo?

Answer: The Mystery Machine

Worth adding: The gang's case always ends the same way: a mask comes off, and the ghost turns out to be a person with a property scheme.

12. Which fictional detective's costume needs only a deerstalker hat and a magnifying glass?

A Hercule Poirot
B Miss Marple
C Inspector Clouseau
D Sherlock Holmes

Answer: D — Sherlock Holmes

Worth adding: The deerstalker never appears in the stories' text — it came from Sidney Paget's illustrations.

ROUND 3 — Halloween films for everyone

Family films only. Nobody needs to have watched anything through their fingers.

13. In Hocus Pocus, what brings the Sanderson sisters back on Halloween night?

Answer: Someone lights the black flame candle

Worth adding: Max lights it to impress a girl, having been told it was nonsense.

14. In It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown, who waits all night in the pumpkin patch?

A Linus
B Snoopy
C Lucy
D Charlie Brown

Answer: A — Linus

Worth adding: Sally waits with him and misses trick-or-treating, and does not let him forget it.

15. In Monsters, Inc., what does the factory collect from children to power the city?

A Teeth
B Screams
C Dreams
D Tears

Answer: B — Screams

Worth adding: Until they find out that laughter is ten times more powerful, and the scare floor becomes a laugh floor.

16. How many times do you have to say Beetlejuice's name to summon him?

A Five
B Seven
C Three
D Two

Answer: C — Three

17. In Coraline, what does the Other Mother have instead of eyes?

A Coins
B Marbles
C Keys
D Buttons

Answer: D — Buttons

Worth adding: And she wants to sew a pair on Coraline. Based on the Neil Gaiman novella.

18. Casper is famously what kind of ghost?

A Sleepy
B Hungry
C Friendly
D Shy

Answer: C — Friendly

ROUND 4 — True or false

Fast round. Read them straight through with no pause and mark at the end.

19. True or false: botanically, a pumpkin is a fruit.

A True
B False

Answer: A — True

Worth adding: True. It grows from the flower and carries the seeds, which makes it a fruit — a kind of berry, technically.

20. True or false: bats are blind.

A True
B False

Answer: B — False

Worth adding: False. Bats can see; many species also find their way by echolocation, which is where the myth comes from.

21. True or false: in Mary Shelley's novel, Frankenstein is the name of the monster.

A True

B False

Answer: B — False

Worth adding: False. Frankenstein is the scientist. The creature never gets a name.

22. True or false: the escape artist Harry Houdini died on Halloween.

A True

B False

Answer: A — True

Worth adding: True — 31 October 1926. His widow held séances on the anniversary for ten years, waiting for a message that never came.

23. True or false: candy corn was first sold under the name Chicken Feed.

A True

B False

Answer: A — True

Worth adding: True. It was marketed to a country where most people knew what corn kernels in a feed bag looked like.

24. True or false: the people convicted in the Salem witch trials were burned at the stake.

A True

B False

Answer: B — False

Worth adding: False, and the most confidently wrong answer in this quiz. Nineteen were hanged; one man was pressed to death with stones. Burning was the punishment on the European continent; English law, and the colonies with it, hanged witches.