

MindPlays Connections™

HAPPY HALLOWEEN



Brain teaser fun: trivia quizzes, word games, discussion questions, and imagination and reminiscing exercises



Welcome to Wiser Now's MindPlay Connections™

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If you have exercises, resources, or ideas you want to add, please feel free to email Kathy@WiserNow.com.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

“Happy Halloween” is the theme of this **MindPlay Connections™**. Say hello to trick-or-treaters, pumpkin carving, apple bobbing, and much more fun than fear.

This issue is one of an ever expanding list of dozens that can be accessed at <http://shop.wisernow.com>. It makes a great accompaniment to all fall and other seasonal titles such as:

- Fascinated by Fall
- Mysterious Fun
- November Celebrations
- School Daze

The goal of MindPlay Connections™ is always twofold:

1) We want you to make playful new connections in your brain, because learning new information builds new brain pathways – as opposed to retrieving answers you already know, which merely deepens ruts.

2) We want you to strengthen your connections with others by sharing the exercises with a partner or group, because having strong social networks is one of the most important components of wellbeing at any age.

Feel free to go beyond the suggested uses. For example, many of the exercises are likely to prompt reminiscences that can open up additional discussions.

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Trivia quiz: Halloween Customs

What do you know about Halloween's history? Take this quiz and find out.

Don't let this quiz spook you. Answer as well as you can.

1. Halloween is based on a 2000-year old Celtic holiday known as Samhein (pronounced "sow-wan"), which means

- a. Summer's end ____ b. Saints preserve us ____



2. Traditionally, the Celts lit bonfires on October 31st to
- a. Celebrate the harvest and clear debris from the fields for the next spring ____
- b. Keep away the ghosts of the dead whom they believed returned on that night ____

3. The Romans also had a late October holiday which they brought to parts of today's England, Ireland and Wales.

- a. It honored Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees and was symbolized by the apple. ____
- b. It honored Dionysus, also known as Bacchus, the god of the grape harvest and wine-making who was known for wild celebrating. ____

4. Centuries later, the Roman Catholic Pope Boniface IV declared November 1st, All Saints Day, a time to honor saints and martyrs, and November 2nd, a time to honor the dead, that together with the evening of October 31st became known as All-hallowmas.

- a. The Pope was attempting to create a serious holiday marked by praying and church services to counter the pagan holidays. ____
- b. The Pope was simply repurposing the pagan holidays; bonfires, parades and dressing up as angels, saints and devils were all still encouraged. ____

5. The Puritans who settled America's New England colonies discouraged celebrations like Halloween, but Maryland and the southern colonies celebrated the end of the harvest with dancing, singing, the telling of ghost stories and fortunes, and mischief-making that was not so different from the ancient Celts.

- a. True ____
- b. False ____



6. The strongest influence on the American version of Halloween came from the Irish immigrants who fled Ireland's potato famine in the mid-1800's. Interestingly, the Irish in Ireland no longer create jack o' lanterns or go trick or treating.

a. True ____

b. False ____

7. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, there was a movement in the U.S. to take the frightening, superstitious and religious aspects out of Halloween and use it instead for building community through neighborly get-togethers.

a. True ____

b. False ____

8. By the 1950s, at the height of the American Baby Boom, Halloween became primarily focused on the young, and in addition to the popular trick-or-treating in every neighborhood, it entered the classroom in the form of decorations and costume parties.

a. Decades later, adults who want to celebrate are still out of luck. ____

b. Merchants and restaurant owners do a brisk business on Halloween from adults who love a dress-up party. ____



9. In Mexico, Latin America and Spain, October 31st is still the beginning of a 3-day religious festival focused on honoring the dead, whom many believe return to their earthly homes at that time. Which of the following are common customs in these countries?

a. Tidying and decorating gravesites with flowers and streamers ____

b. Gathering at the gravesites for picnics, reminiscing and musical entertainment ____

c. Constructing a home altar with photos of the deceased relatives, and providing flowers, food and drink for them ____

d. Putting out a wash basin so the spirit can wash before feasting ____

e. All of the above ____

10. The tradition of wearing Halloween masks stems from the ancient Celtic practice of people disguising themselves in the hope of being seen as fellow spirits by the ghosts they believed were roaming about on October 31st.

a. True ____

b. False ____

Answers:

1. a

3. a

5. a

7. a

9. e

2. b

4. b

6. b

8. b

10. a



Trivia quiz: Pumpkin Hodge-Podge

What do you know about the colorful fall symbol of pumpkins?

What's the pumpkin truth?

1. Pumpkins are native to _____ where they have grown for at least five thousand years.
 - a. Africa ____
 - b. North America ____
2. Pumpkins are now found on six of the seven continents; they don't grow in Antarctica.
 - a. True ____
 - b. False ____
3. They are a member of the gourd family which includes:
 - a. Cucumbers, squash and zucchini ____
 - b. Cantaloupe, honey dew and watermelons ____
 - c. Both a. and b. ____
4. Pumpkins come in many varieties and some are blue, white and green.
 - a. True ____
 - b. False ____
5. Which parts of the pumpkin are edible?
 - a. Just the fleshy inside shell ____
 - b. The fleshy part plus the seeds ____
 - c. The leaves and flowers ____
 - d. All of the above ____
6. The Irish brought the idea of vegetable carving to America, but until they discovered how easy pumpkins were to carve, they used sweet potatoes.
 - a. True ____
 - b. False ____
7. The name jack o' lantern originates with the Celts. According to legend, Jack was a miserable man who had tricked the devil, and was forced to roam the earth endlessly. He used his lantern to keep evil spirits away.
 - a. True ____
 - b. False ____



Primary source: <http://www.history.com/topics/pumpkin-facts>

How do you mend a broken jack o' lantern? With a pumpkin patch!

Answers: 1. b 2. a 3. c 4. a 5. d 6. b (They used turnips) 7. a



Reminiscing: Pumpkin Pleasures

Share your thoughts

What pumpkin foods do you enjoy? (Pie, bread, cake, soup, etc.)

Do you or did you ever use fresh pumpkin for a recipe? How did it taste?

Did you ever (or do you still) carve jack-o-lanterns from pumpkins? Talk about the experience. (The mushy insides, choosing the right expression, lighting it, displaying it, seeing it get smashed)

How important is it to you to have your jack-o-lantern and eat it, too? (In other words, is canned pumpkin just fine with you?)

Pumpkin is a term of endearment, often pronounced “punkin”. Did anyone ever call you that? Who? Did you like it? Do you ever call others that?

Q: What do you get if you divide the circumference of a jack-o-lantern by its diameter?
A: Pumpkin Pi!



Trivia quiz: Not Necessarily Pie-Worthy

Pumpkins come in a great variety of sizes, shapes and colors, but most people only know the orange shapes that are suitable for carving, and farmers have been accommodating. Jack o' lantern pumpkins seldom yield the interior fruit that makes for yummy pies, breads, cakes, muffins, and soups. Following are the names of actual pumpkin varieties. Only one name in each list is my invention.

Can you identify the one pumpkin in each group with a fake name?

1. Group 1
 - a. Autumn Gold ____
 - b. Baby Boo ____
 - c. Big Moon ____
 - d. Carvin' Madness ____
2. Group 2
 - a. Captain Jack ____
 - b. Casper ____
 - c. Frosty ____
 - d. Funny Face ____
3. Group 3
 - a. Ghost Rider ____
 - b. Goblin Magic ____
 - c. Happy Jack ____
 - d. Harvest Moon ____
4. Group 4
 - a. Jack-Be-Quick ____
 - b. Jack-o-Lantern ____
 - c. Little Boo ____
 - d. Monster Mash ____
5. Group 5
 - a. Spooktacular ____
 - b. Trick or Treat ____
 - c. Tricky Jack ____
 - d. Witch's Light ____



Answers:

1. d 2. a 3. b 4. d 5. d

Word game: Halloween Hilarity

Part 1: Can you match the question to the punch line?

1. Why do demons and ghouls hang out together?

2. Where does a ghost go on Saturday night? _____
3. Why did the ghost go into the bar? _____
4. Why didn't the skeleton dance at the party? _____
5. What happens when a ghost gets lost in the fog?

6. What do you call a goblin who gets too close to a bonfire? _____
7. What is a ghost's favorite kind of street? _____
8. What do Italians eat on Halloween? _____
9. What do you get when you cross a black cat with a lemon? _____
10. What instrument do skeletons play? _____
11. What do ghosts eat for breakfast? _____
12. Why didn't the skeleton cross the road? _____

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| a. A dead end | g. Fettucinni Afraid-o |
| b. A sour-puss | h. For the Boos |
| c. A toasty ghosty | i. He had no body to dance with |
| d. Anywhere where he can boo-gie | j. He had no guts |
| e. Because demons are a ghouls best friend! | k. He is mist |
| f. Boo-Berries | l. Trom-BONE |



Do you believe?

Catching falling leaves in autumn will give you good luck in the coming year – one month of good luck for every leaf you catch.

Part 2: Can you match the question to the punchline?

13. What's it like to be kissed by a vampire? ____
14. Why are vampires like false teeth? ____
15. What's a ghost's favorite fast food? ____
16. Where does a ghost go on vacation? ____
17. What do they teach in witching school? ____
18. What do you call a witch's garage? ____
19. Why don't mummies take vacations? ____
20. What do you call a monster that poisons corn flakes? ____
21. Why do ghosts like to ride elevators? ____
22. What do the skeletons say before eating? ____
23. Why does a cemetery have to keep a fence around it? ____
24. Where do vampires keep their money? ____



- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| a. A blood bank | g. It raises their spirits |
| b. A broom closet | h. It's a pain in the neck |
| c. A cereal killer | i. Mali-boo |
| d. A guy with high blood pressure | j. Spelling |
| e. Because people are dying to get in | k. They all come out at night |
| f. Bone appetit | l. They're afraid they'll relax and unwind |

Answers, Part 1:

- | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. e | 3. h | 5. k | 7. a | 9. b | 11. f |
| 2. d | 4. i | 6. c | 8. g | 10. l | 12. j |

Answers, Part 2:

- | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 13.h | 15.d | 17.j | 19.l | 21.g | 23.e |
| 14.k | 16.i | 18.b | 20.c | 22.f | 24.a |

Just in case you're dying for more of this sick humor, go to:

<http://www.theholidayspot.com/halloween/jokes.htm> or

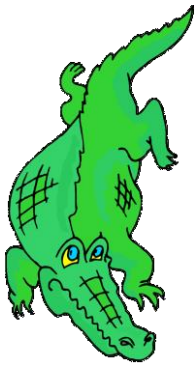
<http://www.halloween.com/halloween-jokes-1.php>

Trivia Quiz: True Scary Stories?

Urban legends are stories that spread like wildfire but may or may not be true. Learn more at <http://www.snopes.com/info/top25uls.asp>.

Can you tell which of the following stories are true?

1. An elderly woman, in an attempt to dry her just-bathed miniature poodle faster, put him in the microwave and pressed the defrost button.



a) True ____

b) False ____

2. Baby alligators from Florida that were flushed down a toilet, grew into a thriving colony of large alligators living in the New York City sewer system.

a) True ____

b) False ____

3. That little bit of crunch in Fig Newtons could be due to the bugs that inadvertently get into the fig paste.

a) True ____

b) False ____

4. A young boy died from eating six bags of Pop Rocks and a six-pack of Coca-Cola that exploded in his stomach, killing him instantly.

a) True ____

b) False ____

5. A drugged tourist awoke in his hotel room's ice-filled bathtub, the unwilling surgical victim of a kidney robbery.

a) True ____

b) False ____

6. Kopi Luwak, the world's most expensive coffee at U.S. \$75 per quarter pound, is harvested from the partially digested coffee beans found in the feces of the palm civet, a distant cousin of the mongoose.



a) True ____

b) False ____



7. A man who had purchased a large rare cactus in Mexico which he displayed in his living room, called the Department of Agriculture when it started vibrating. After many pointed questions the man was told to get out of the house as soon as possible, because the cactus was full of huge tarantulas and was about to explode.

a) True ____

b) False ____

8. In a 1999 joint project between Microsoft and AOL, users received \$1 to \$5 for each e-mail they forwarded to others. Within two weeks, participants received checks from Microsoft in amounts from \$800 to more than \$24,000.

a) True ____

b) False ____

9. While demonstrating the safety of the windows in a skyscraper, a lawyer fell to his death when the window he was pushing on gave way.

a) True ____

b) False ____

10. A man picked up a young female hitchhiker at an intersection late one night and drove her to the address she requested. When he pulled up to the house, he realized she had disappeared. He went to the house to ask about the girl, and the elderly couple living there informed him that the girl was their daughter, who had died many years ago in a car crash at that intersection.



a) True ____

b) False ____

Answers:

1. False, and let's keep it that way. No living thing is safe in a microwave oven!
2. False. This one has been around since the 1920s, but no alligators have ever actually been sighted!
3. True. The Food and Drug Administration allows for fig paste to have up to 13 insect heads per 100 grams. Because the fig flower relies upon wasps for pollination, many wasps end up harvested along with the figs, and are nearly impossible to eliminate entirely. Still, the crunch is mostly from the fig's seeds.
4. False. The combination could easily cause belching, but not exploding.
5. False. The story has been widely circulated for more than 10 years, but there is no record of it ever actually happening.
6. True. We can provide more details, but do you really want them?
7. False. Thank goodness. Although this legend had its origins in Europe more than 30 years ago, scientists have pointed out that this tale is impossible, because tarantulas live in holes in the ground and rarely venture to the surface.
8. False. So many inquiries were made to Microsoft about this one that Bill Gates himself issued statements explaining that this was an e-mail chain letter hoax.
9. True. Sadly, so for Toronto lawyer Garry Hoy, who fell 24 stories to his death in 1993.
10. False. This one is *really* old, and makes a great Halloween story, especially when the ghost leaves her scarf behind in the car.

Discussion: Do You Fear What I Fear?

Rationally or not, most of us are fearful of something. The basic definition of a phobia is an "...irrational, persistent fear of or an excessive avoidance of a specific object, some particular activity or situation." The American Psychiatric Association subdivides Phobic Disorders into the following three types:

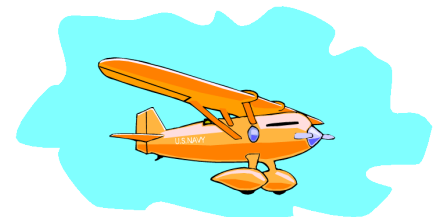
1. Agoraphobia: Related to panic attacks, the most common and severe of phobias.
2. Social phobia: fear of and avoidance of embarrassment or ridicule in social situations.
3. Simple phobia: fear of and avoidance of specific objects, situations or activities.

According to the Mayo Clinic website on phobias, children may develop them as early as age five, and usually those are type 3 phobias related to the natural environment – such as storms or certain animals – or bodily injury. (Brontophobia is fear of thunder and lightning.) Dr. Donald F. Dossey, Ph.D. has an article on his website called "Fear, Phobias and Stress." He notes, "We are born with only two emotions – love and fear – and born with only two fears – falling and loud noises." (Ligyrophobia = fear of loud noises) That would explain the common childhood fear of thunder. But many childhood fears are probably a reaction to reality. An aggressive dog can induce a fear of dogs. (Cynophobia) My brother chasing me with spiders is the origin of my fear of 8-legged creatures. (Arachnophobia).

The most common phobia – agoraphobia – usually does not appear until someone reaches the age of 20 or more. According to Wikipedia, agoraphobia is an anxiety disorder which primarily consists of the fear of experiencing a difficult or embarrassing situation from which the sufferer cannot escape. People with agoraphobia may experience severe panic attacks in situations where they feel trapped, insecure, out of control, or too far from their personal comfort zone. In severe cases, agoraphobics may be confined not only to their home, but they may even become a bed-bound recluse. Contrary to common misconceptions agoraphobic people are not frightened of open spaces or crowded spaces per se, but rather being in a space out of what they define as their "safety zone."

Agoraphobia is treatable and most people who seek treatment recover. Many of us have far less debilitating social fears – of making embarrassing mistakes (katagelophobia = fear of ridicule) or speaking in public (glossophobia). Since we all make mistakes (Isn't that the definition of being human rather than divine?) the reality is, most of us survive or overcome our social phobias. However, most of us go through life without trying to cure our simple phobias. Here are a few common ones:

- Acrophobia = Fear of heights
- Aviatophobia = Fear of flying
- Claustrophobia = Fear of confined spaces
- Coulrophobia = Fear of clowns (not restricted to evil clowns).
- Mysophobia = Fear of being contaminated with dirt or germs
- Odontophobia = Fear of dentists and dental procedures
- Ophidiophobia = Fear of snakes
- Trypanophobia = The extreme and irrational fear of medical procedures involving injections or hypodermic needles



Some people will go to extreme lengths to avoid fear-filled situations, but there are cures, such as reprogramming and refocusing our minds. Most of us have rehearsed our fears innumerable times; we can also rehearse for success in overcoming our fears, just as athletes envision themselves making the perfect dive, pole vault or football pass.

Having a sense of humor also helps, and the people who come up with both fears and the names for the fears seem to enjoy the process. Consider these unusual phobias:

- Allodoxaphobia - Fear of opinions
- Arachibutyrophobia - Fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of the mouth
- Aulophobia - Fear of flutes
- Homilophobia – Fear of sermons
- Lachanophobia – Fear of vegetables
- Novercaphobia - Fear of your mother-in-law
- Politicophobia - Fear or abnormal dislike of politicians

And finally, there is:

- Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia = Fear of long words

Talk about it

- Do you have any phobias? What are they?
- Do you have a logical explanation for your phobia(s)? What is it? (What are they?)
- How do you cope with your phobia(s)?
- Has your phobia kept you from doing anything you would like to do? If so, have you ever sought a cure? Was it successful?
- Do you know anyone with an unusual phobia? What is it?
- If you could name a new phobia, what would it be a fear of and what name would you give it?



Spooks – by Sandra Liatsos

There's a goblin at my window,
A monster by my door.
The pumpkin at my table
Keeps on smiling more and more.
There's a ghost who haunts my bedroom,
A witch whose face is green.
They used to be my family,
Till they dressed for Halloween.



Reminisce: Your Halloween Memories

Talk about costumes. Do you now or did you ever enjoy costume parties? Talk about the funniest, scariest or most clever or elaborate costume you or someone else wore for Halloween or any occasion.

Talk about candy. What kind of Halloween treats do you (or did you) like giving or receiving? Did you ever get sick from eating candy?

Talk about tricks. Did you ever play a Halloween trick on anyone? What did you do? Do you think some tricks are mean? (Throwing eggs, smashing pumpkins)

Talk about scary things. Do you like scary stories and movies or visiting haunted houses? Talk about an experience that frightened you or that thrilled you in a way you found fun.



Talk about pumpkin carving and decorating your house and yard for Halloween. Did you do it? Talk about the best decorations or carving you made or saw.

Word game: Boo to You

Many words related to Halloween have double o's. The following story provides a chance to fill in the blanks with some of them. The choices are listed at the bottom of the page.



Can you fill in the blanks with a double "o" word?

1. _____, it's Halloween! We're having a party at my 2. _____. We'll march around the playground in our costumes and then go 3. _____ for candy and other 4. _____. The teachers have set up a haunted house. I was 5. _____ around and saw there are costumed manikins. One is a vampire that is 6. _____ fake 7. _____ from the corner of his mouth. There is a monster with a 8. _____ for a hand and a mangled left 9. _____ that gives me 10. _____ bumps. In a corner 11. _____ there is a bent over, 12. _____ figure in a monk's robe with a 13. _____ over his head. There is a witch with one jagged 14. _____ riding a 15. _____. But the 16. _____ that scared me most and almost made me 17. _____ was a corpse in a coffin that had more than a few 18. _____. Among its wounds was a stomach with guts falling out. But then I realized they were just 19. _____. Thank 20. _____ I don't believe in 21. _____. I was just getting over feeling 22. _____ and reached for the door handle at the exit, when I realized it felt too 23. _____ and saw it was made to look like a snake. Opening the door brought a bright light and the sound of a 24. _____ crowing, as if it was dawn and all was safe again. I was so relieved, I almost gave my teacher a 25. _____ !

blood	food	hook	rooster	spook
boo-boos	foot	Hooray	school	swoon
broom	goodness	indoors	smooch	tooth
crooked	goose	noodles	smooth	voodoo
drooling	hood	nook	snooping	woozy

Answers:

- | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Hooray | 6. drooling | 11. nook | 16. spook | 21. voodoo |
| 2. school | 7. blood | 12. crooked | 17. swoon | 22. woozy |
| 3. indoors | 8. hook | 13. hood | 18. boo-boos | 23. smooth |
| 4. food | 9. foot | 14. tooth | 19. noodles | 24. rooster |
| 5. snooping | 10. goose | 15. broom | 20. goodness | 25. smooch |

Discussion: White House Hauntings?



Most of us have at least a vague awareness of the fragile mental health of Mary Todd Lincoln, but we probably have a narrow picture of her. She was born in 1818 in Lexington, Kentucky. Her father was a successful storekeeper and a state senator. Her mother died in childbirth when she was six and her father soon remarried. In spite of the fact that her stepmother was said to have treated her husband's first seven children poorly, Mary was well educated, especially for a girl of her era.

Although her family owned slaves, Mary was a lifelong Abolitionist, perhaps influenced by her step-grandmother whose home was purportedly a stop on the Underground Railroad for escaping slaves. Her extended family didn't share her views. Mary had one brother and three half-brothers who fought on the side of the Confederacy during the Civil War, and all three half-brothers were killed (one, Alex, by friendly fire). While mourning them, she was considered a traitor by Southerners, and Northerners

questioned her loyalty to the Union.

But she was far more deeply affected by the death of her sons: Eddie at four, Willie at 12 (while she was living in the White House) and Tad in 1871 at the age of 18. And, of course the worst tragedy was the 1865 assassination of her husband as she sat beside him. He was the first American President to be assassinated, and the event shocked the world. It shook Mary Todd Lincoln to her core, and she never really recovered. In 1875 Robert, her only remaining son, had her committed to an insane asylum.

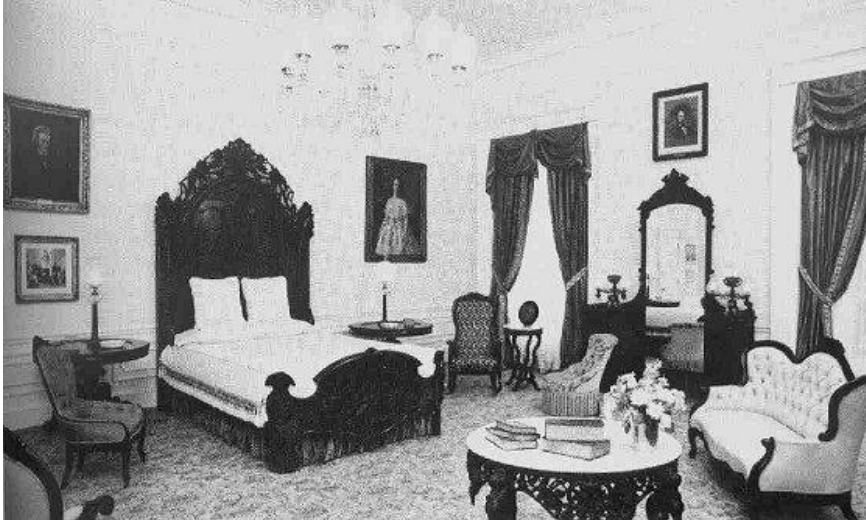
But was Mrs. Lincoln insane? She was confined to Bellevue Nursing and Rest Home in Batavia, Illinois, for only four months before being released to her sister's care in Springfield. It's certainly true that her health was frail. She suffered from migraines all her life, and like her husband endured periods of deep depression. She may have had other ailments that went untreated (undiagnosed diabetes?) or were poorly treated (spinal arthritis). It didn't help that the press vilified her ceaselessly.

Some people point to the séances she held at the White House to try to make contact with her dead sons as proof of an unstable mind, but consulting "spiritualists" was quite popular at the time.). According to the website

http://www.theforbiddenknowledge.com/hardtruth/mary_todd_lincoln.htm, Mary Todd Lincoln

probably became interested in the spiritualist movement while living in Springfield during the 1850s, when “prophets” began appearing there after finding success in the East. “News from Europe that Empress Eugenie and Queen Victoria practiced spiritualism probably helped confirm Mary's interest.”

After Willie's death in the White House in 1862, Mary both visited the home of friends who engaged mediums and hired a clairvoyant to hold séances in the White House in an effort to be in touch with her two sons who had died so young. Mary wrote to her half-sister, “Willie lives. He comes to me every night and stands at the foot of the bed with the same sweet adorable smile he always has had. He does not always come alone. Little Eddie is sometimes with him, and twice he has come with our brother, Alex.”



Interestingly, Mrs. Lincoln was not sleeping in what is now known as The Lincoln Bedroom when she saw these comforting apparitions. The Lincoln bedroom was never Lincoln's bedroom. It was his office and Cabinet room in the days before we had a West Wing or an Oval Office, just as it was for all the Presidents between 1830 and 1902.

That huge 8' X 6' bed with the cathedral-like carved rosewood headboard that now dominates the room would have been roomy enough for Lincoln's 6'4" frame, but he never slept in it. Mary Todd Lincoln purchased the bed in 1861 as part of her refurbishing of the White House. It was intended for the Prince of Wales Room (Didn't know there was one, did you?).

A number of people who have slept or spent time in the bedroom have said they have either seen or felt the presence of Lincoln in that room, including Winston Churchill, Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, and Dwight Eisenhower and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. However, Mrs. Roosevelt found it comforting, and Jackie Kennedy said she felt a kind of peace in the room like “what you feel when going into a church.” On the other hand, over the years, quite a number of White House servants claim to have seen Lincoln's ghost there and refused to enter the room. Ronald Reagan's dog also refused to go further than the doorway where he would stand barking.

Years after her husband's assassination, Mary continued to consult mediums. According to the website, “Once, on a trip to Boston, she attended a séance using the name ‘Mrs. Tundall’ to avoid recognition. Abraham ‘appeared’ before her during the séance. She then visited William Mumler's studio. Mumler was a spirit photographer. He produced a photograph of Mary with Abraham superimposed in the background with his hands on her shoulders.” (The print is from the Lloyd Ostendorf collection). The photograph was said to give Mary “great comfort that Abraham was hovering over her.” She always appreciated her spiritualist friends



whom she felt never stopped supporting her after she had been abandoned by others following her husband's assassination.

Resources:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/first_ladies/marylincn/

<http://www.firstladies.org/biographies/firstladies.aspx?biography=17>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Todd_Lincoln

<http://home.att.net/~rjnorton/Lincoln54.html>

(The photograph of the bed is from the Meserve-Kunhardt Collection.)

For added information on Mary Todd's Lincoln's spiritualism, see Jean H. Baker's 1987 biography entitled "Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography." Katherine Helm's "Mary, Wife of Lincoln" discusses Mary's vision of Willie, Eddie, and Alex.

Talk about it

- Do you think Mary Todd Lincoln was legally insane or just distraught by her life's overwhelming tragedies? Will we ever know for sure?
- Did you know the background of the Lincoln bedroom? Do you have anything else to add?
- Given the chance, would you stay in the Lincoln bedroom or another room in the White House? Talk about your response.
- Have you (or someone you know) ever attended a séance? If so, talk about what happened.
- Do you believe it is possible for the dead to speak to the living? Have you ever felt you received a message, a sign, or a vision from someone who was no longer living? If so, share the experience, if you are willing.
- Have you had any other experiences (seriously or as a lark) with palm readers, psychics or fortune-tellers? Talk about what you learned or experienced.

Word Game: Knock-knock Jokes

October 31st is Knock-Knock Day, intended to be a day for people to try out their knock-knock jokes while knocking on doors for Trick or Treat.

Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Wicked.
Wicked who?
Wicked make beautiful music together.



Now put on your vampire costume and let's do a Count Dracula imitation.

Can you match the joke to its translated punchline?

1. Knock, knock
Who's there?
Vault
Vault who?

4. Knock, knock
Who's there?
Voodoo
Voodoo who?

7. Knock, knock
Who's there?
Vassar
Vassar who?

2. Knock, knock
Who's there?
Venice
Venice who?

5. Knock, knock
Who's there?
Veal chop
Veal chop who?

8. Knock, knock
Who's There?
Ivan
Ivan who?

3. Knock, knock
Who's there?
Ivana
Ivana who?

6. Knock, knock
Who's there?
Vaughan
Vaughan who?

9. Knock, knock
Who's there?
Valid
Valid who?

- a. I wanna be alone
- b. I want to suck your blood
- c. One day my prince will come
- d. Waltzing Matilda
- e. We'll shop around to look for bargains
- f. Well, it's not a very good ending, I know
- g. What's a girl like you doing in a place like this?
- h. When is your father coming back?
- i. Who do you think you are?



Answers:

1. d 2. h 3. a 4. i 5. e 6. c 7. g 8. b 9. f

Word Game: Knock-knock Jokes 2

Knock-knock jokes have long been popular throughout the English-speaking world and in France (where they begin with "Toc toc"). October 31st is Knock-Knock Day, intended to be a day for people to try out their knock-knock jokes while knocking on doors for Trick or Treat. In this game I'm giving you a chance to think of your own clever responses.

Can you come up with a clever answer for the following knock-knock jokes?

1. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Aardvark
Aardvark who?

6. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Little old lady
Little old lady who?

2. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Aaron
Aaron who?

7. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Deanna!
Deanna who?

3. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Noah
Noah who?

8. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Lettuce
Lettuce who?

4. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Adair
Adair who?



9. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Owls
Owls who?

5. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Avocado
Avocado who?

10. Knock-knock
Who's there?
Cash
Cash who?

You can make up your own knock-knock jokes with a few little hints. Here are names that suggest lots of possible punch lines:

- Al (I'll)
- Dawn (Don't)
- Anita (I need a)
- Ida (I'd have)
- Ivan (I want)
- Justin (Just in time to . . .)
- Ken (Can)
- Kent (Can't)
- Lionel (Lion will)
- Norma Lee (Normally)

Finally, we wouldn't be surprised if you are ready for this one:

Knock- knock
Who's there?
Amaryllis
Amaryllis who?
Amaryllisick of these knock-knock jokes. Can we stop now?

Possible answers:

1. Aardvark a mile for one of your smiles
2. Aaron the side of caution
3. Noah good place to eat around here?
4. Adair once, but now I'm bald
5. Avocado cold and I'm all stuffy.
6. I didn't know you could yodel!
7. De animals are restless; they need exercise.
8. Lettuce in; it's cold out here!
9. I know that!
10. Cashew? You're nuts!



Resources: Primarily <http://www.knock-knock-joke.com/> and http://www.ahajokes.com/knock_knock_jokes.html.

UNICEF

If gremlins come to your door this year trick-or-treating for UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund <http://www.unicefusa.org/about/>) praise them for thinking of others and give generously. If all your gremlins want only candy, think of donating anyway to a charity of your choice. You can learn more about the efficacy of various charities by going to www.charitynavigator.org and looking up the organization by name or typing in your location and seeing who in your area might need your help.

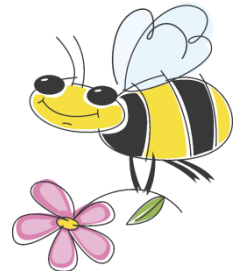
Trivia quiz: Good Fortune

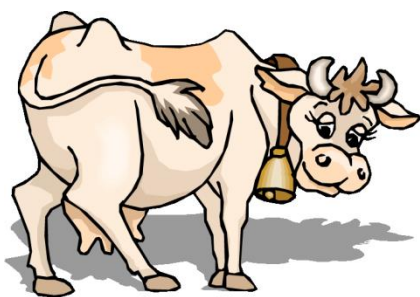
Did you realize that any month beginning on a Sunday will have a Friday the 13th? Among various people, Fridays have been associated with bad luck since time began. According to one source I read, "It is traditionally believed that Eve tempted Adam with the apple on a Friday." Who was keeping track *then*?! Add the 13th to Friday and you can dig up loads of gruesome reasons to spend the day safely under the covers, but then no one has been tracking all the *good* things that have happened on a Friday the 13th. Being ever an optimist, this week's trivia quiz is about encouraging (if you are superstitious) *good* fortune.



Here are 13 superstitions. Can you guess the answers?

1. Only one of the following is **not** a sign of good luck. Which is it?
 - a. A cricket or frog in the house ____
 - b. A raven on a fencepost ____
 - c. Dolphins around a ship ____
 - d. A ladybug landing on you ____
 - e. Meeting 3 sheep ____
 - f. A black cat walking toward you ____
 - g. A horseshoe in the house ____
2. In the ditty about "Monday's child is fair of face, Tuesday's child is full of grace," is it fortunate or unfortunate to be born on a Friday?
 - a. fortunate ____
 - b. unfortunate ____
3. An acorn at the window will
 - a. Keep nutty people from visiting ____
 - b. ____ Keep lightning out ____
 - c. Frustrate the squirrels ____
 - d. Make your children grow straight and tall ____
4. If a bee enters your home – and you do not kill it – it's a sign that
 - a. Your hard work will soon pay off ____
 - b. Your garden will be abundant with flowers ____
 - c. You will soon have a visitor ____
 - d. You are as sweet as honey ____
5. Touch blue and
 - a. You'll avoid the flu ____
 - b. Your worries will be few ____
 - c. You'll feel like new ____
 - d. Your wish will come true ____
6. If the first butterfly you see in the year is white, you will
 - a. have good luck all year ____
 - b. take a trip in the new year ____
 - c. have a wish come true in the new year ____
 - d. escape your cocoon in the new year ____





7. Cows lifting their tails is a sure sign that
- Rain is coming ____
 - They are alerting you to danger ____
 - You can expect especially good milk that evening ____
 - They like you ____

Match these:

8. If the bottom of your right foot itches

9. If your nose itches ____

10. If your right hand palm itches ____

11. If your right ear itches ____

a. someone is speaking well of you.

b. you will soon be getting money.

c. you will soon be kissed by a fool.

d. you will soon be taking a trip.

12. A swan's feather, sewed into your husband's pillow, will

a. make your marriage glide ____

b. keep his temper even ____

c. ensure fidelity ____

d. keep him handsome ____

13. Salty soup is a sign that the cook

a. wants to spice up his/her life ____

b. is absent-minded ____

c. is coming into money ____

d. is in love ____

Thought you'd like to know:

In the U.S. a black cat crossing one's path is considered bad luck, but in England, Ireland and Japan black cats are good luck, and in England they are often used on birthday and greeting cards. Furthermore, the owners of black cats everywhere probably do not consider them bad luck, even if like most cats they tend to have a mind of their own. And three black cats together are always good luck.

If you break a mirror in North America, it's seven years of bad luck, but guess what? Again, if you break it in Britain, Ireland or Japan you get seven years of good luck!

Some charms are both good and bad:

- It's unlucky to see one magpie, lucky to see two, unlucky to see three, and so on. Basically, it means if you see a flock, you'd better be a fast counter.
- If your palm itches, you are lucky because it means you will receive money, but if you scratch it, you will be unlucky because the money won't come.

Answers:

1. c.

4. c

7. a

10. b

13. d

2. b. *

5. d

8. d

11. a

3. b

6. a

9. c

12. c

* Friday's child is loving and giving

Primary resource: <http://www.corsinet.com/trivia/scary.html#friday>

Reminiscing about Your Magical Memories



International Magic Week is an annual affair that always ends on October 31st, the anniversary of Harry Houdini's death in 1926. Members of The Society of American Magicians, which Mr. Houdini led for nearly a decade, are expected to make a special effort during this week to promote magic by performing shows at orphanages, hospitals, nursing homes and other places where people have limited ability to see a live performance. Similar groups in other countries do the same through programs called Magical Moments – a perfect theme for reminiscence.

Do you enjoy watching magicians and magic tricks? Among magicians, there are performers who specialize in:

- animal acts (Siegfried and Roy)
- making large items such as airliners disappear (David Copperfield)
- traditional magic like sawing a woman in half (Doug Henning) and
- mind-boggling card tricks (Dai Vernon, James Galea)

Do you have any preferences for certain types of magic? Which ones and why? Are there any performers you especially like? If so, who?

Have you seen any tricks that especially baffle you? If so, which ones?

There are now television shows with a masked magician who reveals to the audience how the tricks are done. Do you enjoy watching these, or would you prefer to keep magic magical? (Penn and Teller also do exposés.)



In the documentary on U.S. education “Waiting for Superman,” one of the reformers describes his disappointment in learning Superman wasn’t coming to the rescue of his neighborhood. Have you ever had a similar disillusionment?

My own daughter was terribly upset to learn the Tooth Fairy wasn’t real because she had imagined her resembling a beloved grandmother. In contrast, we were able to keep some of the magic of Santa alive by including her in the magic making. How were beloved myths handled in your household?



Many of us had a favorite relative who entertained us by “magically” finding a coin in our ear or “stealing” our nose. Talk about your memories of such childhood wonders.

For many children Disney’s Magic Kingdom really is a magical place. For others, a walk in nature is every bit as magical. Talk about places that once (or still do) invoked a sense of awe in you.



Children are filled with wonder easily. How can we keep such a spirit alive in them and in ourselves?

Word Game: Nevermore

Halloween is a perfect time for a word quiz based on Edgar Allen Poe's spooky poem "The Raven" and its repetitious line, "Quoth the raven, `Nevermore.'" The wonderfully rhythmic poem, as you may remember from early school days begins like this:



*Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.*

The tapping/rapping is the raven with a message. The exercise below, I trust, will not catch you napping as you fill in the missing word in all the quotes that advise what you should never do (or what the speaker has never done). **Do you agree with the sentiments?**

Part 1: Can you match the missing word to the correct blank?

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|------------|
| a. bitterness | d. indigestion | g. time |
| b. curiosity | e. Oops | h. unicorn |
| c. given birth | f. schooling | |

1. I've been on a calendar, but I've never been on _____.
~Marilyn Monroe
2. Never lose a holy _____.
~ Albert Einstein
3. Never play leapfrog with a _____.
~ American proverb
4. Never lend a car to anyone to whom you have _____.
~ Erma Bombeck
5. Never say "_____" in the operating room.
~ Dr. Leo Troy
6. Eating words has never given me _____.
~ Winston Churchill
7. Never succumb to the temptation of _____.
~ Martin Luther King, Jr.
8. I've never let my _____ interfere with my education.
~ Mark Twain



Part 2: Can you match the missing word to the correct blank again?

a. action
b. diamonds
c. eats or needs
 repairing

d. imagination
e. lift
f. nag
g. say yes

h. solitude
i. succeed
j. tried

1. I never hated a man enough to give his _____ back.
 ~ Zsa Zsa Gabor

2. Never eat more than you can _____.
 ~ Miss Piggy

3. Never invest your money in anything that
 _____.
 ~ Billy Rose

4. I never found the companion that was so companionable as _____.
 ~ Henry David Thoreau

5. Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can _____.
 ~ Maria Montessori

6. Never confuse motion with _____.
 ~ Benjamin Franklin

7. Between two evils, I always pick the one I never _____ before.
 ~ Mae West

8. Never allow a person to tell you no who doesn't have the power to _____.
 ~ Eleanor Roosevelt

9. Disneyland will never be completed. It will continue to grow as long as there
 is _____ left in the world.
 ~ Walt Disney

10. If you treat your wife like a thoroughbred, you'll never end up with a _____.
 ~ Zig Ziglar



Answers, Part 1:

1. g 2. b 3. h 4. c 5. e 6. d 7. a 8. f

Answers, Part 2:

1. b	3. c	5. i	7. j	9. d
2. e	4. h	6. a	8. g	10. f



Discussion: Apple Charms

"An apple a day keeps the doctor away," but according to Halloween lore, apples can do a lot more. They foretell who a young woman will marry in a variety of ways:

- If a girl stands before a mirror while eating an apple and combing her hair at midnight on Halloween, her future husband's image will be reflected in the glass over her left shoulder.
- If a girl cuts an apple into nine pieces at midnight on Halloween in front of a mirror, then sticks each piece with the knife and holds each piece (one at a time) over her left shoulder, as the ninth piece hits the reflection in the mirror, she will see her future husband.
- If a girl peels an apple in one long piece at midnight on Halloween, and then tosses the peel over her left shoulder or into a bowl of water, she will be able to read the first initial of her future partner's name in the shape assumed by the discarded peel.
- In a group of unmarried boys and girls, each person marks an apple and places it in a large bucket of water, along with unmarked apples. Without using their hands, the teens attempt to take bites out of the apples floating in the water. The teen is fated to marry the person whose apple they bite.
- The American custom of apple bobbing does not mark the apples. Whoever snags an apple first will be wed first, and if a boy or girl puts the apple they caught during the bobbing game under their pillow on Halloween Eve, they will dream of their intended lover.
- For the girl who has many suitors, the apple seed divination is a must. The young woman peels an apple and places a wet seed named for each boyfriend on her cheeks (or forehead). The seed to fall off last will be her next lover.



Talk about it

- Are you familiar with these methods of identifying your future husband or lover? If so, have you ever tried any? Did it work?
- Have you ever bobbed for apples? Did you associate it with identifying your future husband? Did you find it required really dunking your head to get a grip? Were you determined enough to succeed?
- Have you ever tried other superstitious ways to identify your future husband (Like pulling off the petals on a daisy?)

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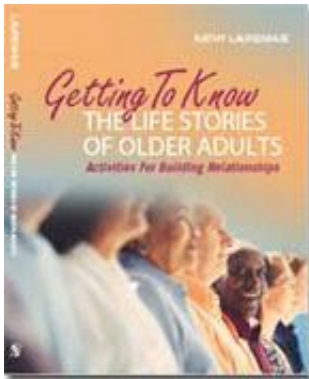
Two inherited traits inspire everything author Kathy Laenhue writes:

- 1) Wide-ranging curiosity from her father
- 2) From her mother, a light-hearted touch that seeks out what's amusing

With that in mind, and if you enjoyed this title, here are some other ideas:

Do you want additional mind-stimulating material?

Visit the Wiser Now store (<http://shop.WiserNow.com>) or print out a list of publications from the website (www.WiserNow.com) to see the ever-growing catalog of downloadable **MindPlay Connections™** titles. Then consider doing the following:



- Order the **Creative Mind Play** CD series from Health Professions Press based on archived material from Kathy's former publication, *Brain Aerobics Weekly*.
- Order Kathy's book, **Getting to Know the Life Stories of Older Adults, Activities for Building Relationships** also from Health Professions Press.
- Watch the video demos of two of her favorite activity ideas at www.WiserNow.com.
- Visit her blog at www.MindMusings.com.



Do you need a presenter of fun and stimulating brain exercises?

Kathy would be delighted to comply. The programs described under “staff development” at www.WiserNow.com can be adapted for broad audiences.

Do you have staff development needs?

- Under the name **Elder Care Conversations**, Kathy and her friend and colleague, David Troxel, co-author of “The Best Friends Approach™” books on Alzheimer’s care, have created a fabulously friendly, useful and comprehensive 12-module, self-contained, downloadable series of audio files and print training materials on “**Amping Up Your Activity Programming**.” Order them individually or as a flash drive at <http://shop.WiserNow.com> and learn more at www.ElderCareConversations.com.
- Kathy gives **active aging and train-the-trainer workshops** to professionals in person or via webinar or teleseminar. Her topics include brain aerobics/mind play, life stories, creative training techniques, dementia care, and medical staff sensitivity.
- Order “**22 Creative Training Tips to Use Instantly**” at <http://shop.WiserNow.com> and check out Kathy’s other downloadable materials there on staff development.
- Kathy has a master’s degree in instructional technology and has developed multi-media curricula for corporate clients for more than 20 years. **Contact her to discuss your specific staff development needs.**



Are you a caregiver?

You will find both useful advice and compassionate reassurance at Kathy's website www.WiserNowAlz.com and her blog www.CaregiverCheer.com. Check out the material there, including her very practical and upbeat **books on Alzheimer's caregiving**, which are also available on Kindle.

Are you a media rep needing an interview subject/press release?

Here are some of Kathy's topics:

- Exercising Your Brain: What's Laughter Got to Do with It?
- The Top 10 List for Brain Health (#1 Will Surprise You)
- Variety Is Vital to a Vigorous Mind
- Humor in Dementia
- Alzheimer's Disease: Stop the Fear-Mongering
- The Logic Behind Illogical Behavior in People with Dementia

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