

# Halloween Live Listening: Stingy Jack

**Objective:** Functional Language: Oral storytelling

**Level:** Pre-intermediate

**Length:** 50 minutes

**Main aim:** Students will practice telling a story orally with sequencers and time markers

**Sub aim:** Students will practice live listening skills

**Assumptions:** general familiarity with Halloween and jack-o-lanterns; ease with simple past tense

**Materials:** jack-o-lantern photo collection; Stingy Jack reading adapted from Laura Denby, *Taste of Home*. "[History Lesson: Why Do We Carve Pumpkins?](#)"

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## Warmer: Jack-o'-lantern photos (5 min)



- Display the jack-o'-lantern photo collage (see page 4)
- Ask the following questions:

What are these objects? Which holiday are they for? How are they made? Which design do you like best?

If group work is permitted, have students discuss their ideas in pairs. If not permitted, have students work individually then take group feedback.

- Elicit key vocabulary and write on board:  
**Jack-o'-lantern, Halloween, pumpkins, carve, trick**
  - Within the word "jack-o'-lantern" elicit/teach "Jack" as man's name and "lantern"

## Introduce reading: Stingy Jack (5 min)

- Ask students: Why do people celebrate Halloween with jack-o'-lanterns? Where do you think this tradition comes from?
- Introduce the story of Stingy Jack. Jack-o'-lanterns come from the story of a man called Stingy Jack and his tricks on the Devil.
- Write "Stingy Jack and the Devil" on the board.
  - Pre-teach "stingy" and "devil"

## Live Listening: Stingy Jack

### Listening task: 5 Questions (5 min)

- Instruct students to write 5 questions they have about Stingy Jack and the Devil before they listen.

Eg. Who is Stingy Jack? What happens to Stingy Jack? Are Jack-o'-Lanterns named for Stingy Jack? What does the Devil do? Where does Stingy Jack live? What does Stingy Jack look like?

- Instruct students to listen to the story and see how many of their questions actually get answered in the story.

### **Tell the story: Stingy Jack (5 min. (2 min read, 3 min feedback))**

- Tell the story of Stingy Jack aloud. Tell, don't read, the story.
  - Tell it like a ghost story with suspense and a bit of danger. Use facial and body language as well. For kids, turning the lights off and adding a flashlight held under your chin increases the spooky factor.
- Ask students how many of their questions were answered and have them share the answers to their questions as a class.

### **Student retelling (if pairwork permitted) (5 min)**

- Students work in pairs to retell the story of Stingy Jack.
  - One student starts retelling the story but when you say "Boo!" they must stop and their partner takes over. If you finish the story, begin again.

If you can, monitor the pairs for who actually finishes retelling the story and who uses the sequence and time phrases from the story. If the class is doing well with the sequence and time markers, move directly to the final task.

### **Teacher retelling (no pairwork allowed) (2 min)**

- Instruct students that they will hear the story again but this time they should count and write down the sequence words and time markers they hear. (eg. next, then, one day, etc.)
- Retell the story. Tell it the same way you did the first time.

### **Group feedback: Sequence and time markers (3 min)**

- Elicit the sequence words and time markers. Have students repeat the whole phrase, not just the sequence/time word or phrase so that students get practice retelling the story and using the functional language in context.
- Emphasize that while they occur frequently in the story, they are not used in every sentence. Telling a good story requires sentences with sequence and time markers as well as those without.

### **Final task: Tell a ghost story (variable time)**

- Students orally tell their own ghost story.
  - The ghost story can be a retelling of a traditional ghost story from their culture, a retelling of a horror movie, their own spooky/paranormal experience, or their own creative work.

**Requirements:** Similar in length to Stingy Jack (3-4 paragraphs, 2-3 minutes to tell), use past tense, sequence and time markers, and have a title.

### **Pairwork (if permitted): (5 min individual prep, 10 min practice)**

- Give students 5 min to prepare individually. They can (but are not required) to write down a few key words but they are not permitted to write the story in full. The functional language is oral storytelling, so they cannot simply read a story they have written.
- If students are able to work in pairs, have them tell their stories to each other.
  - Use the same listening model as the previous exercise.
    - Speaker gives the title of their work; listener writes 3 questions they have based on the title then listens for the answers to their questions and the sequence/time markers.
- If students are permitted to switch partners, switch and have them share their story with a new partner. If they are not, have them practice again with the same partner (basic) or switch stories and try to retell their partner's story (advanced).

### **Oral Presentation: Halloween Fest (no pairwork, more intensive, scalable):**

- Students tell ghost stories at a class Halloween party (or online)
  - Requires students to work on their presentations outside of class.
  - You may want to add a written component, peer editing, and an opportunity for your own teacher feedback before the final presentation.
- Have a Halloween party at the end of the month where students take turns telling their stories to the entire class.
  - Ideas to up the fun: turn lights off, use a flashlight, play spooky music in the background, hold the party outside, offer a prize for the scariest story, combine with a costume contest or other [Halloween activities](#).
  - Online classes can audio/video record themselves then play their stories around a digital campfire.
- Alternatively, have one or two students present every day for the rest of the month.



Stingy Jack reading adapted by Sarah Tew from Laura Denby, *Taste of Home*. "[History Lesson: Why Do We Carve Pumpkins?](#)"

### **Stingy Jack and the Devil**

Jack was a sneaky man who tricked many people and even the devil. One night, Jack had a drink with the Devil. Jack was stingy and didn't want to pay for his drink, so he convinced the Devil to change into a coin. After the devil became a coin, Jack immediately put the coin in his pocket next to a silver cross so the Devil couldn't change back. Jack made the Devil promise not to take his soul before he changed him back.

Next, Jack convinced the Devil to climb up a tree to steal a piece of fruit for Jack to eat. He quickly carved a cross on the tree while the Devil was at the top picking the fruit. Then, Jack made the Devil promise to leave him alone for 10 years before he came down.

One day, Jack died. Of course, God did not accept Jack into heaven and sent him down to the Devil in hell. But the Devil kept his promise. He did not keep Jack in hell, but did something worse. The devil sent Jack into the night to walk the world forever, with only a coal for light. Jack lit the coal, put it in an empty turnip and has been roaming around the world, scaring children, ever since.

After a while, people began to call him "Jack of the lantern," which became "Jack o' lantern." Then, people began to carve their own lanterns out of turnips, beets, potatoes and pumpkins to keep Jack and other ghosts away.