



Halloween Reading Worksheets: Grades 5-6

2 original passages for grades 5-6, with comprehension questions and answer keys that show the evidence behind every answer.

PASSAGE	LEVEL	SKILL FOCUS	PAGES
Bring a Sheet	Grades 5-6	A school-event mix-up	3-5, key 10-11
How a Pumpkin Grows	Grades 5-6	Plant life cycle (non-spooky)	6-9, key 12-13

Before You Print

How to pick a passage, run it and mark it.

Choose a Passage

PASSAGE	LEVEL	TYPE	WORDS
The Pumpkin on the Step	Grades 1-2	Story	142
The Missing Pumpkin Cookies	Grades 1-2	Story	135
The Scarecrow Who Kept Moving	Grades 3-4	Mystery	305
The Corn Maze Map	Grades 3-4	Story	267
Bring a Sheet	Grades 5-6	Story	392
How a Pumpkin Grows	Grades 5-6	Informational	424

The levels are a starting point, set by passage length, sentence length, vocabulary and how much reading between the lines the questions ask for. They are not a test score, so move a reader up or down a band whenever a passage feels too easy or too hard.

Run It Three Ways

- **Independent:** students read the passage twice, then answer. The second read is where the inference clues show up.
- **Paired reading:** partners take turns reading paragraphs aloud, then answer on their own sheets and compare evidence.
- **Supported reading:** read the passage aloud while students follow along, go over the Words to Know box first and let students answer out loud before writing.

Mark It Fairly

- Inference questions can have more than one good answer. Give full marks when the answer fits the passage and points to a clue from it. A correct idea with no clue earns half.
- For grades 1-2, spelling should not cost marks. The goal is understanding.
- The Draw It and Your Turn boxes are extension tasks for early finishers. They are not marked.

Print, Edit and Share

- Every page works in black and white. Print at 100% (actual size).
- Want your students' names in the stories, or an easier question? Each grade band is also a Canva template, so you can change any passage, question or name before you print.
- Free to print and copy for your own class, homeschool or family. Please share the link to the download page instead of reposting or selling the files.

Bring a Sheet

- 1 Every year, the sixth graders at Maple Grove School turned the east hallway into a Haunted Hallway for the fall fundraiser. Younger students paid one ticket to walk through it, and the money went toward new library books. This year, Mr. Alvarez put Tomás in charge of decorations, which Tomás considered the greatest honor of his life so far.
- 2 Tomás had a plan. He wanted the hallway to feel like a dark tunnel, with no light coming in from the windows along the way. That meant covering eight windows. On Monday, he wrote a quick message on the class whiteboard: “Everyone, bring a sheet on Friday for the Haunted Hallway!”
- 3 He meant an old bedsheet that could be taped over a window. He did not think to explain that part. To him, it was obvious.
- 4 On Friday morning, Tomás arrived early with a roll of tape and two flowered sheets from his own closet. Then his classmates began to arrive. Lena walked in with a white sheet draped over her head and two eyeholes cut in the front. Behind her came Marcus, also in a white sheet, then the Kim twins, then almost everyone else. By 8:15, the room held twenty-three ghosts.
- 5 “Great costumes,” Mr. Alvarez said slowly, looking from the ghosts to the bare windows. “Tomás, how many sheets do we have for the windows?”
- 6 Tomás counted. “Two,” he said. His face felt hot. He had been so sure his message was clear.
- 7 For a moment, nobody spoke. Then Lena lifted the front of her sheet. “What if we don’t cover the windows?” she said. “What if we stand in front of them?”
- 8 It turned out to be the best idea of the day. The students lined up along the hallway, with a ghost in front of every window and the rest spaced along the walls, all standing perfectly still. The daylight behind them made each sheet glow softly, so they looked like lanterns. When a group of second graders walked past, the ghosts swayed slowly from side to side, and the younger kids giggled and shrieked at the same time.
- 9 The Haunted Hallway sold more tickets than any year before. That afternoon, Tomás wrote a new message on the whiteboard for next year’s decoration team: “Say exactly what you mean. Then say it again.”

WORDS TO KNOW

fundraiser: an event that collects money for a good cause

draped: hung loosely over something

honor: something that makes you feel proud and trusted

lantern: a lamp with a cover that light glows through

Bring a Sheet

Answer the questions. Look back at the story to check your answers. Page 1 of 2.

Name _____ Date _____

1 What was the money from the Haunted Hallway used for? RECALL

2 Why did Tomás want to cover the windows? CAUSE AND EFFECT

3 The word **sheet** can mean different things. What did Tomás mean by “sheet,” and what did his classmates think it meant? VOCABULARY

4 Reread paragraph 5. What is Mr. Alvarez probably thinking when he says “Great costumes” slowly? INFERENCE

5 “His face felt hot.” How was Tomás feeling, and why? INFERENCE

Bring a Sheet

Answer the questions. Look back at the story to check your answers. Page 2 of 2.

- 6** How did Lena’s idea solve the problem of the uncovered windows? CAUSE AND EFFECT

- 7** The author writes that the ghosts “looked like lanterns.” What does FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE this comparison help you picture?

- 8** What lesson did Tomás learn? Use his new whiteboard message in THEME your answer.

Your turn: Rewrite Tomás’s Monday message so that everyone brings the right kind of sheet.

How a Pumpkin Grows

- 1 A pumpkin on a doorstep in October is the last stage of a story that began with a flat white seed months earlier. Pumpkins are a type of squash, and they belong to the same plant family as cucumbers and melons.

From Seed to Sprout

- 2 Pumpkin seeds need warm soil, so gardeners plant them after the last frost of spring. Most pumpkins need about three to four months to grow. That is why, in the United States, seeds for Halloween pumpkins usually go into the ground between late May and early July.
- 3 Once a seed soaks up water from the soil, its shell splits open. A tiny root pushes down first, and then a pair of smooth, rounded seed leaves pushes up into the light. These first leaves do not look like pumpkin leaves at all. The true leaves, which come next, are much larger, with jagged edges and a rough, prickly surface.

Vines and Flowers

- 4 Over the summer, the plant grows long stems called vines that creep across the ground. A single vine can spread more than ten feet. Bright yellow flowers open along the vines. A pumpkin plant has two kinds of flowers. Male flowers grow on long, thin stems and usually appear first. Female flowers sit close to the vine, and each one has a small green bump at its base that looks like a tiny pumpkin.
- 5 Each flower opens in the early morning and closes by the afternoon of the same day. In those few hours, bees must pollinate it. They do this by carrying pollen, a yellow powder, from a male flower to a female flower. If a female flower is not pollinated, its tiny bump turns yellow, shrivels and falls off. If it is pollinated, the bump begins to grow into a pumpkin.

From Flower to Fruit

- 6 A young pumpkin is usually green. As it grows heavier over the following weeks, it turns orange, and its skin, called the rind, becomes hard. The stem that connects the pumpkin to the vine dries out and becomes tough and woody.

Harvest Time

- 7 A pumpkin is ready to pick when its color is deep all over and the rind is hard enough that a fingernail cannot easily dent it. Farmers cut the stem with a knife or clippers, leaving a few inches attached to the pumpkin. They avoid carrying pumpkins by the stem, because a broken stem lets germs in and the pumpkin rots sooner.
- 8 Inside every pumpkin are stringy pulp and hundreds of seeds. Each seed has the chance to grow into a new plant the next spring, and the cycle begins again.

How a Pumpkin Grows

Answer the questions. Look back at the passage to check your answers. Page 1 of 3.

Name _____ Date _____

WORDS TO KNOW

frost: a thin layer of ice that forms on very cold nights

shrivels: dries up and gets smaller

germs: tiny living things that can make food rot

pulp: the soft, wet inside of a fruit

1 What is this passage mostly about?

MAIN IDEA

- ☐ A how to carve a jack-o'-lantern
- ☐ B the stages of a pumpkin's growth, from seed to harvest
- ☐ C why bees make honey
- ☐ D the history of Halloween

2 Why do gardeners wait until after the last spring frost to plant pumpkin seeds?

RECALL

3 Under which heading would you look to find out when a pumpkin is ready to pick?

TEXT FEATURES

4 Give two differences between male and female pumpkin flowers.

COMPARE

How a Pumpkin Grows

Answer the questions. Look back at the passage to check your answers. Page 2 of 3.

5 Use paragraph 5 to explain what **pollinate** means.

VOCABULARY

6 A farmer sees many tiny green bumps turn yellow and fall off the vines in July. Using the passage, give the most likely reason.

INFERENCE

7 Write 1 to 5 to show the order of a pumpkin's growth.

SEQUENCE

- ☐ The true leaves grow.
- ☐ Yellow flowers open on the vines.
- ☐ A tiny root pushes down.
- ☐ The pumpkin turns orange.
- ☐ Smooth seed leaves push up.

How a Pumpkin Grows

Answer the questions. Look back at the passage to check your answers. Page 3 of 3.

8 Why should you avoid carrying a pumpkin by its stem?

CAUSE AND EFFECT

Draw it: Sketch and label 4 stages of a pumpkin's life, from seed to harvest.

Bring a Sheet

Answers in red. Evidence quotes come straight from the passage. Page 1 of 2.

- 1** What was the money from the Haunted Hallway used for? RECALL

Answer: **New library books.**

Evidence: paragraph 1: *“the money went toward new library books”*

- 2** Why did Tomás want to cover the windows? CAUSE AND EFFECT

Answer: **He wanted the hallway to be dark, like a tunnel, with no light coming in.**

Evidence: paragraph 2: *“He wanted the hallway to feel like a dark tunnel, with no light coming in from the windows along the way.”*

Also accept: “To make it dark and scary.”

- 3** The word **sheet** can mean different things. What did Tomás mean by “sheet,” and what did his classmates think it meant? VOCABULARY

Answer: **Tomás meant an old bedsheet to tape over a window. His classmates thought he meant a sheet to wear as a ghost costume.**

Evidence: paragraph 3: *“He meant an old bedsheet that could be taped over a window.”*; paragraph 4: *“Lena walked in with a white sheet draped over her head and two eyeholes cut in the front.”*

Also accept: Both meanings are needed for full marks. One meaning earns half.

- 4** Reread paragraph 5. What is Mr. Alvarez probably thinking when he says “Great costumes” slowly? INFERENCE

Answer: **He has realized there is a problem: everyone wore their sheets as costumes, so there is nothing to cover the windows. He is being polite while he works it out.**

Evidence: paragraph 5: *“‘Great costumes,’ Mr. Alvarez said slowly, looking from the ghosts to the bare windows.”*

Also accept: Any answer that connects his look at the bare windows with the missing sheets. “He likes the costumes” alone does not fit the word “slowly” or the question that follows.

- 5** “His face felt hot.” How was Tomás feeling, and why? INFERENCE

Answer: **Embarrassed. He had been sure his message was clear, and now he could see it was not.**

Evidence: paragraph 6: *“His face felt hot. He had been so sure his message was clear.”*

Also accept: Ashamed, worried or upset, with a reason linked to the message or the missing sheets.

Bring a Sheet

Answers in red. Evidence quotes come straight from the passage. Page 2 of 2.

-
- 6** How did Lena’s idea solve the problem of the uncovered windows? CAUSE AND EFFECT
- Answer:** The ghosts stood in front of the windows instead of covering them. The daylight behind them made the sheets glow, so the windows became part of the decorations.
- Evidence:** paragraph 7: “What if we stand in front of them?”; paragraph 8: “The daylight behind them made each sheet glow softly”
- Also accept:** Full marks need the ghosts standing in front of the windows. The glowing effect is a strong extra detail.
-
- 7** The author writes that the ghosts “looked like lanterns.” What does this comparison help you picture? FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE
- Answer:** The sheets glowing softly because light was shining through them from behind, the way light glows through a lantern.
- Evidence:** paragraph 8: “made each sheet glow softly, so they looked like lanterns”
- Also accept:** Any answer about light glowing through the sheets.
-
- 8** What lesson did Tomás learn? Use his new whiteboard message in your answer. THEME
- Answer:** Say exactly what you mean, because something obvious to you may not be obvious to other people. His message says, “Say exactly what you mean. Then say it again.”
- Evidence:** paragraph 3: “To him, it was obvious.”; paragraph 9: “Say exactly what you mean. Then say it again.”
- Also accept:** Any answer about clear instructions or not assuming others know what you mean, connected to the message.
-
- +** Your turn NOT MARKED
- Answers will vary. Example: “Please bring an old bedsheet on Friday. We will tape it over the hallway windows to make it dark. It is not for a costume.” Look for what to bring, what it is for and when.

How a Pumpkin Grows

Answers in red. Evidence quotes come straight from the passage. Page 1 of 2.

-
- 1** What is this passage mostly about? MAIN IDEA
- Answer:** **B. the stages of a pumpkin's growth, from seed to harvest**
- Evidence:** paragraph 1: *"the last stage of a story that began with a flat white seed months earlier"*
- Also accept:** The headings follow the plant from seed to harvest.
-
- 2** Why do gardeners wait until after the last spring frost to plant pumpkin seeds? RECALL
- Answer:** **Pumpkin seeds need warm soil.**
- Evidence:** paragraph 2: *"Pumpkin seeds need warm soil, so gardeners plant them after the last frost of spring."*
- Also accept:** "Because the cold or frost would hurt them" shows the right idea.
-
- 3** Under which heading would you look to find out when a pumpkin is ready to pick? TEXT FEATURES
- Answer:** **Harvest Time.**
- Evidence:** paragraph 7: *"A pumpkin is ready to pick when its color is deep all over"*
-
- 4** Give two differences between male and female pumpkin flowers. COMPARE
- Answer:** **Male flowers grow on long, thin stems and usually appear first. Female flowers sit close to the vine and have a small green bump at the base that looks like a tiny pumpkin.**
- Evidence:** paragraph 4: *"Male flowers grow on long, thin stems and usually appear first."*; paragraph 4: *"Female flowers sit close to the vine, and each one has a small green bump at its base"*
- Also accept:** Any two of: stem length, which appears first, the green bump. "Only the female flower can become a pumpkin" is also correct (paragraph 5).
-
- 5** Use paragraph 5 to explain what **pollinate** means. VOCABULARY
- Answer:** **To carry pollen from a male flower to a female flower.**
- Evidence:** paragraph 5: *"They do this by carrying pollen, a yellow powder, from a male flower to a female flower."*
- Also accept:** "To move pollen between flowers so a fruit can grow."
-

How a Pumpkin Grows

Answers in red. Evidence quotes come straight from the passage. Page 2 of 2.

-
- 6** A farmer sees many tiny green bumps turn yellow and fall off the vines in July. INFERENCE
Using the passage, give the most likely reason.
- Answer:** Those female flowers were not pollinated, perhaps because not enough bees visited during the few hours each flower was open.
- Evidence:** paragraph 5: “If a female flower is not pollinated, its tiny bump turns yellow, shrivels and falls off.”; paragraph 5: “Each flower opens in the early morning and closes by the afternoon of the same day.”
- Also accept:** Full marks for “not pollinated.” Mentioning too few bees or the short time the flower is open is a strong extra.
-
- 7** Write 1 to 5 to show the order of a pumpkin’s growth. SEQUENCE
- Answer:** 1. A tiny root pushes down.
2. Smooth seed leaves push up.
3. The true leaves grow.
4. Yellow flowers open on the vines.
5. The pumpkin turns orange.
- Boxes top to bottom: 3, 4, 1, 5, 2
- Evidence:** paragraph 3: “A tiny root pushes down first”; paragraph 3: “seed leaves pushes up into the light”; paragraph 3: “The true leaves, which come next”; paragraph 4: “Bright yellow flowers open along the vines.”; paragraph 6: “it turns orange”
-
- 8** Why should you avoid carrying a pumpkin by its stem? CAUSE AND EFFECT
- Answer:** The stem might break, and a broken stem lets germs in, so the pumpkin rots sooner.
- Evidence:** paragraph 7: “a broken stem lets germs in and the pumpkin rots sooner”
- Also accept:** Full marks need the effect (rotting sooner). “It might break” alone earns half.
-
- +** Draw it NOT MARKED
- Look for stages in the right order with labels from the passage, such as seed, seed leaves, true leaves, vine with flowers, green pumpkin and orange pumpkin.