

# CONNECTION

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## Where did the Name "Jack-o'-lantern" Come From?

According to the History Channel, the name Jack-o'-lantern first originated from an Irish folktale about a man named Stingy Jack who tricked the Devil over and over again. When Jack died, he was forced to walk the Earth with only a carved-out turnip and a burning coal in it to help light his way.

A turnip? Why do we carve pumpkins and not turnips? The answer to that is forthcoming...



Jack-o'-lanterns are associated with Halloween and its name comes from the reported phenomenon of strange lights flickering over peat bogs, called *will-o'-the-wisps* or *jack-o'-lanterns*.

# AARGH-PIRATE WEEK!

International Talk-Like-a-Pirate Day is celebrated every September 19th, but at Life College we do not feel that one day is enough to let our pirate flags fly, both literally and figuratively. This marks our second annual Pirate Week, and we cannot be accused of holding back.



On the subtler side, every homeroom was decked out (nautical humor) in pirate style, and to the delight of the neighborhood (we hope) the front yard was decorated from porch to street! Bruce constructed a cannon using nothing but upcycled materials found in his own classroom; Jennifer created a dotted-line treasure map down the sidewalk leading to the X marking the spot of a pirate-themed Little Free Library; Michelle sourced materials to create an amazing mast and sail, complete with a crow's nest housing Jennifer's life-sized skeleton, Indiana Bones (regrettably not pictured). Everyone worked incredibly hard to transform the space, and, of course, to have a whole lot of piratical fun. We even managed to sneak some learning in, too, if you can believe it! Our Knowledge/Cultural Literacy course *Pirates: Aargh!* reminded us that, even though Bruce built one in the front yard (utilizing leftover sharks from Shark Week!) pirates didn't really make people walk the plank, and that booty, while hilarious, means plundered treasure.

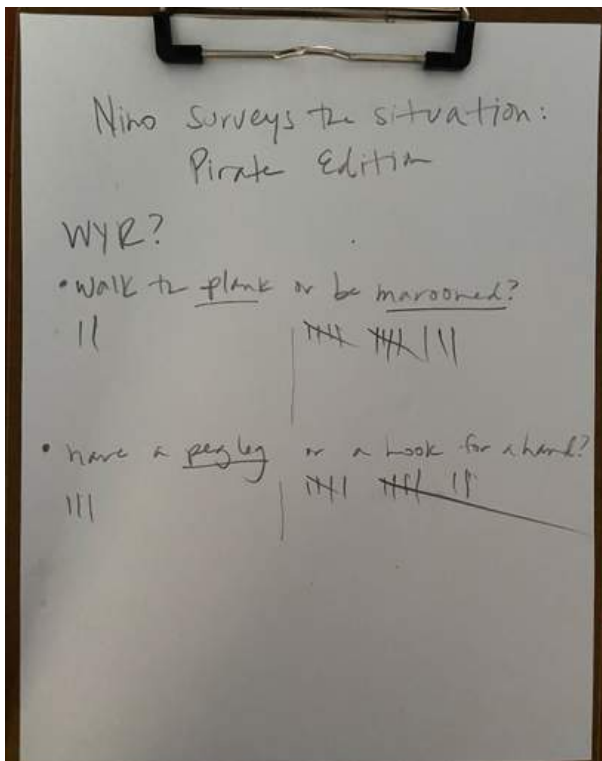


## MORE PIRATE WEEK!

Chris' art class drawing the one and only Captain Jack Sparrow!



Ahoy! Nino took a "Would You Rather?" pirate poll, and it turns out more people would prefer marooning to plank-walking, and a hook to a peg leg! Aargh, that be a good survey, me hearties!





**Did you know that while pumpkins are typically orange, they can also be green, white, red and gray?**



**Did you know that Halloween is not Day of the Dead (and vice versa)?**

While the Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos) is often associated with Halloween, it shouldn't be. The Mexican holiday dates back more than 3,000 years and is a time to honor deceased loved ones. That said, it shouldn't be associated with costumes, candy and other Halloween traditions.



# OCTOBER 2023 NATIONAL DAYS

Positive Attitude Month with Jennifer  
National Disability Employment Awareness Month

- 10/1 - National Pumpkin Spice Day
- 10/2 - Name Your Car Day
- 10/4 - National Taco Day
- 10/5 - Get Funky Day
- 10/6 - World Smile Day and National Noodle Day
- 10/7 - Play Outside Day
- 10/9 - **Native American Day**
- 10/10 - World Mental Health Day
- 10/11 - Fossil Day and **Stop Bullying Day**
- 10/12 - National Gumbo Day
- 10/13 - **Friday the 13th**
- 10/14 - **I Love Yarn Day** and **National Chess Day**
- 10/15 - National I Love Lucy Day
- 10/16 - National Sports Day and Boss' Day
- 10/17 - National Pasta Day
- 10/20 - **International Chefs Day**
- 10/21 - Reptile Awareness Day and Sweetest Day
- 10/5 - International Artist's Day
- 10/26 - National Pumpkin Day
- 10/27 - **Black Cat Day** and Frankenstein Day
- 10/28 - First Responders Day
- 10/29 - **National Cat Day**
- 10/30 - **Candy Corn Day**
- 10/31 - **Halloween**





# COLLECTIVE NOUNS

Collective nouns refer to a group of people or things, such as a crowd of people or a pack of wild dogs. Here are some Halloween-related or Halloween-adjacent collective nouns for your enjoyment:

## Bat

- The main collective nouns for bats are a colony, a cloud or cauldron:
  - A **colony** of bats refers to the large groups of bats that roost together in caves or other dark places.
  - A **cloud** of bats refers to a large numbers of bats that can be seen flying together in the sky.
  - A **cauldron** of bats is a reference to the swirling motion of bats flying in a circle.
- Another collective nouns for bats is a **hanger**. (The etymology of the collective nouns for bats is related to their hanging behavior.)



## Raven

- An **unkindness** of ravens.
- Other less common names include **rave**, **treachery**, or **conspiracy**.
- In practice, most people use the more generic **flock** of ravens. BORING!



## Owl

- A **parliament** of owls.
- Other less common names include a **wisdom**, **congress**, **hooting** and a **stare** of owls.
- In flight, owls can be referred to as a **silence**; this is because owls have extremely quiet flight, making them excellent hunters.
- Wait, there's more: Groups of owls can also be called a **bazaar** of owls, a **diss** of owls, a **looming** of owls, or a **sagaciousness** of owls.



## Cat

- A **clowder** refers to a group of cats that live together in a household or on a farm. A **pounce** describes a group of cats that are hunting or playing together. While a **glaring** is a group of cats that are staring intently at something.
- A **destruction** is used to describe a group of cats that are causing chaos or destruction, such as knocking things over or scratching furniture. And lastly, there is a **clutter** of cats. This is less commonly used. It refers to a group of cats that are in a disordered or messy state, such as a group of cats lying around in a cluttered room.



# Andrew's Corner

## Pikas

Pikas graze on a range of plants, usually grass, young stems and flowers. A Pika's habitat is usually rocky slopes.

Pikas are also called Whistling Hare because of its high-pitched alarm call when diving into its burrow. Pikas live in colonies divided into individual territories that they actively defend. The Pika will bark if they are scared and to warn



other animals of danger that is near. They can be quiet when a weasel is nearby to avoid being detected. There are only two kinds of Pika in North America, the American Pika and the Collared Pika. The lifespan of the Pika is roughly seven years. Pikas survive cold winter by eating dried vegetation they have stored away in haypiles. Pikas are related to Rabbits. The family of Pikas is called *Ochotonidae*. Pikas are the most active during the day. Pikas breed in early to mid-spring season. Many pikas breed twice. The female pika is pregnant for a month before giving birth to a litter of two to six young.

I chose to write about Pikas because their name is part of the pokemon Pikachu's name.

*Bio: Andrew Newson is a student at Life College and is 25 years old. He likes comic books, video games, hiking, exploring new places with his mom.... and babies. He is an authority in all things Star Wars, Star Trek and great places to go in the Bay Area. He is currently learning Mandarin and loves to research and learn new things.*

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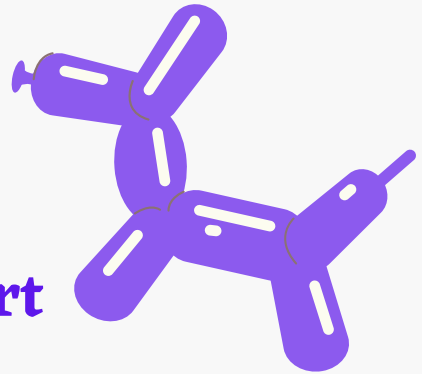


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# Happy BIRTHDAY



10/1 - Chas  
10/18 - Joe  
10/28 - Amy and Bert



Welcome  
back,  
Matthew!

After earning his MA by Research in Classics/Ancient History from Swansea University in Wales, we are delighted to have Matthew back in the Life College classroom. He and his group of over-achievers extraordinaire dove right back into their pursuit of academic excellence, and had Latin lessons up and running right away—even amongst the chaos of Pirate Week! Infinite extra-credit and gold stars all around! ★

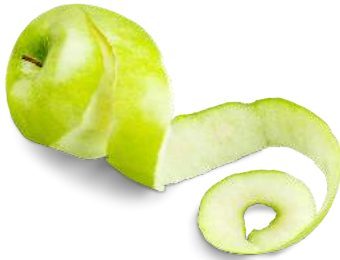




## Did you know that women of old used to perform spooky rituals in hopes of finding their future husbands?

Women used to perform "rituals" to help them find their future husbands. Here's an example of one such ritual: Women tossed apple peels over their shoulders in the hopes that they'd see the shape of their future hubby's initials on the ground.

Another involved women standing in front of a mirror in a dark room and holding up a candle to see their future husband's face.



## Did you know that Jack-o'-lanterns were once the root of evil?

Did you know jack-o'-lanterns were once carved from turnips? According to the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, <https://carnegiemnh.org/the-history-of-jack-o-lanterns-make-your-own-dippy-jack-o-lantern/#> Ancient Celtic cultures carved turnips and placed embers inside to ward off evil spirits.

Why turnips? Because Ireland didn't have pumpkins. When immigrants brought over their carving tradition, Americans began carving jack-o'-lanterns from pumpkins. Thank goodness, because pumpkins are much easier to carve than teeny little turnips!



By Rannpháirtí anaithnid at English Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=7788068>

# Leaves That Are Green

with Joe's group

Bert, Mike, Phoebe, Tyrone and Joe were on a hike recently, when Bert asked “what kind of tree is that?” Oh boy. As we looked around we realized that we only knew the names of a few of the trees that had been growing all around us all our lives. We decided then that we'd take on the task of learning a bit about some of the more common trees in Marin County. There are over 1,400 species of trees in California, but we'll start with 8.

This tree was found growing next to the baseball field in Nicasio. We suspected it was some kind of oak because of the shape of the leaves - and we were right! This is a Valley Oak (*Quercus Lobata*), photographed by Mike Rigney.



(Left) We found this tall specimen just off of the St. Vincent exit in San Rafael. Because we'd done a eucalyptus knowledge class a few months ago, everybody immediately knew what kind of tree it was! Eucalyptus Globulus, photographed by Phoebe Robb.

Across the freeway from the eucalyptus lives this verdant variety. We spotted it in the parking lot of the Marinwood Market, and we weren't sure we'd ever seen another one. Apparently it's called a Carob Tree (*Certonia Siliqua*). It's part of the legume family! Photo by Tyrone Mosby.





## Leaves That Are Green-ish with Joe's group

In beautiful Sausalito one can find the Arroyo Willow (*Salix lasiolepis*) growing along the sides of many windy roads. We found a lot of trees with leaves that look like this, so it was hard to narrow it down. We're pretty sure we've got it right! Photo by Bert Grosser.



(Top left) Down at the Marin Headlands we found tons of trees we didn't know anything about! This one turned out to be a Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus Macrocarpa*). It only grows naturally in two locations - on the Monterey Peninsula and Point Lobos - but it's been widely planted in other places such as Great Britain, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Sri Lanka. Photo by Mike Rigney.



(Above) Okay this one needed no introduction. The Coast Redwood (*Sequoia Sempervirens*) is one of Marin County's most spectacular trees. It can be recognized by its extremely straight trunk, thick bark, and slightly drooping branches. We found this one at Fort Baker. Photo by Tyrone Mosby.



# Leaves That Are Sometimes Red with Joe's group

The main drag in Tiburon is lined with these beautiful Sweet Gum (liquidambar) trees. It's September, so we hypothesized that the leaf was in the middle of its transition from green to red. Photo by Bert Grosser.



(Top left) If you take a trip down to the Marin County Civic Center in San Rafael you'll see a bevy of interesting trees. One of the most common varieties in this area is the London Plane (*Platanus acerifolia*). These things are everywhere! Photo by Phoebe Robb.



(Above) This resident of the Nicasio baseball field is common around Marin. It's very tall, with delicate elliptical leaves. What is it?? Photo by Tyrone Mosby.





# Leaves That Are Sometimes Mysterious

with Joe's group

Another mysterious Nicasio baseball field tree that definitely looks like an oak. Is it an oak? We couldn't find any leaves that looked exactly like this one anywhere on the internet. Help!

Photo by Mike Rigney.



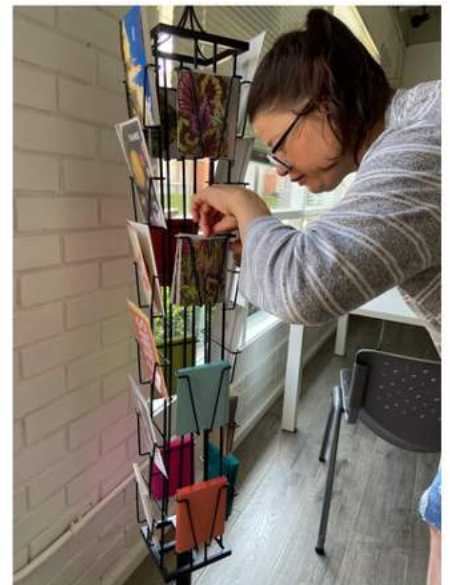
Hamilton Field has many, many beautiful trees like this one. What is it, though? It looks sort of like a maple, sort of like the sweet gum. Either way, our hours of research didn't yield anything definitive.

Speaking of definitive, if you think we've mislabeled a tree please let us know! We were surprised by how difficult it is to identify trees, and though the Picture This app was very helpful, we wondered if there was a better way to go about learning their names.

## ***You're Invited!***

Join us every first Friday of the month for the Snail Mail Pen-Pal Club from 10-12 at the CH&S Project Center, located at 866 Grant Ave. #3. This month, to celebrate spooky season, we will have a Halloween themed craft, as well as stationary, stamps and stickers, postage, and snacks. Come with a friend in mind to write to, or we can help you find a new friend just waiting to be your pen-pal!

Call Jennifer with any questions at CH&S Life College, (415) 897-8676



*Yvette stocks our schmancy spinning card rack!*



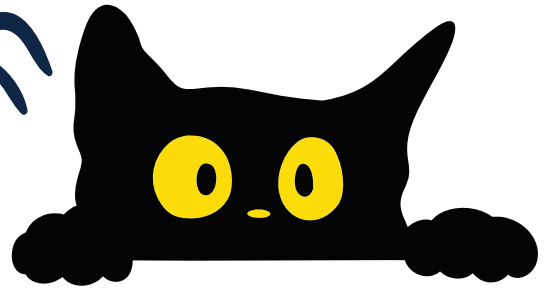
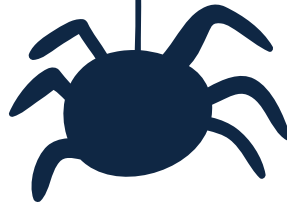
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BAT CANDY GHOST HALLOWEEN  
 PUMPKIN SCARY SKULL  
 SPOOKY TOMBSTONE VAMPIRE





# HALLOWEEN CLIP ART



TRICK  
or  
TREAT



HALLOWEEN

# *Scenes from the Science Fair*

The first annual CH&S Science Fair was a resounding success! We decked out the new project center with a dozen science experiments, from hands-on and messy to snackable science! Yvette expertly demonstrated a diy “groovy lava lamp” experiment, where oil meets colored water and effervescent tablets (minimally messy but decidedly groovy). Our resident shutterbug Randall manned the photo booth, complete with lab coats, goggles (safety first) and fun props galore. (There were some highly photogenic scientists at the fair, if we do say so ourselves.)





## *More Scenes from the Science Fair*

Bruce regaled us with an eruption from his gorgeously handcrafted volcano. Michelle helped everyone “shake it till they make it”-- it being homemade ice cream in a bag! Jennifer embraced her inner florist with a color-changing carnation experiment, and found out that there are many, many songs about science when putting together a science fair playlist. Yvette made a lava lamp and a sciencetastic time was had by all! And there were plenty of takeaways, from the lessons learned to literal favors—rock candy, lemonade, balloons, flowers, and even pirate patches. While we are still sweeping remnants of rock candy from the far corners of the room, we are still excited to make the science fair a regular event!



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# October 2023 Connection Magazine

