



Why Americans Shell Out Billions for Halloween Thrills

Description

Why do Americans spend over \$12 billion on Halloween? A psychologist sheds light on the allure of frightening ourselves for fun.

Gone are the times when children and their parents crafted DIY Halloween costumes from cardboard and bedsheets. According to the National Retail Federation, Americans splurged an astonishing \$12.2 billion on Halloween last year. A recent survey by Lending Tree reveals that nearly half of us are gearing up to indulge again this spooky season.

This presents a lucrative opportunity for small-business owners. If you're interested, the *Wall Street Journal* features an intriguing article detailing the secrets of success in the competitive \$500 million haunted house industry.

But the question remains: why do we willingly pay to experience that rush of terror? In our everyday lives, we go to great lengths to evade fear, especially given the many real-life horrors we face today.

To understand this phenomenon, we should consult psychologists. A recent post by Sarah Kollat, a Penn State psychology professor, delves into why we find value in scaring ourselves ridiculous on Halloween.

Halloween as an Adrenaline High

One straightforward reason for our fascination with Halloween fright is that many of us are, to some extent, adrenaline seekers. The thrilling rush that fear triggers is addictive, and visiting a haunted attraction offers a safe way to experience this excitement compared to more extreme activities, like skydiving.

Halloween as a Bonding Experience

Moreover, Halloween fosters social bonds. Sharing intense experiences, like visiting a haunted house, can strengthen friendships. Psychologists assert that moments of shared fear can solidify relationships, similar to the camaraderie formed among soldiers or survivors of disasters.

In essence, deep-rooted psychological factors drive Americans to invest significantly in Halloween festivities. The thrill of scare is not merely entertaining; it also offers a unique way to cope with the stresses of real life.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Allure** /ə'ljʊr/ (noun): The quality of being powerfully and mysteriously attractive.
2. **Indulge** /ɪn'dʌldʒ/ (verb): To allow oneself to enjoy the pleasure of something.



3. **Lucrative** /'lu:krətɪv/ (adjective): Producing a great deal of profit.
4. **Phenomenon** /fə'ni:ˌmæ.nə:n/ (noun): An extraordinary event or circumstance.
5. **Camaraderie** /,kæmə'rɑ:dəri/ (noun): Mutual trust and friendship among people who spend a lot of time together.
6. **Adrenaline** /ə'drenəlɪn/ (noun): A hormone released in response to stress excitement or danger increasing heart rate and energy.

Comprehension Questions

Multiple Choice

1. Why do Americans spend over \$12 billion on Halloween?
Option: To impress their friends
Option: To scare themselves for fun
Option: To support small businesses
Option: To avoid fear in real life
2. What is one reason for the fascination with Halloween fright mentioned in the text?
Option: To make DIY costumes
Option: To engage in extreme sports
Option: To experience an adrenaline rush
Option: To learn about psychology
3. According to psychologists, how can Halloween foster social bonds?
Option: By competing in haunted house contests
Option: By sharing intense experiences
Option: By avoiding fear altogether
Option: By celebrating alone
4. What does the text suggest about the allure of frightening oneself on Halloween?
Option: It is equivalent to facing real-life horrors
Option: It offers a unique coping mechanism
Option: It has no psychological benefits
Option: It is just for entertainment
5. How does the text describe the thrill of scare during Halloween?
Option: As a boring experience



- Option: As an extreme sport
- Option: As a way to cope with real-life stresses
- Option: As an entertaining and addictive rush

6. What is one possible reason given in the text for Americans indulging in Halloween festivities?

- Option: To support small-business owners
- Option: To fight real-life horrors
- Option: To avoid adrenaline rushes
- Option: To spend time with family

True-False

- 7. Americans used to primarily make DIY costumes for Halloween before spending billions on it.
- 8. Visiting a haunted attraction is considered a safe way to experience an adrenaline rush.
- 9. Psychologists believe that moments of shared fear can weaken relationships.
- 10. The text suggests that Halloween is solely about impressing others.
- 11. The allure of frightening oneself on Halloween is portrayed as having no psychological benefits.
- 12. According to the text, Halloween provides a way to cope with real-life stresses.

Gap-Fill

- 13. Americans spent an astonishing \$12.2 billion on Halloween last year, showcasing a lucrative opportunity for _____ owners.
- 14. Psychologists believe that shared fear can solidify relationships, similar to the camaraderie among soldiers or survivors of _____.
- 15. The text mentions that Halloween allows us to experience a thrilling rush that fear triggers in a _____ way compared to extreme activities like skydiving.
- 16. Many Americans are described as adrenaline seekers, finding the excitement of the Halloween scare to



be _____ and addictive.

17. According to the text, Halloween offers a unique way to cope with the stresses of

_____.

18. Americans are gearing up to indulge in Halloween again this season, as revealed by a recent survey conducted by _____.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. To scare themselves for fun 2. To experience an adrenaline rush 3. By sharing intense experiences 4. It offers a unique coping mechanism 5. As an entertaining and addictive rush 6. To fight real-life horrors

True-False: 7. True 8. True 9. False 10. False 11. False 12. True

Gap-Fill: 13. small-business 14. disasters 15. safe 16. thrilling 17. real life 18. Lending Tree

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. What is the opposite of activity?

- Option: Stimulate
- Option: Exacerbate
- Option: Acknowledge
- Option: Cautioned

2. What are taxes on imports and exports called?

- Option: Whimsical
- Option: Reliant
- Option: Lamented
- Option: Tariffs

3. What is to allow oneself to enjoy the pleasure of something?



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- Option: Procrastination
Option: Consequently
Option: Indulge
Option: Nurture
4. What is a synonym for thrive or prosper?
Option: Enhance
Option: Inevitably
Option: Perspectives
Option: Flourish
5. What is the mutual trust and friendship among people who spend a lot of time together?
Option: Allure
Option: Camaraderie
Option: Adrenaline
Option: Misconception
6. What is the feeling of responsibility or remorse for some offense?
Option: Guilt
Option: Alleviate
Option: Emotional
Option: Engrossed
7. What is a view or opinion that is incorrect because it is based on faulty thinking or understanding?
Option: Engrossed
Option: Misconception
Option: Guilt
Option: Alleviate
8. What is the act of supporting a cause or idea?
Option: Lamented
Option: Stymied
Option: Advocating
Option: Procrastination
9. What is to improve or increase the quality value or attractiveness of something?
Option: Nurture
Option: Enhance
Option: Inevitably
Option: Perspectives
10. What means to encourage or arouse interest or enthusiasm?
Option: Outpace
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- Option: Stimulate
Option: Lamented
Option: Cautious

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. The technology sector continues to evolve rapidly with innovations that often _____
older technologies.
12. The doctor _____ the patient about the potential side effects of the medication.
13. Parents play a crucial role in the _____ of their children providing love care and
guidance.
14. The heavy rain caused flooding and _____ many roads were closed.
15. Traveling to different countries can broaden your _____ and help you understand
diverse cultures.
16. As technology advances some jobs will be replaced by automation; this change is
_____.
17. Extreme sports like skydiving can provide an adrenaline rush for those seeking _____
activities.
18. The team _____ their defeat but vowed to train harder for the next match.
19. _____ can lead to missed opportunities and increased stress as tasks pile up.
20. Taking a walk in nature can help to _____ stress and clear the mind.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. Children are often on their parents for support and guidance.



22. The artist's paintings were known for their and playful themes.
23. Regular exercise can help combat the negative effects of and sedentary lifestyles.
24. Using harsh chemicals can skin conditions like eczema.
25. The scientist's groundbreaking research was by the scientific community.
26. The team was by the challenging puzzle unable to solve it.
27. The lavish resort's spa had an that attracted visitors from around the world.
28. The sudden migration of birds was a natural that fascinated scientists.
29. The movie's ending was so touching that it left many viewers in a highly state.
30. The gripping novel had readers completely unable to put the book down.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Stimulate 2. Tariffs 3. Indulge 4. Flourish 5. Camaraderie 6. Guilt 7. Misconception 8. Advocating 9. Enhance 10. Stimulate

Gap-Fill: 11. Outpace 12. Cautioned 13. Nurture 14. Consequently 15. Perspectives 16. Inevitably 17. Adrenaline 18. Lamented 19. Procrastination 20. Alleviate

Matching sentence: 1. Reliant 2. Whimsical 3. Inactivity 4. Exacerbate 5. Acknowledged 6. Stymied 7. Allure 8. Phenomenon 9. Emotional 10. Engrossed

CATEGORY

1. Business - LEVEL4

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