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10 Ideas for Parents to Add Math Fun to Halloween from Whizz Education

Seattle, WA (October 19, 2011) Sneaking math lessons into Halloween activities and parties might sound more like a trick than a treat. But, between the costumes, candy and pumpkins, the popular holiday is actually a perfect time for parents to help make learning math fun for their elementary school children, according to Kevin Judd, Vice President of Whizz Education, creator of the online math tutor, Math-Whizz. Judd, a former Math Teacher and Curriculum Director, recommends the following 10 fun and easy ideas for parents to add math to the Halloween mix this year:

1) Tally Trick-or-treating

Before they ring the first door bell on their route, encourage your children to keep a running tally of the houses that they visit for candy and to estimate the number of miles they walk. They can weigh their bounty using a traditional bathroom scale, count individual pieces of candy and guess the amount of calories in the whole bag. Children can also divide the candy into categories, i.e. chocolate, hard, soft, nutritious, etc.

2) Judge the Jack-o-Lanterns

Place jack-o-lanterns large and small in your child's hands and ask them to guess how many pounds they think each one weighs. Use the bathroom scale to see how close they came. Then, take a common tape measure and wrap it around jack-o-lanterns at the widest point to measure their circumference. Children can also count the number of seeds inside. Why not roast the seeds while you're at it?

3) Mimic the Mathematicians

Inspire your children to reach their highest math potential by inviting them to dress up as famous mathematicians such as Albert Einstein and Sir Isaac Newton. Dressing up as "The Count" from Sesame Street could be fun as well. Or, kids can create their own imaginary math heroes like Math Man.

4) Spot the Duplicates

Pick one of the year's most popular costumes such as the Smurfs, Transformers, Harry the Potter or Winnie the Pooh and keep track of how many times you see duplicates of it.

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5) Count the Cash

Between buying costumes, candy and pumpkins, Halloween costs can add up. Discuss with children how much money the family spends on Halloween every year, how much the country as a whole spends and how money can be saved with acts such as trading costumes with friends.

6) Speak about Spooky Math Facts

Bats can consume nearly 50 percent of their body weight in food each night. The thread of the orb web spider is extremely elastic and can be stretched 30 - 40% before it breaks. Discuss these and other spooky math facts about bats and spiders.

7) Estimate the Candy Corn

Fill a mason jar full of candy corn and have children guess the number of individual pieces. This game is particularly fun at parties. The person closest to the actual amount wins a prize.

8) Marvel in the Geometric Genius of Spider Webs

Spiders use silk in their abdomens to spin geometrically complex creations to catch their pray. Different spiders produce a wide variety of shapes. Parents can print pictures of various webs--spiral orb webs, cobwebs, funnel webs, tubular webs, sheet webs and dome or tent webs—and discuss with kids how they are the same and unique.

9) Wade into Water Measurement

If you plan on bobbing for apples, mark a line on the container where you want the water to reach. Ask children to estimate how many gallons of water it will take to reach the line.

10) Count the Days until Thanksgiving and Christmas

Once all the candy is collected, break out the calendar and count the days until Thanksgiving and Christmas. This exercise is a great way to cap off Halloween while sneaking in one last math lesson.

About Whizz Education

Whizz Education, creator of the award-winning, online math tutoring program, Math-Whizz, is the leading provider of dynamic online math instruction and instructional resources for grades K-8. Whizz Education's personalized, interactive and collaborative approach to teaching math is raising math achievement for thousands of students in over 40 countries. By engaging students in entertaining challenges, individualizing the curriculum for each student, and involving teachers and parents in the process, Math-Whizz is changing the math education equation. For more information about Whizz Education, Inc. and the Math-Whizz suite of services, visit <http://www.whizz.us>.

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