

### Reading Level 3: a Halloween visit to Carinthia

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November

**Topics:** family, halloween

**Learning points:**

- vocabulary
- past perfect tense
- collocations

1 Last Thursday we paid a visit to my wife's relatives, who live in Carinthia, beside Lake Millstatt. We used to  
2 visit them regularly over Halloween - which falls on All Souls Day – and on All Saints Day, due to the long bank  
3 holiday weekend, but had broken that routine last year. In England, Halloween is a far more important  
4 occasion than All Saints Day, with Guy Fawkes Night on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November coming a close second.  
5 This is traditionally a time of candles and bonfires in the dark, of damp and misty evenings outside and log  
6 fires inside; half-spooky and half-cosy, as autumn draws to a close.

7  
8 As it had snowed hard on Wednesday night, we took the longer motorway route through the Tauern tunnel,  
9 rather than the more direct route over the Felber Tauern. We thought at first that we wouldn't have needed  
10 to, as the sun continued to shine until after we had driven through the Tauern tunnel. On the other side,  
11 however, it was like being in another season: low clouds came down the mountain sides, it was spitting with  
12 rain, and snow was heaped up along the roadsides and hanging thickly on the still beautifully yellow beech  
13 and larch trees. Before we reached Lake Millstatt it had started to snow again, but the roads had already  
14 been cleared by snowploughs and so it didn't hinder our journey.

15  
16 We spent a very pleasant few days in Carinthia, savouring the relative tranquility of the off-season and the  
17 stunning colours of the deciduous trees. One morning we went on an outing to an indoor swimming pool,  
18 where our nie  
19 ces and nephew splashed around happily in the warm water. The oldest can swim quite well now, wearing  
20 goggles to protect her eyes underwater. The other children are still young enough to need armbands and the  
21 constant reassurance of an adult within reach. Unfortunately, the swimming pool was pretty crowded due to  
22 the somewhat gloomy weather outside, so much so that the children enjoyed the experience significantly  
23 more than the adults did.

24  
25 The children had been invited to a halloween party on Thursday evening. They dressed up as zombies, with  
26 black face-paint, and looked quite scary. The party room had been decorated with spiders, bats, broomsticks  
27 and pumpkins. On the menu were chopped-off fingers (sausages), pumpkin soup with eyeballs in, and other  
28 suitably gruesome food, which the children found hilarious. It didn't put them off tucking in to it all!

29  
30 What do you think about halloween parties? Some people are in favour of them, and others against.  
31 Personally, I'm not keen on the tradition of children playing 'trick-or-treat' on their neighbours, which can be  
32 intimidating and has occasionally been taken too far in England, but I don't mind fancy-dress parties.  
33 However, for me it is the atmosphere created by the carved pumpkins standing outside the front doors of  
34 houses and the sense of autumnal cosiness, accentuated perhaps by the spookiness outside, that I enjoy.  
35 Unfortunately, Halloween seems to mark the onset of winter, with the clocks having gone back and the  
36 weather drawing in.

37  
38 On our return from Carinthia, we realised that we had caught a nasty cold there, which has lingered on  
39 persistently until now. I am going to try to knock it on the head with some cough medicine and then drink a  
herbal tea before getting a good night's sleep!

### Level 3 exercises

#### **Past Perfect tense**

The Past Perfect tense is used to indicate that the action happened before another action in the past (which is described in the Past Simple tense). When you read or hear it, it is important that you make the connection with the other action. It only makes sense in connection with another action.

When you use it yourself, at first try to link it to the signal words 'before' and 'after' (when you are talking about the past). Later on, you can use it to help organise the sequence of any two actions in the past.

Look at the following examples in the text, and try to see the order/sequence:

- lines 8 & 13

Now try to complete these sentences, using the verbs given in brackets:

1. For Halloween we \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to Carinthia. We \_\_\_\_\_ (break) this routine last year.
2. The sun \_\_\_\_\_ (continue) to shine until after we \_\_\_\_\_ (drive) through the tunnel.
3. The children \_\_\_\_\_ (be invited) to a Halloween party, and they \_\_\_\_\_ (go) on Halloween.
4. The party room \_\_\_\_\_ (be decorated) with spiders and bats – it \_\_\_\_\_ (look) scary.
5. When we \_\_\_\_\_ (get) back from Carinthia, we \_\_\_\_\_ (realise) that we \_\_\_\_\_ (catch) a nasty cold there.

#### **Collocations**

Can you match the pairs of words?

to pay	too far
to tuck into	with rain
to break	reassurance
the clocks	a visit
the festival	on the head
to knock an illness	go forwards/back
to catch	a routine
constant	a cold
to spit	falls on this date
to take something	some food

### Level 3 answers

1. For Halloween we went (go) to Carinthia. We had broken (break) this routine last year.
2. The sun continued (continue) to shine until after we had driven (drive) through the tunnel.
3. The children had been invited (be invited) to a Halloween party, and they went (go) on Halloween.
4. The party room had been decorated (be decorated) with spiders and bats – it looked (look) scary.
5. When we got (get) back from Carinthia, we realised (realise) that we had caught (catch) a nasty cold there.

### Collocations

to pay	a visit
to tuck into	some food
to break	a routine
the clocks	go forwards/back
the festival	falls on this date
to knock an illness	on the head
to catch	a cold
constant	reassurance
to spit	with rain
to take something	too far