



All Ears English Episode 211: Find Out How Americans Celebrate Halloween

Lindsay: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 211: “Find Out How Americans Celebrate Halloween.”

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, where you’ll finally get real, native English conversation with your hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’ and Gabby Wallace, the ‘Language Angel’, from Boston, USA.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: In today’s episode, you’ll hear about how we celebrate Halloween here in the US and you’ll find out why learning a language is your chance to have Halloween every day.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Lindsay, how do you do?

Lindsay: Gabby. Why are you using that old school English? It sounds like you need to learn some common, real English.

Gabby: Oh, my!



Lindsay: Gabby, seriously. You need help and I know the perfect place you can go. You can go to AllEarsEnglish.com/100 to get the 100 most common phrases in every day English, real English.

Gabby: Goodness.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: All right. Hey, Lindsay.

Lindsay: Gabby!

Gabby: Hey! How you...?

Lindsay: How's it...?

Gabby: How you doing?

Lindsay: I'm doing great.

Gabby: That's good.

Lindsay: I'm excited because Halloween is coming.

Gabby: Yeah, tomorrow, right?

Lindsay: Yeah, I think so, I think so. I'm so excited. Are you gonna (going to) dress up for Halloween over in Japan?

Gabby: (Um), (you know), I don't think so, but a lot of people do. Even adults dress up over here which is totally different for me because in the US, usually only kids dress up or maybe if you're going to, (like), a special party you might dress up, right?

Lindsay: Yeah, exactly. It's more of a – it's really more of a kids' thing to do.

Gabby: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: (Um), I remember when I was teaching over at – I taught for AEON in Japan...

Gabby: Yeah.



Lindsay: ...and I remember we had a Halloween party. It was so...

Gabby: Oh.

Lindsay: ...funny. All my students, they came in with these funny outfits, (you know), their, their costumes. We had a blast.

Gabby: Oh, that's fun. So...

Lindsay: Yeah, it was so much fun.

Gabby: ...are you dressing up this year?

Lindsay: So, actually I haven't decided yet. Oh my god and it's tomorrow. Is it tomorrow? I better figure that out. But...

Gabby: You better decide.

Lindsay: ...when I was a kid I used to love dressing up. One year I tried to be a computer because...

Gabby: Oh my gosh.

Lindsay: Yeah, my dad was really into computers and so I was, like, I'm gonna (going to) be a computer. So I put this box around my waist and couldn't get through the door.

Gabby: Oh no! That's really funny.

Lindsay: It was funny. What have you been in the past...

Gabby: (Um)...

Lindsay: ...for Halloween?

Gabby: ...I remember when I was a kid I dressed up as Snow White.

Lindsay: Oh, that's fancy.

Gabby: Yeah, yeah.

Lindsay: Did you make your own costume?



Gabby: That time, no. I think it was a store-bought costume. (Um)...

Lindsay: Oh.

Gabby: Yeah, I love creative costumes, though. I love it when people just be creative and, (uh), when people are creative and they just think up something interesting that you can't buy in the store, that you have to make on your own. (Um), I think it's really common to dress up as a witch or maybe a scarecrow...

Lindsay: Or a ghost...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...with a sheet over your head.

Gabby: And that's fun. (I mean), that's fun. You can be creative with your costume, (um), regardless of what it is, (um), but I really get a kick out of the creative costumes. Like when you dress up as, (um), something that's funny or something that relates to a current event or something clever. I love that.

Lindsay: Yeah, totally agree. So when you were a kid, wh-wh-what did you – like, did you used to go trick-or-treating around your neighborhood? Did you walk from house to house or did your mom drive you to a different neighborhood that had more candy? Or what did you do?

Gabby: Yeah, I remember going trick-or-treating with friends of mine, (um), in the neighborhood. So, (you know), again, when I was a kid, maybe eight years old, we would walk around, and there would usually be a parent with us. So not all the parents, but one parent usually gets Halloween duty and walks around with the kids but – what about you?

Lindsay: Yeah. Well I remember one year – so my best friend next door – her name was Megan and her dad had a trailer, like with a, a flat-bed thing.

Gabby: Whoa!



Lindsay: And so we all jumped on top of the trailer and he brought us up and down our road and we would...

Gabby: Oh!

Lindsay: ...just stop in front of the houses, we'd rush out and get our candy. (You know), "Trick or treat!" and then get back on the trailer. And I, I remember one year I think we ran over a kid because...

Gabby: What? That's horrible.

Lindsay: Yeah, I remember someone saying, "You ran over Nelson!"

Gabby: Oh no! Well, Nelson was fine, right? No one was injured?

Lindsay: Nelson was okay...

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: ...the last I heard but, (um)...

Gabby: Good, good.

Lindsay: ...that was funny.

Gabby: Good.

Lindsay: That was funny.

Gabby: Oh. So how about now, do you usually, (um), trick-or-treat, like are you the trick-or-treater or do you usually offer candy to kids in the neighborhood?

Lindsay: Yeah, actually in this neighborhood, (like), kids don't come in to our house because our house is this big Victorian home and...

Gabby: Oh, yeah.

Lindsay: ...it's usually dark and it looks kinda (kind of) scary...

Gabby: Right.



- Lindsay:** ...and around Halloween kids get kinda (kind of) spooked. So they...
- Gabby:** (Hmm).
- Lindsay:** ...don't come here, but, (um), I like to, (you know), go out to parties. Halloween parties are huge in the US, right?
- Gabby:** Yeah.
- Lindsay:** Adults enjoy Halloween more than kids sometimes.
- Gabby:** Well, and I know Boston is a big university city so there's a lot of university kids and, (um), they like to have Halloween parties. So I think in Boston, especially, it's big to go to a Halloween party if you're between maybe 20 and 30 years old. And then, I don't know, maybe 30 and up, (um), you'll have your own party, (you know), at a, a friend or a colleague's house, (um), or maybe at work, (you know). I know it's common at the university to have, (uh), a work (sort of) Halloween party or especially in, (um), the English department to have a party for the students, too. Like you were saying when you worked in Japan you had a party for your students. So that's common. I think it depends on the industry that you work in. Maybe more...
- Lindsay:** Oh, yeah.
- Gabby:** ...serious industries like – I'm not sure if people on Wall Street are gonna (going to) be dressing up on the trading floor. It's a...
- Lindsay:** I know, like some attorney, (right), having a pumpkin on his head.
- Gabby:** Yeah.
- Lindsay:** I think it would be hard to keep – take him seriously, right?
- Gabby:** Exactly, yeah, so it depends on your industry. But I think it is a fun time to celebrate and, (um), dress up if you can find a fun event to go to. Absolutely.



Lindsay: Yeah, yeah, but it's funny because I, I meet a lot of people that tell me that Halloween is their absolute favorite holiday. I find that kinda (kind of) puzzling. And (I mean)...

Gabby: Oh.

Lindsay: ...it's kind of fun, (like), it's kinda (kind of) cool, but actually Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday – I don't understand why people love Halloween so, so much. What do you think about that?

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Do you know anyone who's obsessed with Halloween? Like they go to the costume store a month before the holiday and start planning it out, spend hundreds of dollars to create this crazy costume.

Gabby: Yeah, I do know a lot of people like that, and I think the reason why we love it so much is it's the one day in the year when you can be anything and anyone you want to. So if you feel like your alter-ego is Superman, well, dress up as Superman. This is your chance to be – embody that character, to be more powerful, to be a superhero, to be the kind of person that people admire, and that's so powerful. I think that's a big reason, too, why people like to learn a new language because when you learn a new language, you can be anyone you want. You can reinvent yourself through the English language and this is what...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: ...(you know), I, I talk to my students about a lot that when you learn English you get to choose how you represent yourself, and in a little way, it's like Halloween all the time when you speak English.

Lindsay: Yeah, (I mean), we've talked about this before that often speaking a new language, you're able to have a new personality.

Gabby: (Mm-hm).



Lindsay: (I mean), I know when I speak Spanish I'm a lot more – I'm actually less inhibited in general...

Gabby: (Mm-hm).

Lindsay: ...as a personality. I'm more, (um), a little more confident, a little more careless – I just don't...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...care that much. (You know), I just spit off the words because...

Gabby: (Um).

Lindsay: ...it doesn't feel like the real me. It is sort of an alter-ego.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: And I don't remember which episode we talked about this in, but it's way back there, maybe somewhere around January or December, but this is a fantastic topic. Gabby, when you speak Portuguese...

Gabby: (Uhn).

Lindsay: ...are you different from when you speak Japanese? Are you a different personality?

Gabby: (Um), I think so, (I mean), things, (um) – certain aspects of my personality will come out easier in one or the other because when you speak a language you also have the cultural aspects. So I find, (um), Japanese, I find it to be more polite and more, (um), sort of reserved, but that's a good thing. (You know), it's not a bad thing, it's just different. (Um), and so I'm able to express myself in a more, perhaps, oh, reserved way. (Um)...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: ...but in Portuguese I feel more outgoing, (um), maybe more, (um) – I don't know, (uh), happier, boisterous, kind of...

Lindsay: Yeah.



Gabby: ...musical because the language, (uh), really feels musical to me.

Lindsay: Yeah, that's how I felt about Spanish.

Gabby: (Mm-hm).

Lindsay: It's just something, (uh), very smooth that kinda (kind of) rolls off your tongue and you're kinda (kind of) – you're in it and you're, I don't know, there's a lot of feeling to the language.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: So...

Gabby: But they both have beauty. (You know), Japanese is more of a restrained beauty in the language – very, (um), detailed. (I mean), if you think about the, (uh), the characters, (you know), instead of writing letters you write characters. They're so...

Lindsay: (Uhn).

Gabby: ...detailed and so beautiful...

Lindsay: Oh, gorgeous.

Gabby: Yeah, (you know), whereas, (um), a language like Portuguese, its beauty comes from the, (um), softness of the sound.

Lindsay: (Hmm).

Gabby: I always thought that it sounds like a soft language but a, but a sensual language. (I mean), not to...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...stereotype it, but it's a very, (um) – like the, the sounds, like the nasal 'ou' or the, (uh), like, (uh), like 'mou' or, or, or I don't know. This is not a Portuguese podcast but I wanted to share, (you know), the, the feeling, like the L-H, the 'al-u', and I'm horrible. (Um), I have a bit of an accent, of



course, when I speak Portuguese, but it – they're, they're rolling and, (um)...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...soft sounds.

Lindsay: (Mm), reminds me a little bit about – of Argentine Spanish, (right)...

Gabby: (Uhn).

Lindsay: ...like 'ca-shay, ca-shay', that very kind of smooth sound with the double L.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Anyways, we're not teaching you Spanish or Portuguese, we're teaching English, but it's good to jump into other topics. And so speaking a new language is like an opportunity to have Halloween...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...any day of the year because you can put on a new face. And I would be interested – just getting back to the Halloween topic...

Gabby: (Uh-hm).

Lindsay: ...I would be interested in knowing how you guys celebrate Halloween in your country, or if you do, and whaddya (what do you) do? What are your, (uh), traditions?

Gabby: Yeah, that's a great question. (Um), I know in Japan it's very popular and I'm not sure about other countries so I'd love to know. (Um)...

Lindsay: Yeah, so why don't you guys come back to AllEarsEnglish.com/211 and let us know about that.

Gabby: Great, and one last thing. Not to scare anybody, ha ha...

Lindsay: {Howl}



Gabby: ...because it's Halloween, (um), but, (you know), a lot of you know that I am leaving the All Ears English podcast and, (um), I'd like to stay in touch with you guys. I'm focusing on my own English instruction, (uh), business which I started back in 2011, and it's time for me to focus more wholeheartedly there. I do a video – I have a video, (um), should I say, not a podcast, a vlog-cast on, (um), YouTube. I have a channel, Go Natural English. My website is Go Natural English, and, (um), I have video courses and I'll be podcasting as well. So you can find me at GoNaturalEnglish.com. I would love to stay in touch with listeners over there.

Lindsay: (Mm-hm), and just to let you guys know, obviously the All Ears English podcast is gonna (going to) keep going with a new co-host. So I'm in the process of finding our next co-host for All Ears English. So you guys gotta (got to) wait for that, but it's coming soon. So keep your ears open for that.

Gabby: Awesome. The more English the better.

Lindsay: The more English the better. All right, guys, take care.

Gabby: Bye.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, be sure to subscribe to our podcast in iTunes on your computer or on your smartphone. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

