

Name _____ **Literary Non-fiction**

An Open Letter to Our Students

Dear Students,

Many of you have come by the office over the past week to ask about our recently announced policy prohibiting students from wearing Halloween costumes to school. We have tried to explain our rationale patiently to each of you, but at this time it seems expedient to publish our reasons here in the school paper.

In the first place, Halloween is a historically religious observance. It falls on the evening before the Christian holy days of All Hallows' Day on 1 November and All Souls' Day on 2 November, which is why Halloween is also known as All Hallows' Eve (i.e., the evening before All Hallows' Day). Furthermore, for many Americans, Halloween is returning to its Celtic and pre-Cristian roots. Amongst those who practice Wicca, Neopaganism, and other nature-based traditions, Halloween is also recognized as a religious festival. Since either way, Halloween celebrations are religious observances, they cannot be held at a public school without violating the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

Along these lines, it is possible that students who don't wish to participate in Halloween celebrations may opt not to come to school at all on that day, thus being deprived of their right to an education on that day. It is unfair to those students to create an environment in which they feel unwelcome or uncomfortable.

Finally, our school exists for the sole purpose of educating the future generation. For those who maintain that Halloween is a purely secular and commercial holiday, we acknowledge your argument and to some extent even agree; but there is no place in an educational institution for the distraction of costumes. Not to mention that candy is already prohibited on school grounds.

We hope that this letter has answered your questions and will put a stop to the seemingly endless barrage of inquiries that have continued to grow over the past week. We encourage any students with dissenting opinions to express them in writing in a letter to the editor here at the Cavalier Chronicle.

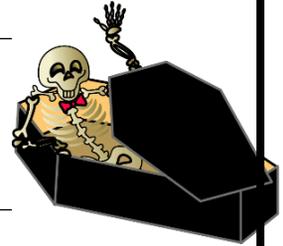
Thank you. Your principal,
Dr. Kate Moss



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1. What is Principal Moss's claim?

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2. What arguments does she provide to support her claim?



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3. Does she adequately support her arguments? How?

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4. Is her argument convincing? Why or why not?



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