When did Halloween become SPOOPY?
Brittney Christy

Although language may seem static, it’s constantly evolving. Although linguists study this evolution, official channels often can’t keep up with the strange lexical shifts and linguistic hiccups inspired by meme culture. One such shift took the traditional Halloween adjective “spooky” and turned it into “spoopy.” According to Amelia Tate’s article on the New Statesman America, “spoopy” first emerged in 2009 when a Flikr user uploaded a photo of a misprinted Halloween sign. The misprint, posted only to garner a laugh, went viral and a new word joined the English language. The creation of a new word, known as a neologism, used to be a slower process, but the internet and social media facilitate the rapid spread of linguistic shifts. It also encourages small shifts to have a greater impact on language usage. UND English department Senior Lecturer and resident linguist Jessica Zerr says, “new words are emerging all the time. [Spoopy] is interesting because it emerged out of a typo.” Though “spoopy” hasn’t appeared in any official dictionaries yet, as of 2012, the Urban Dictionary defines the word as, “Something that is funny and spooky at the same time.” However, like many words originating from internet hijinks, the word's usage doesn't always coincide with this exact definition. And its use is still evolving. Some have embraced “spoopy,” while others despise it. Like it or hate it, “spoopy” has entered the English language and isn't likely to disappear any time soon.

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Scary Writing

When your online source has no author or date of publication...
   - Parker Combs

When your professor says, ‘I will be grading your punctuation and grammar’...
   - Lora Horner

When you finish a paper only to reread the rubric and realize you wrote it incorrectly...
   - Katherine Byers

When your prof assigns a paper with no page count...
   - Molly Anderson

When you get assigned a paper...in single space...
   - Maddie Gentile

When you have to write in a second language...
   - Bailey Baesler

Getting Started and watching the cursor blink mockingly...
   - Michael Prewit

When the points in your paper do not match your thesis...
   - Conrad Kranz

When your computer crashes and you can’t remember the last time you hit the save button.
   - Diane Newberry

Having to write something in an area that your professor is an expert in...
   - Jenifer Polson
O.k. – I Wrote my Shitty First Draft…Now What?
Diane Newberry

If you were a bookish, anxiety-ridden high school student (like my former self), you might have come across Anne Lamott’s thoughts on “Shitty First Drafts” from her book Bird by Bird and it might have changed your life. Lamott, a recognized writer, admits that getting started with writing is daunting and horrible and truly one of the worst things that can be experienced. Her remedy is to stop worrying about how the final product is going to look and to embrace the fact that your first draft is going to be “shitty.” She advocates saying exactly what you feel – not worrying about the structure or cadence of your words – and just getting it all on the page.

This was a revolution for me. I could suddenly begin writing when once I would have been paralyzed. I could write pages and pages! I was invincible!

But…there’s still that one problem: those are shitty first drafts. They are, by definition, shitty. And the daunting feeling that comes from an empty page can come on just as strong when staring at a half-good page that needs to be revised.

Over the years, I realized that one of my major issues in revision was getting too attached to a particular turn of phrase or clever metaphor. I could easily revise parts of my writing that I didn’t like, but it was harder to admit when something that I loved in isolation just wasn’t doing enough work for the rest of the piece.

The tip that has helped me cope with this came from our center’s coordinator Anna Kinney (shout-out to the best boss at UND), and since hearing it, I’ve applied it to everything I’ve written. After my first draft, if there is a part of the piece that I know I really need to eliminate or rewrite for the good of the paper but feel sad about losing, I cut and paste it into a separate document. I label the document “[Corresponding document] Junk.”

After I feel like I have finished revising, I revisit the “junk” document. Sometimes, I decide to add a sentence or two back in. But most times, I realize that it truly was junk; it was just too hard to let it go in the heat of the revising moment.

I never delete these junk documents because the digital age has made it much easier to be a document hoarder. One day, some fun ideas or turns of phrase might make their way into the piece they belong in.

The beautiful thing about the junk document is that it is noncommittal but will exist in perpetuity if only for peace of mind. I can be a bit of a technophobe, must admit that life is good for a neurotic writer with access to a computer.

Haiku By Steve

Writing, revising -
leaves falling, snowflakes blowing (!)
Gosh, isn't life ruff...
Both MLA and APA have specifications for formatting numbers in writing. Though you should check your style guide when formatting numbers, here are a few commonly-used formatting rules to keep in mind:

**MLA**
- If you can write the number out in one or two words, do so (e.g. one, one hundred, thirty-seven); otherwise use a numeral (e.g. 105, 3,406, 61/2)
- Avoid mixing numerals and written numbers in a sentence (e.g. Instead of, “One hundred grey squirrels and 117 red squirrels were recorded by scientists” revise to, “Scientists recorded 100 grey squirrels and 117 red squirrels.”)
- If using symbols and numbers together, don’t mix symbols and written-out numbers (e.g. 68% or sixty-eight percent, but not 68 percent)

**APA**
- Use words for numbers one to nine and numerals for numbers 10 and up
- Numbers in a title or heading should be written out
- Simple fractions should be written out (e.g. one half of the group, three-fifths majority)
- When using numbers to approximate time, numbers should be written out (e.g. “about six months ago...”)
- You may need to mix numerals and written-out numbers to avoid confusion (e.g. “Fifty 8-year-olds” not to be confused with “Fifty eight year olds”)

**Both MLA and APA**
- When a sentence begins with a number, always write out the number (e.g. “One hundred and seven women joined the Lion’s Club”)

Sources:
MLA Style Sheet by Dr. Abel Scribe
Academic Coaching & Writing (.org)
October Horoscope

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)
You’ve been procrastinating for way too long, Aries, and you know it. Your creative energy will be enhanced through the end of the month and allow you to get a good start on that project. There’s no time like the present. Future you will appreciate your efforts.

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)
The number of assignments you’ve been juggling so far this month has been a bit overwhelming, but you’ve done an excellent job keeping up with it so far, Taurus. Keep up this energy through the rest of the month and show those deadlines who’s boss!

Gemini (May 21 – Jun 20)
When you started your current project, Gemini, you were absolutely on fire! Since then, however, things have come to a bit of a standstill. Don’t fret. Take a deep breath, set aside the distractions, and power through a few more paragraphs. There’s always time to revise later.

Cancer (Jun 21 – Jul 22)
The last half of October provides a fantastic opportunity to reevaluate your creative goals, Cancer. Feel like your current paper is turning out a little dull? Talk it through with a friend. Their insight will be invaluable as you proceed with the project.

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 22)
Balancing your personal and academic lives has proven to be a challenge for you this month, Leo. Friends are important, but so is your schoolwork. Finish up that conclusion you’ve been stuck on before you meet your friends for dinner. They won’t mind the wait.

Virgo (Aug 23 – Sept 22)
This month, you’ve had a lot of extra energy to channel into your academic pursuits, Virgo. This energy will carry you through the rest of October if you let it. Try to use this as an opportunity to try something new in regard to your writing. Your creativity will be rewarded.

Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22)
As you approach the end of October, Libra, you’ll find yourself feeling renewed enough to complete the assignments you’ve been stuck on this month. Be careful not to let your confidence in your ideas get in the way of actually seeing them through.

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21):
You’ve been pushing yourself to finish a project you’ve been stuck on this month with little to no success, Scorpio. Continuing on your current path will leave you feeling frustrated and burnt out. Take a break, work on something else, and come back to it when you’re refreshed.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)
You’re feeling very passionate about a new assignment, Sagittarius, and because of this it’s taking up a lot of your focus. While this could be an excellent opportunity for you to shine in class, don’t neglect your current projects. You run the risk of falling behind.

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)
The end of the month will provide many opportunities for you to take on new projects, Capricorn. Yes, a lot of good can come from this, but be careful not to get too overwhelmed. Sometimes it’s better to focus on the task at hand before you divert your attention.

Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 18)
You’ve been struggling with patience regarding your recent assignments, Aquarius, and it’s doing more harm than good. Trying to force yourself into doing a task without outlining first is counterproductive. Think before you act, or, in this case, write.

Pisces (Feb 19 – Mar 20)
You are full of great ideas this month, Pisces. Maybe too many great ideas. If you try and include too many different topics in your upcoming paper, you jeopardize the clarity of your writing. To prevent confusion, focus on one or two concepts, and save the others for a later day.