

## **Ten Timid Ghosts**

**By Jennifer O'Connell**

**Scholastic \$3.25**

**The Gist:** 10 timid ghosts live in a haunted house. A witch moves in; she wants them out, so 1-by-1 she scares them away. Now the ghosts want her out so they devise a plan to get rid of her!

### **Why I love it:**

- It's a rhyme book that my students can easily follow along and fill in the missing word when I pause.
- The illustrations are cute not creepy or scary.
- The phrase "A witch moved in and wanted them out." repeats so it's perfect for my students to help me tell the story.
- The ghosts are eliminated 1-by-1 counting from 10 to 0 so it helps reinforce that report card standard and my students can count backwards with me while I read the story.
- It has a fun surprise ending that I have my students help me yell!

### **Storytelling Tips:**

- I bought a tombstone that's a doorbell. You press it and it bongs and says welcome with a creepy laugh. It's how I start this story. After all we're going to visit a haunted house!
- Tell your students that you want them to help you tell the story.
- Each time you come to the repetitive phrase: "*A witch moved in and wanted them out!*" Hold up the ghost paddle and have the children yell "Out!"
- *Make a [ghost paddle](#).*
- Halloween Novelty stores that spring up at this time, as well as the Halloween section in most department stores carry little "scream" boxes for a few dollars. I own several. After the witch scares a ghost I press my scream machine to add that special affect. This always gets a few giggles and adds that special touch to my story telling.
- I wave my magic wand and give everyone 10 timid ghosts. They wiggle all of their little ghosts (fingers) and I tell them I want them to help me count them as they run away.
- After the story we sing **10 Little Ghosts** to the tune of **10 Little Indians**.
- We also do the [Ghost Pokey](#) with our booklet.
- If I'm reading this to my class, I pause before saying the rhyming word to see if they can fill it in. I give out Smartie coins after the reading to children who had the correct answers. No need for me to keep track. My students won't let me forget.

- If you want to go over some word wall words that you have that coincide with the story, try using one of those stick-on creepy fingers that you can buy at this time. They always have monster, witch and skeleton ones with wonderful long pointed-painted nails. They usually come in a pack of 10 so 2 packs give you a class set.
- I sometimes pass them out to my students to wear to follow along when reading their everyday stories. You could also pass one out to each child to put on when reading this story to make counting with you a bit more fun.

To make the story a bit more fun to listen to, and because my haunted house is in England, I tell the story in an English accent. The children LOVE it! Before you say “Oh I can’t do that.” just say “appy alloween.” Great! You passed with enough of an English accent to sound different and fun. Now just go underline all of the OUT’s so you remember to lift up the ghost paddle and cross out all of the H’s and you’ll do just fine.

- After everyone yells BOO! I end the story by saying: **“And the ghosts lived ‘appily eva**
- **Of course if you don’t feel this is your bag, just read it in your own spooky voice and that will be just great too. If you use expression and have fun, your students will too!**

### Magic Tricks:

- I read this story at our Halloween Party, and once again as with all of my Halloween stories we review “real” & “pretend” and that there is no such thing as monsters, ghosts and witches and that there is nothing to be afraid of.
- Despite what your personal beliefs are, they should NOT be shared or debated with young children. Our school keeps Halloween fun and not creepy or gory. Some schools have done away with Halloween altogether and opted for a Harvest Festival, which is wonderful; I’m personally glad that we’re still able to dress up and enjoy being little kids once more.
- I bought an adorable stuffed witch and took out her stuffing to turn her into a puppet. I put her in the dove pan.
- I have an orange envelope with a note inside that reads: **“Sniffle-Sniffle” I’m sorry; may I please come to your party? I promise to be good.** ” The writing is all splattered as if someone had been crying. I ask the children whom they think it might be from as the signature has been washed out and only an H is showing. They try and guess.
- I put the lid on and produce Hazel. She shares with us that she used to be a bad witch but went to Young Fives and learned about rules and how to be good so she now behaves herself and wants to stay.
- The children vote to let her stay. It’s always quite heartwarming to hear them invite her and even funny listening to them explain about the Time Out chair if she misbehaves. She asks us if we’d like to meet her 10 ghost friends. We say yes.
- I show the children my change bag. There’s nothing in it. Are the ghosts invisible? I guess we must count to 10 to produce them. We do it in Spanish. I then pull out a string of 10 ghosts that we count in English. **Make your own [string of ghosts](#).**
- I say Shhhhh! They are asking me something. They want to know if you want to meet



George the big ghost.

- I then put a paper ghost in my dog pan and produce another puppet, the big ghost named George. He introduces the book, telling us the author and illustrator and explains how he wants the children to help tell the story showing us his ghost paddle. They are all excited to help out and we settle in...

### **Art Project-Math Extension:**



Make a [Ghost Counting Booklet](#).

Do some [Ghostly Skill Sheets](#).



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10 Timid Ghosts In A Haunted House Counting Book

**Materials:**

- White & brown construction paper
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Stapler
- **Optional:** Wiggle eyes, Glue dots, & Small heart stickers

**Directions:**

**Prep:**

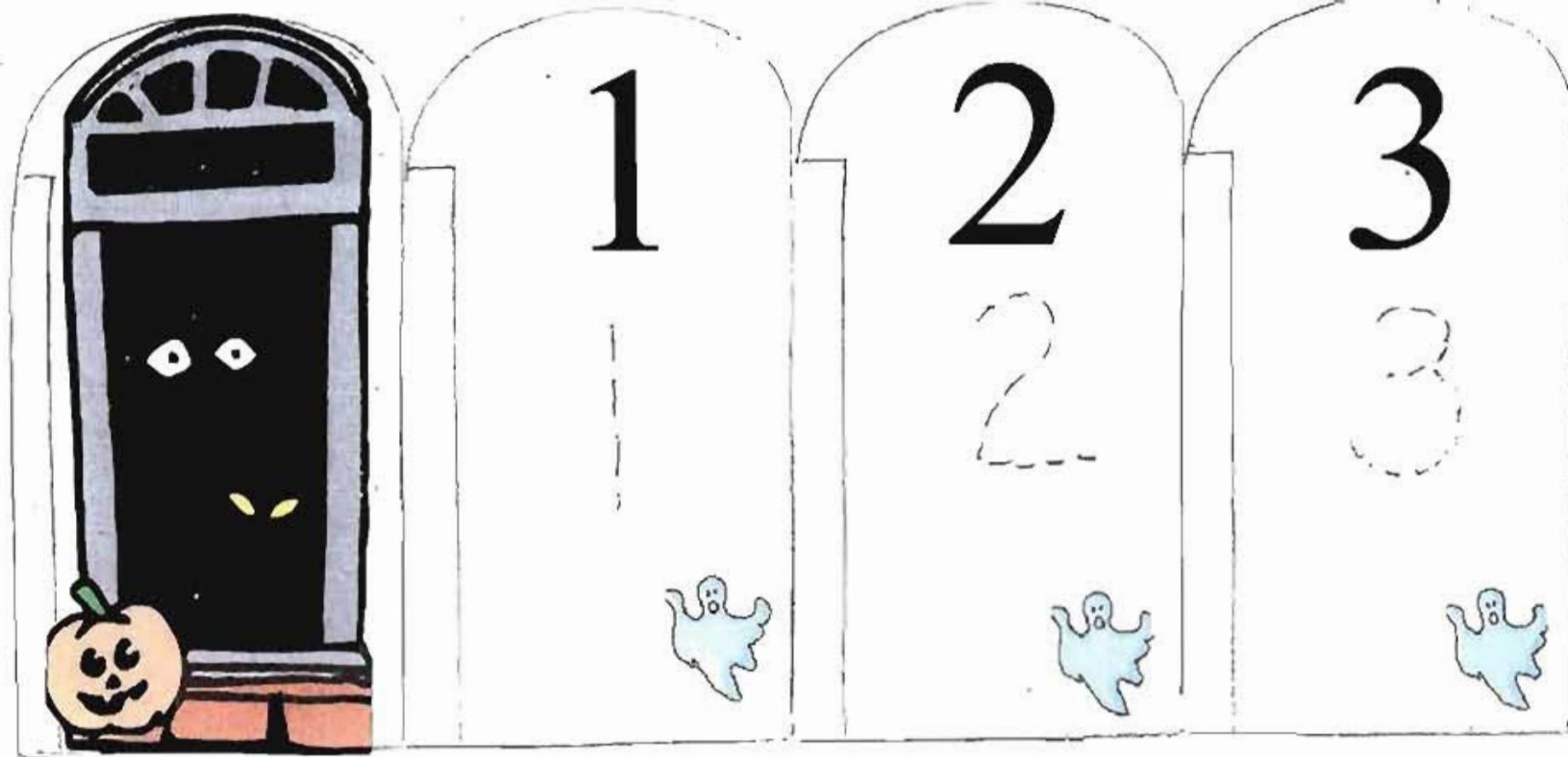
- Trace each student's foot with their shoe on & cut them out.
- Write the child's name on the back of the foot on the bottom.
- Run off booklet and staple.

**The next day...**

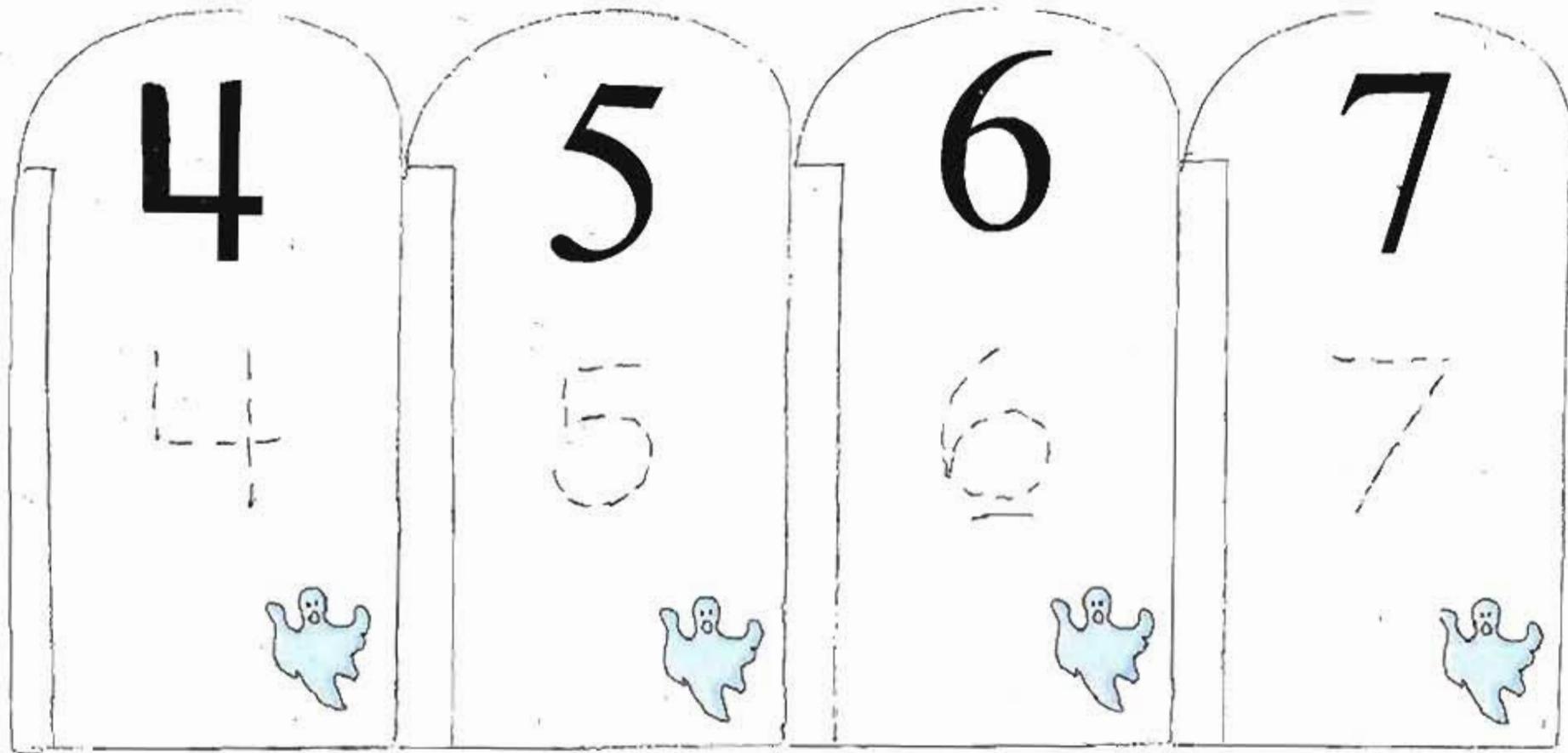
1. Children CUT out their haunted house & add some COLOR to it.
2. For better support, I have my students GLUE their house to a sheet of brown construction paper and trim around the edges. It also gives the house a bit more color.
3. Students GLUE their ghost foot to the back, **right** side of their haunted house with the heel (small) end sticking out as if the ghost is flying out of the roof. This is their ghost's head.
4. Children glue wiggle eyes to their ghost's face & stick a heart sticker some where on his body.
5. Children TRACE & WRITE their numbers in their booklet.
6. Children CUT & SEQUENCE their booklet.
7. Students raise their hand. Teacher checks the order and then staples the booklet over the door of the haunted house.
8. Students WRITE their name on the **back** of their haunted house.
9. When everyone is done, we read the booklet together.
10. We do the ***Ghost Pokey*** with our booklets before the children put them away.
11. I remind the children to tell their families that the ghost was traced from their shoe. ☺







10 Timid Ghosts  
Booklet



10 Timid Ghosts Booklet

8



9



10



10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1-0  
ghosts in a  
haunted house!  
**BOO!**  
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10  
little ghosts live  
happily ever after!



## 10 Timid Ghosts Booklet



## **Ghost Pokey**

Put your ghost in  
Take your ghost out  
Put your ghost in  
Now you shake it all about  
You do the Ghost Pokey and you turn yourself around.  
That's what it's all about.

You put your ghost up.  
You put your ghost down.  
You put your ghost up.  
Now you twirl it all around.  
You do the Ghost Pokey and you turn yourself around  
That's what it's all about.

You put your ghost to the left.  
You put your ghost to the right.  
You put your ghost to the left.  
Now you hide it out of sight.  
You do the Ghost Pokey and you turn yourself around  
That's what it's all about.

You do the Ghost Pokey.  
You do the Ghost Pokey.  
You do the Ghost Pokey.  
Happy happy happy  
Halloween! (Harvest Time!)

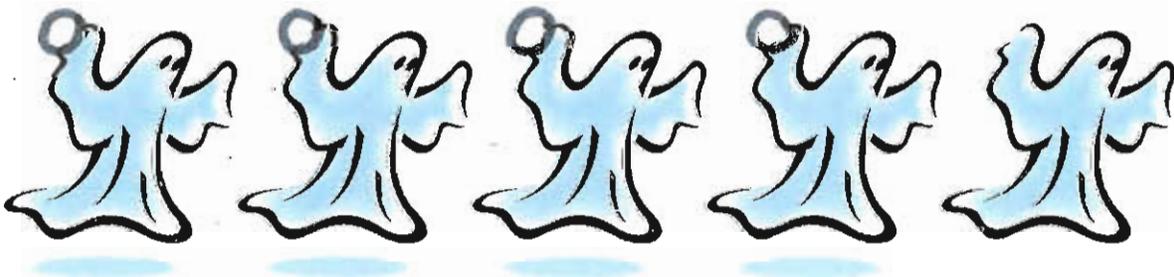
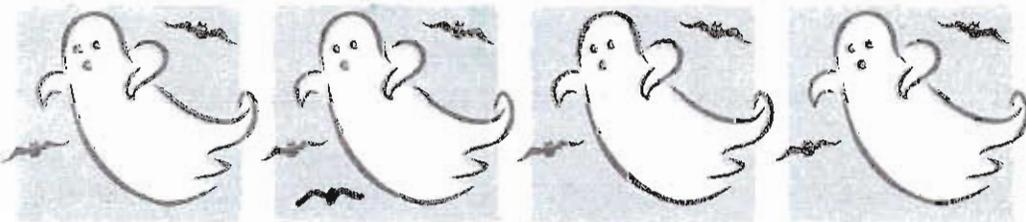
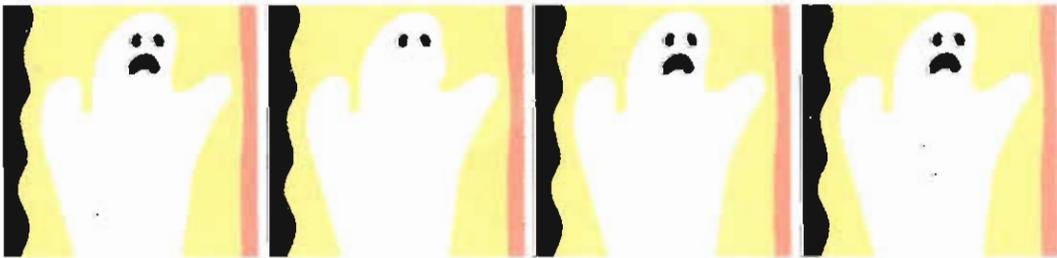
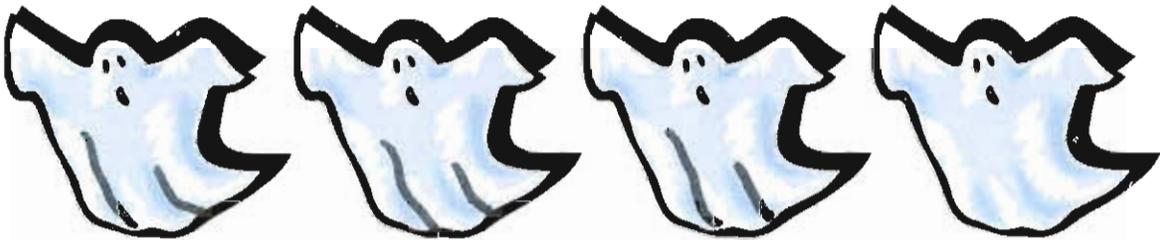
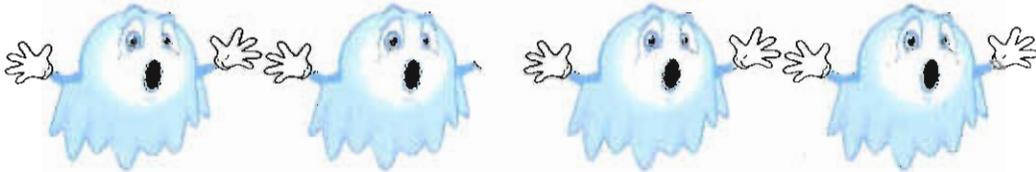




**OUT!**

### Similarities & Differences

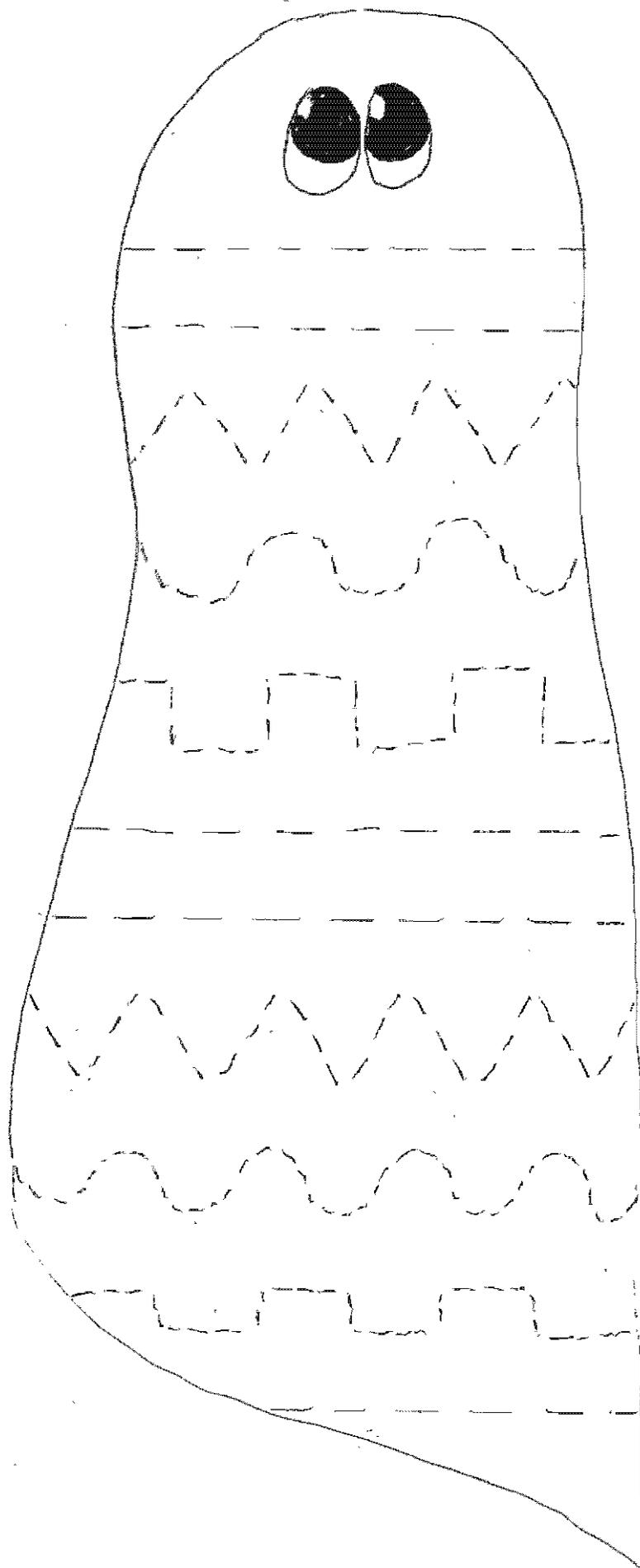
There is a spy, one that is different, in each row. Zap it with an X.



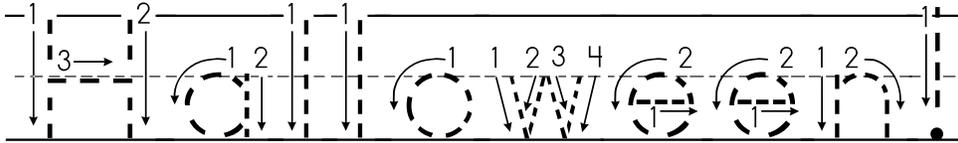
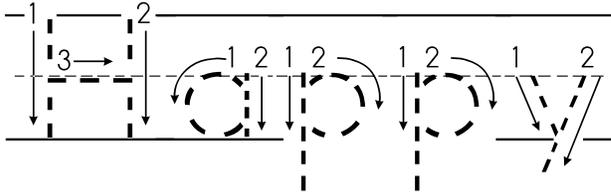
Match the ghost on the left with its twin on the right.  
Use a DIFFERENT color for each one.



TRACE the lines. Use a DIFFERENT color for each one.



TRACE:



WRITE:

Two sets of handwriting lines for practice. Each set consists of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

COLOR: **Happy  
Halloween!**

Cut out the scrambled letters and glue them in the correct order to spell the word **Halloween**.

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H	l	o	i	d	e	n	e	w
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

H	l	o	i	d	e	n	e	w
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

H	l	o	i	d	e	n	e	w
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

H	l	o	i	d	e	n	e	w
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

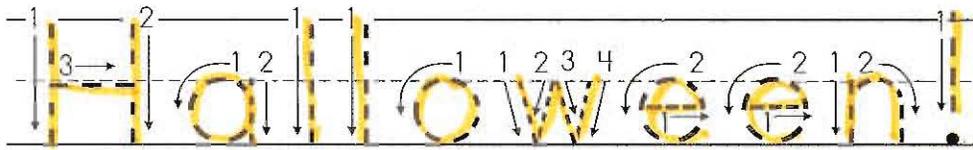
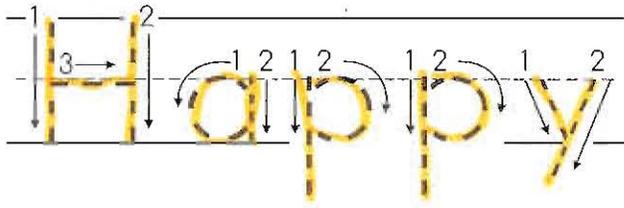
H	l	o	i	d	e	n	e	w
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

H	l	o	i	d	e	n	e	w
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

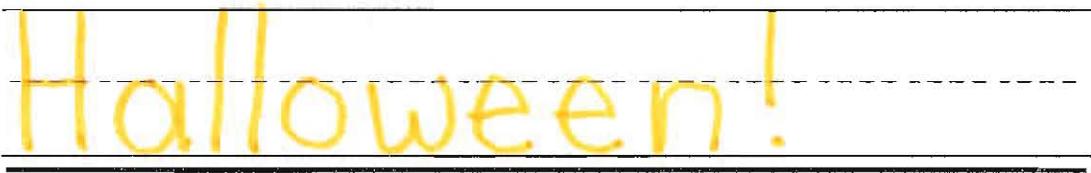
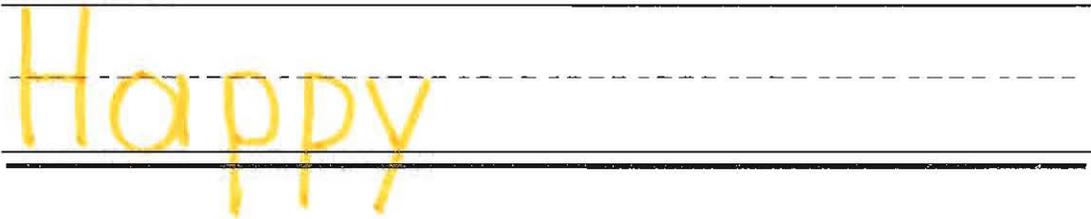
H	l	o	i	d	e	n	e	w
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Run off these strips. Give one to each student. Have them TRACE then CUT out the letters and “un-jumble” them to spell the word Halloween. They then GLUE the letters on their skill sheet. It would help if you ran this page off on a different color.

TRACE:



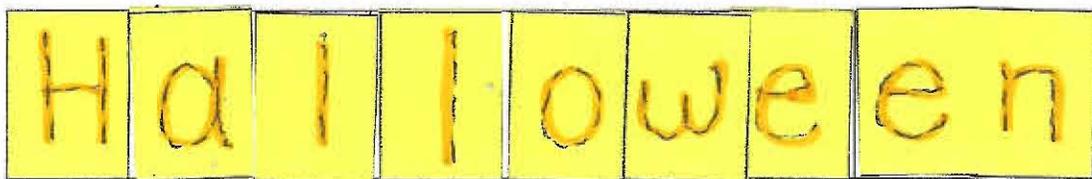
WRITE:



COLOR: HAPPY

HALLOWEEN!

Cut out the scrambled letters and glue them in the correct order to spell the word **Halloween**.





Make your own string of ghosts.  
Run off 2 copies, write #'s 1-10 on  
them, laminate, cut out & string.



String Of Pumpkins Magic Trick. Print off 5 copies. Write an upper & lowercase letter on each one. Laminate & cut out. Lay a long piece of yarn down the back of your vertical line of pumpkins; tape it down.