

Halloween Costume Ideas for Book Lovers by Laura Stoll, Assistant to the Director

Halloween is coming and it's time to choose your costume! My mother is an expert seamstress so she would always make our costumes. Over the years, she made me a flowing blue gown to be the Tooth Fairy, an animal-print Wilma Flintstone, and (my all-time favorite) red calico prairie dress with matching bonnet to be Laura Ingalls.

Her sewing skills are not genetic and instead of using a sewing machine, my husband and I took trips to the thrift and craft supply stores to show off our own creativity. Over the years, we transformed our son and daughter into a cardboard Thomas The Tank Engine, a raincoat-clad firefighter, and everyone's favorite superhero, Super Henry. (Well, he's my personal favorite.)

Even if you have no sewing or crafting skills at all, there are plenty of Halloween costumes that you can put together. And, since you are reading this column, I'm guessing you are open to literary characters. Here are some ideas for you; just be sure to stop by the Kirkland Town Library to check out a copy of the book or movie to carry with you so no one is left wondering who you are.

Remember "Charlotte's Web" by E.B. White? Put on a pair of overalls, pull your hair into two pigtails, find a stuffed animal pig, and you're Fern Arable. Bonus points to your significant other if they dress as Wilbur the pig or Charlotte the spider.

Another costume from the children's shelves is from David Shannon's picture book "A Bad Case of Stripes." If you don't know the story, Camilla Cream comes down with a bad case of stripes: her face is covered in a rainbow of colorful lines. Pair your painted face with a bathrobe and a thermometer and everyone under the age of ten will know exactly who you are.

If you'd prefer to be someone from the young adult shelves, look no further than one of high school's most frequently required novels, J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye." For this costume, your clothing can be just about anything. The real creativity comes in the accessory. Check your garage for a baseball glove, run to the store for a loaf of rye bread, and carry a few slices in the glove. If you really want to make a statement, see if you can find a catcher's mask. Again, if you stop by the KTL and borrow the book, your costume will make more sense.

The "Twilight" books aren't on the bestseller list anymore but that doesn't mean the characters aren't good costumes. After all, they are just vampires disguised as teenagers! Put a light covering of baby powder on your face, wear a v-neck sweater and jean jacket, and throw on a pair of inexpensive plastic fangs. Voila! The vampire Edward Cullen has come to life. Err...death.

It's no secret that although some books have a famous name on their cover, they are actually written by a ghostwriter. H.P. Lovecraft wrote books and stories for Harry Houdini. A variety of authors have continued the Jason Bourne series after the death of the creator, Robert Ludlum. Carolyn Keene is a pseudonym for all of the authors who wrote the Nancy Drew series. For your own ghostwriter costume, get a white sheet, cut out some eye holes, and grab one of these ghostwritten books.

A costume that wouldn't require you to ruin one of your bedsheets is to dress as a tourist. Borrow a Fodors travel guide or Loney Planet book, buckle on a fanny pack, strap a camera around your neck, grab a bucket hat, and you're just someone looking to take an exotic vacation.

Of course, a typical Kirkland Town Library patron would be walking around with more than just books. Why not carry a cake pan bag on your shoulder, wear a park pass around your neck, strap a pair of snowshoes to your back, and show off your library card? You get an extra piece of candy for every item you are able to incorporate into this costume. (Jigsaw puzzle? Heirloom seeds? Good luck!) This could be the perfect costume for the more than 60 patrons who earned a gold library card from the Mid York Library Road Trip this summer.

Whatever you choose to wear, be sure to stop by and tell us about your costume. We're having a costume parade for kids on Saturday, October 29 at 10:30 a.m. and there's no doubt some staff people will choose to dress up on October 31. I came across my own costume idea while I was researching this article. I won't give it away but let's just say that the Assistant to the Director knows that having fun isn't hard when you've got a library card.

Happy Halloween!