

Library Lines, Ruth Gilbert, Youth Services Librarian

Halloween is approaching, and this is the first year my four-year-old daughter has some very specific opinions about her Halloween costume. She'd like to be a princess, possibly with a cape and dinosaur claws, but the accessories haven't been settled on yet. I'm nervous that there will be some last-minute requests, so I'll have her dress-up clothes, hats, headbands, and other odds-and-ends at the ready. If you also find yourself down to the wire this Halloween, I have some easy, book-related costume ideas that anyone can put together. Don't forget to show off your costumes at our costume parade on Saturday, October 28! We'll march from the library to the Clinton village green and enjoy some snacks at the gazebo.

These ideas use clothes your kids may already have in their closets, plus minimal craft supplies, headbands, and a little face paint. Search for any of them on the internet for great examples!

Do you have a pair of denim overalls? Your child can be the mouse from Laura Numeroff's classic "If You Give A Mouse A Cookie." Make some mouse ears out of construction paper or felt and attach them to a headband, use face paint to make an adorable mouse nose and whiskers, and make a cookie prop out of paper or cardboard for them to hold.

If you happen to have green overalls and a brown shirt, you've got yourself a Corduroy costume, from Don Freeman's "Corduroy." Don't forget to leave one of the straps undone to show the missing button!

If you can find a bright yellow tee shirt, you can create a Pete the Cat costume. This idea is from "Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons." Just cut out four buttons from paper or felt, whatever you have, and pin them down the front of the shirt. Depending on how crafty you are, you could make a headband with blue ears and yellow eyes, or attach them to a blue hat that you already own. If you've got them, add blue pants and a shirt under the yellow tee to really make Pete feel groovy.

Does your child have a rainbow-striped shirt? They can be Camilla Cream, who loves lima beans, from David Shannon's "A Bad Case of Stripes." Use face paint to make bold rainbow stripes on your child's face, and they'll look like they have an awful case of the stripes.

If your child has a suit from a special occasion that they'll never wear again, transform it into a Mr. Wolf or Mr. Shark costume from Aaron Blabey's "The Bad Guys" series. If you're artistically inclined, you could make a cardboard mask to look like the drawn face of the character.

Peer into the pajama drawer to check for some red pajamas. If you've got them, your child can be Llama Llama from Anna Dewdney's beloved "Llama Llama Red Pajama." To complete the look, make some long llama ears to put on a headband and paint on a cute llama nose.

Fans of Dav Pilkey's "Dogman" series can easily transform themselves into the Dogman himself with a blue tee shirt, a blue hat, yellow paper or felt, and brown paper or felt. Just cut out a yellow badge to attach to the front of the shirt and hat, and make some long dog ears to hang from the hat.

If all of these seem like too much work, think about convincing your child to be the Princess in Blankets from Shannon and Dean Hale's "The Princess in Black" series. You'll need

some lightweight blankets to heap on and secure with a belt, and maybe a tiara if you have one. Bonus points for staying nice and warm on a chilly Halloween night!