

The Race for the Perfect Halloween Costume

- Kyra Veprek

Believe it or not, one of the most stressful parts of being a high school girl is choosing the perfect Halloween costume. At first glance, it seems simple; what could possibly be so difficult about choosing a Halloween costume? The options are limitless, and dressing up for Halloween has been a ritual you've gladly taken part of since before you could speak. However, the social pressures and personal insecurities that accompany high school can take a serious toll on the confidence one feels on Hallow's Eve.

Like most teenage girls, I faced this reality my first year of high school. Over Facebook, my class of girls decided to each be Waldo from *Where's Waldo*, creating somewhat of an ironic situation. Like many freshmen, I felt the need to stand out, so taking part in the group costume was out of the question. The more difficult part was thinking of a costume more clever and flattering than the one agreed upon for the class. For any underclassmen, the dream was to have a costume witty enough to get you noticed (especially from upper classmen) but intelligent and subtle enough to get respect (Example: My freshman year a student was "Sub-Tweet," and covered herself in passive aggressive Twitter posts made by MHS students. It was just offensive and clever enough to get a good amount of laughs, as well as high fives, from passing students.). Unfortunately, I pretty much threw myself into emotional turmoil to chose a costume because I felt the need to impress. I wanted people to appreciate my clever thinking, hard work and originality so naturally I turned to the internet. Countless hours were wasted at my laptop searching for "clever Halloween costume for high schooler" or "funniest costume 2015," but to no avail. The night before Halloween I found myself in tears. My life had been consumed by the overwhelming desire to please other people and it seemed nothing would be good enough. So that was it. That Halloween I turned up to school in nothing but jeans and a sweatshirt. I figured maybe I could tell people my costume was "an overtired high school student" and get a few laughs, but it was really just lame.

As my third Halloween in high school quickly approaches, I find myself plagued with the same questions: Should I dress as the designated class costume? Will people think this costume is weird? Will people get the reference? Do I look stupid? Why can't I just cut eyes out of a sheet and call it a day? Instead of chasing myself back and forth over each consideration, I refute the questions with a simpler question: Does it really matter? The purpose of Halloween has never been to top everyone else's costume, and the purpose of dressing up for school has never been to impress other people; it's to make one more day of work a little less stressful. During your high school years (and really just at any point in your life) it's easy to blow the importance of decisions out of proportion. From tests, to sports, to social events, it's common for students to place a ridiculous amount of stress on things that simply don't need it. It's important to understand the purpose of everything one does: the purpose of a test is to test your knowledge; the purpose of a sports game is to get exercise; and the purpose of dressing up is to have a little fun. During our time in high school, it's important to focus on what's important, and reserve stress for when we really need it (like when the day comes that we have to pay bills). This being

said, next time you're feeling stressed, step back, and make sure you're not making the Armageddon out of a Halloween costume.

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