

XTERMIGATOR KIDS

A Friendly Ferns Halloween

Costumes. Kindness. A place for every friend.



By Dr. Eric S. Fishon
xtermigatorkids.com

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A Story of Costumes, Kindness, and Every Way to Celebrate

By Dr. Eric S. Fishon

Friendly Ferns Publishing
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A Friendly Ferns Halloween

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For every child,
and every way to celebrate.

Welcome to Friendly Ferns

A place for every friend.

A quiet corner.

A smooth path.

A costume that feels just right.

Or no costume at all.

There is more than one way to join in.



A Big Idea

Autumn had come to Friendly Ferns Swamp. The cypress leaves turned gold, the air smelled like cinnamon, and Finn had a very big idea.

"This year," he told Shelly the turtle, "we are going to make Halloween good for every single friend."



Finn shared his big idea with Shelly. There would be a place for every friend.



The friends began sharing ideas. A quiet place belonged in the plan, too.



Xtermigator's Costume

They found Xtermigator buried under a mountain of costumes.

"I can't decide!" he said. "A pirate? A superhero? A very spooky pickle?"

Finn laughed. "Xtermigator, you don't have to be anything but you."



A hat, a cape, and a pickle made Ava giggle. Xtermigator was having fun choosing.



Freddie's Quiet Corner

First stop: Freddie the frog's lily pad. Freddie held his headphones close.

"I love Halloween," he said, "but the booms and shrieks are too much for my ears."

Finn opened his notebook. "Then we'll build a quiet corner: soft lights, warm cocoa, and no surprises."



Finn listened carefully and wrote down what would help Freddie enjoy the celebration.



Soft cushions, a blanket, and a picture book made the quiet corner feel welcoming.



Shelly's Route

At the old boardwalk, Shelly stopped at the steps.

"I can't climb those," she said. "Not won't. Can't."

Finn looked at the bumpy boards, then at his best friend. "Then this year, the parade will take the smooth path. Nobody gets left behind."



Finn and Shelly tried the smooth route together, all the way to the gathering place.



Come as You Are

Under the willow, Tebow, the black cat, poked at a costume with one paw.

"It's itchy," he admitted. "Everyone will laugh if I don't wear one."
Romeo, the tabby, nodded.

"Come as you are," said Finn. "You don't need a costume to join in."



Romeo walked beside Tebow. Their friendship did not depend on a costume.



Teal Pumpkin Treasures

By the ferns, Ollie the otter sighed. "I can't eat the treats here; some contain ingredients I'm allergic to."

Finn grinned. "Let's put a teal pumpkin on the porch and offer non-food treasures, like stickers or bookmarks, instead of candy. Your grown-up can help check what works for you."



Finn offered a choice, and Ollie picked for himself.



Stickers and bookmarks could be treasures, too. Ollie found something to enjoy.



Getting Ready Together

All week, the Swamp Gang worked. They painted pumpkins, hung softly glowing lanterns, mapped the smooth parade route, and filled a big teal bucket with treasures.

Even the costumes got kinder: nothing itchy, nothing too tight, and nothing that covered anyone's ears unless they wanted it to.



Ava helped Finn make a picture plan. She wanted to know what would happen next.



Ava and Ollie kept the planning cards in place while the friends got ready.



Halloween Night

When Halloween night came, Friendly Ferns Swamp glowed orange and gold.

Xtermigator wore... a little of everything.

"I'm a pirate-superhero-pickle!" he announced, and everybody cheered.



Finn laughed with delight. Xtermigator had found a way to bring his favorite ideas together.



The Parade

Ava danced at the front in her sparkling green dress, and the parade followed her down the smooth path.

Friends walked, danced, or rode together. No one hurried.

After all, a parade only goes as fast as friendship.



Ava could dance, Shelly could walk, and Finn could stay beside his friends.



Xtermigator matched Shelly's pace. There was no need to hurry.



Every Way to Join In

From the quiet corner, Freddie watched with his headphones on and a cup of cocoa in his hand. He loved every minute.

Tebow came as himself. His friends smiled and waved.

Ollie chose treasures at the teal pumpkin and didn't miss the candy one bit.



After dancing, Ava could choose a quiet break. Both were part of her celebration.



A Real Way to Celebrate

At the end of the night, Finn looked around at his friends. Some liked the noise. Some liked the quiet. Some wore costumes. Some came just as they were.

"Every way of celebrating," he said, "is a real way to celebrate."



Finn listened as his friends shared the parts of the evening they had enjoyed.



Some friends sat close. Others left a little space. Everyone still belonged.



Where Everyone Belongs

Under the harvest moon, all of Friendly Ferns Swamp agreed.

It was the friendliest swamp anywhere.

And it was the swamp where everyone belonged.



A smooth path. A quiet corner. A welcoming light. Friendly Ferns had room for every friend.

Talk Together

What helped Freddie enjoy Halloween?

How did Finn make the parade work for Shelly?

Why did Tebow decide not to wear a costume?

What would help you feel welcome?

Make Room for Every Friend

Plan a celebration together.

Where could someone take a quiet break?

Which path would be easiest to use?

What could friends do if they do not want a costume?

Ask each friend what would help them join in.

About XTERMIGATOR Kids

XTERMIGATOR Kids helps families of all kinds feel the love of Christ through stories, Sunday school adventures, and the Swamp Gang of Friendly Ferns.

People have different abilities and support needs.
Every way of joining in counts.

xtermigatorkids.com

More Adventures

From Friendly Ferns

Xtermigator and the Zoomy Frog

The Missing Leaf Mystery

The Mystery of the Hidden Sound

Remembering 9/11

Hellenic and Orthodox Collection

Saints and Name Days

hellenickids.org

Meet Our Friends

Finn is the young boy exploring Friendly Ferns with his friends. Xtermigator is their friendly alligator companion.

Ollie is an otter. Ava is an autistic fox. Freddie is a frog, and Shelly is a turtle.

Romeo is the tabby cat. Tebow is the black cat. Each friend has a place in the story.



For Families and Educators

Ask children what helps them feel welcome. They may speak, point, draw, write, or use a communication tool. Nobody needs to disclose a diagnosis.

Ava enjoys dancing and may also choose a quiet break. Those are her choices in this story; autistic people have different preferences and support needs.

Notice how the friends change their celebration together. Participation can mean walking, riding, helping, watching, or resting.

Invite children to plan one change that would make their next gathering more welcoming.

Every way to celebrate

Every way of celebrating
is a real way to celebrate.

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