

The First Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving was first celebrated by the Pilgrims in 1621.

The Pilgrims sailed from England to North America to find religious freedom. Their ship, the Mayflower, landed at Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts in late fall, 1620, just as winter was beginning.



The winter was very hard for the Pilgrims. They didn't have enough to eat and many of them were very sick. By the time the winter of 1621 was over, almost half of the Pilgrims had died.

In spring, the Wampanoag Indians helped the Pilgrims get the land ready for planting. They taught them how to grow wheat, barley, corn, and some vegetables.

After the summer growing season, in the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims celebrated their first harvest by having a 3-day feast. They invited their Native American friends to join them. Without the help of the Wampanoag, the Pilgrims would not have made it through the year.

Thanksgiving did not become a national holiday until 1863. That year, President Abraham Lincoln declared the last Thursday in November as a day to remember the first Thanksgiving.

1. Which president was the first to make Thanksgiving a national holiday?

a) Abraham Lincoln b) George Washington c) Woodrow Wilson

2. When was the first Thanksgiving?

a) 1620 b) 1621 c) 1861

3. Why did half of the Pilgrims die during their first winter in America?

a) They didn't have enough food. b) They were killed by English soldiers. c) They drowned.

4. What time of year was it when the Pilgrims arrived in America?

a) late fall b) spring c) late winter

Thanksgiving



Thanksgiving is celebrated in the USA and Canada. In The USA, it is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November every year. The Canadians celebrate it on the second Monday in October. It is associated with giving thanks to God. In the beginning people expressed gratitude for the harvest they reaped. It used to be a religious holiday but now it has become a secular celebration.

The most important part of the celebration is the dinner which includes the customary turkey served with cranberry sauce, and pumpkin. A lot of business goes on during this holiday. For example, restaurants take advantage of the holiday to sell turkey dinners

Families and friends usually get together for a large meal or dinner during Thanksgiving and have a lot of fun. That's why, the Thanksgiving holiday weekend is considered one of the busiest travel periods of the year. Students are given a four-day or five-day weekend vacation. Thanksgiving is also a paid holiday for most workers.

Reading Comprehension:

1. The origin of the name „Thanksgiving“ comes from:
 - a) thanks given to God
 - b) thanks given for the help the early settlers got from each other
2. Thanksgiving is time to
 - a) worship God
 - b) thank God, eat and have fun
3. It is vacation for
 - a) everybody
 - b) a lot of people
4. The main food that is prepared in this celebration is:
 - a) cranberry sauce and pumpkin
 - b) turkey