

Thanksgiving: Origin and Traditions

Skills:

Can follow in outline straightforward short talks on familiar topics, provided these are delivered in clearly articulated standard language or a familiar variety.

Teens

Group

1 Read the beginning of Lily and Emma's conversation about Thanksgiving.

Lily

"Hey, Emma! Are you ready for Thanksgiving tomorrow?"

Emma

"Of course! I can't wait to see my family and eat all the delicious food."

Lily

"What can you tell me about the history of Thanksgiving?"

Emma

"I know that it's about the pilgrims, but do you know who they were?"

2 Look at the words in each group below. Do you understand their meaning? If not, ask your teacher or partner for help. With a partner, create one sentence for each group of words. Make sure your sentence includes all the words in the group.

1. national/holiday/U.S.
2. Families/gather/meal
3. Pilgrims/Native Americans/Thanksgiving
4. Turkey/dish/dinner

3 Watch the video about the history of Thanksgiving and answer the following questions.



1. Why did the Pilgrims leave England?

- A. They wanted to start a new life in a new country
- B. They wanted to start a war with the Native Americans
- C. They wanted to start a new church in England
- D. They wanted to travel and explore new places

2. What happened to the Pilgrims during their first winter in North America?

- A. They had a great harvest and plenty of food
- B. They made many new friends with the Native Americans
- C. Half of the Pilgrims died because of the harsh weather
- D. They were able to grow crops right away

3. Who helped the Pilgrims when they arrived in North America?

- A. The President of the United States
- B. The king and queen of England
- C. A Native American named Squanto
- D. The captain of the Mayflower ship

Glossary:

pilgrims - people who travel to a special place for religious reasons or beliefs.

pilgrim fathers - the first group of people who moved to America to start a new life.

parade - a public event where people walk or march together to celebrate something.

church - a building where people go to pray together.

4. What is the traditional Thanksgiving meal usually made up of?

- A. Hamburgers, french fries, and milkshakes
- B. Roast turkey, cranberry sauce, potatoes, and pumpkin pie
- C. Steak, mashed potatoes, and apple pie
- D. Pizza, salad, and ice cream

5. Where is a famous Thanksgiving parade held every year?

- A. In Washington, D.C.
- B. In Los Angeles, California
- C. In Chicago, Illinois
- D. In New York City, New York

4 Watch the video again and fill in the gaps.

Americans of all religions celebrate Thanksgiving on the _____(1)
 Children do not go to school and most businesses close for _____(2)
 Thanksgiving is a special day for _____(3) and people travel great distances to be with their families for this occasion
 The tradition started with the Pilgrim Fathers who left England on _____(4)
 The first Thanksgiving dinner was celebrated in November _____(5) with Pilgrims and Native Americans
 Today, the traditional Thanksgiving meal includes roast turkey, cranberry sauce, potatoes, corn, and _____(6)
 Macy's _____(7) in New York City has been a famous tradition since 1924, and two million come to see it each year.

5 Discuss the following questions in pairs.

1. How does your family celebrate special holidays, and what traditions do you have that are similar to Thanksgiving?
2. What do you think is the most important part of Thanksgiving: spending time with family, the food, or remembering history? Why?
3. Have you ever attended a Thanksgiving Day parade, like the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade?
4. If you could create a new tradition for Thanksgiving, what kind of food or activities would you include?

Correct answers

1

Made in the “Create a Dialogue” tool.

2

Made in the “Link the Words into Sentences” tool.

Possible answers:

1. Thanksgiving is a national holiday celebrated in the U.S.
2. Families often gather together to enjoy a Thanksgiving meal.
3. The Pilgrims and Native Americans shared the first Thanksgiving.
4. Turkey is a traditional dish on Thanksgiving dinner tables.

3

Made in the “Audio & Video Question Creator” tool. The glossary was made in the “Word-Definition Matching” tool.

1. A
2. C
3. C
4. B
5. D

4

Made in the “Summary GapFill” tool.

1. fourth Thursday of November
2. four days
3. families
4. the Mayflower in 1620
5. 1621
6. pumpkin pie
7. Thanksgiving Day Parade

5

Made in the “Discussion Questions” tool.