

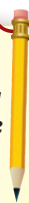
Thanksgiving

Educational Lesson

Thanksgiving Day is a federal holiday celebrated on the fourth Thursday of every November. Originally, this day was set aside to give thanks for a plentiful harvest. Corn often is used in autumn decorations because the Native Americans taught the Pilgrims how to plant corn, and the Pilgrims survived their first harsh winter in North America thanks to the corn harvest. Modern Thanksgiving observances celebrate not only the Earth's bounty, but also good fortune in general.



Activity: *Some items traditionally served at Thanksgiving meals across the U.S. are foods that were readily available for the first Thanksgiving, such as cranberries. Create a menu for this Thanksgiving that uses only items that are locally grown or produced.*



Thanksgiving is a holiday steeped in tradition outside of the meal table as well. For instance, every November, a presidential pardon is issued to save a turkey from becoming Thanksgiving dinner, and the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade is always televised that morning live from New York.

Activity:

Write a persuasive essay about why one Thanksgiving tradition should be kept or eliminated, or advocate for a new tradition to be introduced. You may also choose to create a presentation that explores the historical development of an ongoing tradition.



Thanksgiving in America is traced back the Pilgrims and Native Americans. Other countries also celebrate holidays similar to our Thanksgiving. These "Thanksgiving" holidays recall cultural and historical celebrations of bountiful harvests. The ancient Roman harvest Cerelia was celebrated in October; in Korea, Chuseok usually takes place in August, but the date varies because it is observed according to the lunar calendar; and in some African countries, particularly Ghana and Nigeria, Homowo, or Yam Festival, is celebrated to mark the end of the rainy season.

Activity: *Use library or online resources to learn more about these and other international celebrations of thanks for the harvest. Then, using the news stories in today's Oklahoman as a guide, write a news article as if you were a reporter at one such celebration.*



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