

Name: _____



The First Thanksgiving: (1621)



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Thanksgiving began in November 1621 in Plymouth, Massachusetts, when the Pilgrims – English settlers who arrived on the Mayflower in 1620 – celebrated surviving their first year in America. After a harsh winter with little food, they learned to plant corn, beans, and squash from the Wampanoag Native Americans, led by Squanto and Chief Massasoit. When the harvest was successful, the Pilgrims invited their Wampanoag neighbors to a three-day feast with turkey, deer, fish, corn, and pumpkin. This meal was not called “Thanksgiving” yet, but it was a joyful moment of gratitude for survival, friendship, and sharing between two very different groups.

The Spirit of Thanksgiving and How America Celebrates It.

The spirit of Thanksgiving is thankfulness, family unity, and kindness. It reminds people to pause and appreciate food, loved ones, and help from others – just like the Pilgrims thanked God and the Wampanoag. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving a national holiday on the fourth Thursday of November to bring the country together during the Civil War. Today, Americans celebrate with a big family dinner (turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, pie), parades (like Macy’s in New York), football games, and volunteering at food banks. Many also share what they’re thankful for around the table, keeping the tradition of gratitude alive.

Questions:

1-When and where did the first Thanksgiving feast take place, and who joined the Pilgrims?

2-What is the main spirit of Thanksgiving, and how did the first feast show it?

3-Who made Thanksgiving a national holiday, and why?

4-Name three foods or activities that are part of Thanksgiving celebrations in America today.

5-Why do you think sharing what you’re thankful for is an important Thanksgiving tradition?

