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in on america

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THANKSGIVING

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THANKSGIVING?

Q. In what country (countries) is Thanksgiving celebrated as a national holiday?

A. In the United States and in Canada.

Q. Who did the colonists in Plymouth thank in 1621 and why?

A. They thanked the Wampanoag Indians for teaching them to plant crops, which saved them from dying of starvation.

Q. When is Thanksgiving celebrated in the United States and in Canada?

A. In the United States Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November, and in Canada it is celebrated on the second Monday of October.

Q. Has Thanksgiving always been celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November?

A. No, the Day was observed on various dates and varied from state to state. In 1863 Abraham Lincoln made it an official holiday to be held on the last Thursday in November. Finally, in 1941 Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a resolution of Congress that changed the national Thanksgiving Day from the last Thursday in November to the fourth Thursday.



Q. When is the first Thanksgiving feast thought to have been held?

A. The first feast is believed to have been held in 1621.

Q. In what state is Plymouth? Can you find it on the map?

A. Plymouth is in the present state of Massachusetts.

Q. Was the tradition of the Thanksgiving feast completely new for Pilgrims and Puritans?

A. No, they had a tradition of days of fasting and days of thanksgiving in England, before they came to America.

Q. Which American president was the first to proclaim

thanksgiving celebrations?

A. It was America's first president, George Washington, who proclaimed the first nationwide thanksgiving celebration on November 26, 1789.

Q. When was Thanksgiving celebrated before the observance was set on the fourth Thursday of November?

A. After George Washington's presidency the day was observed on various dates and varied from state to state. In 1863 Abraham Lincoln made it an official holiday to be held on the last Thursday in November. Finally, in 1941

Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a resolution of Congress that changed the national Thanksgiving Day from the last Thursday in November to the fourth Thursday.

Q. What is Indian Summer and in what way did it help the Pilgrims survive 1621?

A. Indian Summer is the period in late-September to mid-November of sunny and clear weather with above normal temperatures, which often comes after a killing frost. In 1621 the Pilgrims, who learned from the Wampanoag Indians how to plant crops, were able to harvest them during Indian Summer before winter arrived.

Q. What sport do Americans watch on Thanksgiving?

A. American football. The tradition known as the Thanksgiving Classic was established by the National Football League which has played games on Thanksgiving every year since its creation.

Q. Which football team has hosted a game every Thanksgiving Day since 1934?

A. The Detroit Lions.

Q. What is the staple menu for Thanksgiving dinner?

A. The traditional Thanksgiving dinner includes roast turkey with stuffing and gravy, mashed and sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin or pecan pie.

Q. What happens to the turkey that is pardoned by the President - a tradition going back to 1947?

A. The bird is sent to Disneyland to live there for the rest of its years.

Q. How do Americans decorate their houses and tables on Thanksgiving Day?

A. Many Americans hang wreaths made with greens from the garden, berries, juniper, lemon leaves, cinnamon



sticks, and even fresh oranges or apples on the door. The table is decorated with dried or fresh leaves, with centerpieces made of branches with colorful leaves.

Q. In what city is the Macy's Parade organized and when did this tradition start?

A. In New York. The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade started in 1924, and has continued - with the exception

of a three-year break caused by World War II – since that time. Macy's is an American chain of department stores.

Q. A balloon of which cartoon character is the most popular in Macy's Parade?

A. Snoopy.

Q. What is Black Friday?

A. It is the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, which is the first day of Christmas shopping. The name “Black Friday” may have its roots in the financial crisis of 1869 or be an expression first used by the police to describe the heavy traffic in Philadelphia.

Q. What other national holidays do Americans celebrate?

A. New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King’s Birthday (January), George Washington’s Birthday (February), Easter, Memorial Day (May), Independence Day (July), Labor Day (September), Columbus Day (October), Veterans’ Day (November), and Christmas (December).



WHY DO AMERICANS LOVE THANKSGIVING?

David Cummings: I love that Thanksgiving is a true American holiday as old as our country. When we celebrate today, it feels great to play football or get a morning workout before the cooking and feasting begin. After the meal, it’s time for relaxing and playing games like Scrabble. My aunt and younger brother seemed to win every year, I have no idea how I could not beat them! Starting Friday after Thanksgiving, leftover turkey becomes lunch and dinner for the next week: turkey sandwiches and every turkey dish you can create. We all say we’re tiring of eating turkey but it fits with the season (and who doesn’t like a turkey sandwich). My Dad always said Thanksgiving is his favorite holiday; no commercialism, just a chance to kick back and consider how fortunate we are and give thanks.

One Thanksgiving abroad expanded my thinking about the meanings of Thanksgiving. My family and I were

living in Spain, and we invited four families to our home for the big meal. Three of the families—from South Africa, England, and Scotland—knew of American Thanksgiving but this would be their first ever Thanksgiving dinner. One was a Scottish minister and he said the grace before the meal.

Courage was the theme of his prayer. He talked briefly about how all of the people at the original Thanksgiving had demonstrated such courage: courage to cross the sea to a new world; courage to make it through the harshest of winters as people were sick and dying; courage of Native Americans and Pilgrims to share resources and build relationships with so much at stake. So now, for me Thanksgiving is about thanks and courage. We’re thankful for our blessings, families and friends, and we admire courage whenever we see it.

CRANBERRY SAUCE

Ingredients:

3 cups fresh cranberries
1 orange
sugar to taste (not more than 1/2 cup)
1/2 cup water
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
a pinch of nutmeg

Directions:

Rinse the cranberries in a colander. Bring water and sugar to a boil in a medium pot. Add the cranberries, cinnamon and nutmeg. Stir. Bring to a boil then lower the heat and simmer for about 10 minutes. Some cranberries will burst, but some will remain whole. Add the orange juice. Cool before serving.



APPLE-WALNUT-HERB STUFFING

INGREDIENTS:

8 cups bread cubes
1/2 cup parsley, fresh, chopped
2 tsp. fresh thyme, finely chopped
1 tsp. fresh rosemary, finely chopped
2 tsp. fresh marjoram, finely chopped
2 tsp. fresh sage, finely chopped
1/4 cup butter
1 onion, chopped
1 cup celery, chopped
8 mushrooms, chopped
1 apple, peeled, chopped
1/3 cup walnut pieces
1 cup turkey stock
salt and pepper, to taste

1. Combine bread and herbs together in a mixing bowl.
2. Toss well.
3. Heat butter and saute the vegetables for about 5 minutes.
4. Mix with the bread.
5. Add walnuts.
6. Add stock to moisten well and mix all together.
7. Season with salt and pepper.
8. Place in an oven-proof dish.
9. Cover and bake for 20-25 minutes or until heated through and brown on top at 350° F.



PEACAN PIE

INGREDIENTS:

2 oz. butter
1 cup light-brown sugar
1 cup white corn syrup
3 eggs
pinch of salt
1 tablespoon flour
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
2 tsp vanilla
1 unbaked 9-inch pie shell
2 cups pecans

DIRECTIONS:

1. Cream the butter and sugar together with an electric mixer.
2. Add the syrup and whip until light.
3. Whip the eggs and salt in a separate bowl until light and fluffy.
4. Combine the eggs with the sugar mixture. the flour, vanilla and cinnamon.
5. Mix well.
6. Pour into pie crust.
7. Sprinkle pecans on top.
8. Bake at 350° F for 50 minutes.



Activity Page

Exercise 1: Speaking

Work in pairs. Each student should choose 2 pictures from the ones below. Take turns to describe your pictures to your partner and then in a conversation compare and contrast your pictures. Think about ingredients needed to prepare the dish in your pictures. What is your favorite dish? Do you know how to make it?



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