

Informational text passage written at two reading levels!

Name: _____

The First Thanksgiving

In the United States, Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November. It is a time when many families get together to overindulge in a rich array of foods and spend quality time with each other. The celebration of Thanksgiving in the United States was influenced by the Pilgrims, who held their first Thanksgiving celebration there in 1621.

In 1620, a group of settlers who later became known as Pilgrims, left Europe for the land that would later become the United States on *The Mayflower*. They had planned to establish a colony farther south, but the weather and adverse sea conditions forced them north. They landed during the winter and the harsh climate combined with a lack of supplies took its toll on the settlers. Many of the settlers succumbed to disease and only about half of the settlers survived the winter.

During the next spring, the settlers of the Plymouth colony began working with the nearby Native American tribe, the Wampanoag. One Native American, Tisquantum, who was also known as Squanto, was especially helpful. He served as a translator to help build relations between the settlers and the Wampanoag. He introduced the settlers to the traditional Native American crops of corn and pumpkins. Also, he showed the settlers how to fertilize their crops by burying fish, which would add beneficial nutrients to the soil.

With the help of the Wampanoag, and particularly Squanto, the settlers had a copious harvest. Celebrating a good harvest had long been a tradition for both Europeans and Native Americans, and the governor of the Plymouth Colony organized a celebration to give thanks for their farming success. The celebration took place in early fall and the Wampanoag chief, Massasoit, was in attendance. Some versions of the story state that the settlers invited him, while others suggest that Massasoit attended because he was either suspicious of the Pilgrims' behaviors or because he wanted to discuss their use of the surrounding land. No matter what brought him there, he did attend, along with about ninety members of his tribe.

The celebration lasted three days. While pumpkin pie may be one of the most iconic foods eaten on Thanksgiving in the United States, it was not served the first Thanksgiving. Members of the Wampanoag tribe brought five deer that the women of Plymouth cooked along with turkey and fish. They also ate the fruits of their harvest, which included corn and pumpkin. The pumpkin was not baked into a pie because the Pilgrims did not have access to butter and flour, which are requisite ingredients for the crust. Despite the differences between the first Thanksgiving and the way it is celebrated today, the roots were planted for a tradition that has endured many centuries.

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Name: _____

The First Thanksgiving

In the United States, Thanksgiving takes place on the fourth Thursday in November. It is a time when many families overindulge in an array of foods and spend time together. Thanksgiving traditions in the United States were influenced by the Pilgrims, who held their first Thanksgiving celebration there in 1621.

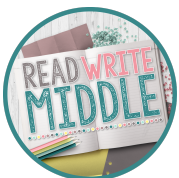
In 1620, a group of settlers who later were called Pilgrims, left Europe for the land that would become the United States. They sailed on *The Mayflower*. The weather and adverse sea conditions forced them off their planned route. They landed during the winter and the bad weather and a lack of supplies took its toll on the settlers. Many succumbed to disease. Only about half of the settlers survived to spring.

The next spring, the settlers worked with the nearby Native American tribe, the Wampanoag. One Native American, Tisquantum, who was also known as Squanto, was very helpful. He spoke English and helped build relations between the settlers and the Wampanoag. He introduced the settlers to corn and pumpkins. Also, he taught the settlers to bury fish near their crops, which would add beneficial nutrients to the soil.

The settlers had a copious harvest that fall. Celebrating a good harvest was a tradition for both Europeans and Native Americans. The governor of the Plymouth Colony planned a celebration to give thanks for their crops. The celebration took place in early fall and the Wampanoag chief, Massasoit, was there. Some versions of the story state that the settlers invited him, while others state that Massasoit was there because he was either suspicious of the Pilgrims or because he wanted to discuss their use of the land. No matter what brought him there, he did attend with about ninety other members of his tribe.

The celebration lasted three days. While pumpkin pie may be one of the most iconic Thanksgiving foods in the United States, there was none that first Thanksgiving. Members of the Wampanoag brought deer that was cooked along with turkey and fish. They also ate the crops they planted, which included corn and pumpkin. The pumpkin was not baked into a pie because the Pilgrims did not have butter and flour, which are requisite ingredients for the crust. Despite the differences between the first Thanksgiving and the way it is celebrated today, the roots were planted for a tradition that has lasted many centuries.

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Differentiated context clues activity!

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Context Clues

Look back in the passage and use context clues to determine the meaning of each word. Circle the answer, then write down the context clues from the text that helped you determine the answer.

- array
a. dish b. pan c. selection
context clues: _____
- adverse
a. unfavorable b. favorable c. ready
context clues: _____
- succumbed
a. withstood b. battled c. died
context clues: _____
- beneficial
a. poisonous b. healthy c. some
context clues: _____
- conspicuous
a. hidden b. small c. average
context clues: _____
- iconic
a. rare b. recognizable c. expensive
context clues: _____
- requisite
a. necessary b. optional c. unnecessary
context clues: _____

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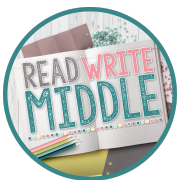
Name: _____

Context Clues

Look back in the passage and use context clues to determine the meaning of each word. Determine what each word means based on the way it is used in the passage, then write down the context clues from the text that helped you.

- array: _____
context clues: _____
- adverse: _____
context clues: _____
- succumbed: _____
context clues: _____
- beneficial: _____
context clues: _____
- copious: _____
context clues: _____
- iconic: _____
context clues: _____
- requisite: _____
context clues: _____

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Writing assignment and comprehension questions also included!!

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Comprehension Questions

Answer the following questions using evidence from the text to support your answer.

1. What is the central idea of the passage? List two supporting details to support your answer.

2. What evidence in the text suggests that the Pilgrims were prepared for their journey and mission?

3. While the Pilgrims and the Native Americans may have seemed like they got along the first year, they did not always have a peaceful relationship. What evidence in the text suggests that the Native Americans may have been suspicious of the Pilgrims?

4. Why might the Pilgrims have felt especially grateful in the fall of 1621?

5. What foods present at the First Thanksgiving are still considered popular at Thanksgiving?

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Writing Assignment

The success of the Pilgrims was possible because of the help provided by the Native Americans. Write about a time when someone helped you. What did you need help with? What do you think motivated that person to help you? What did you learn from the experience? In your writing, be sure to include the following:

- Explain what you needed help with.
- Explain why you think the person helped you and how they helped you.
- Explain what you learned from the experience.
- Make sure you proofread your writing to check for spelling and grammar issues.

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