

Laugh & Learn

Thanksgiving Day Wonders

Thought for Today –

He who can give thanks for little will always find he has enough.

"We would worry less if we praised more. Thanksgiving is the enemy of discontent and dissatisfaction." (Harry A. Ironside)



Thanksgiving Day in the United States is a day for expressing thanks for the good things in life, especially family and friends. On Thanksgiving Day, family and friends enjoy a day of cooking, eating, and talking. They tell each other and God what they are thankful for. The Thanksgiving meal almost always includes turkey meat with stuffing, a bread mixture cooked inside. Other traditional foods are sweet potatoes, cranberries, and pumpkin pie.



Thanksgiving is celebrated every year on the 4th Thursday of November, during autumn in the United States, after crops are gathered. When the Pilgrims, the first European settlers in America, gathered their crops, they celebrated, thanking God for the harvest and other blessings.

Thanksgiving Day Began with the Pilgrim settlers in 1621.

Fill the Blank Spaces with the Vocabulary words on the right.

The Pilgrims Experience

1. They survived the ocean crossing in the small ship, the _____ . As a severe illness came to the Pilgrims, a storm also came that broke their wine casks and wine splashed around everywhere. As they mopped up the wine they were disinfecting the ship. Health returned and they thanked God.



1. poisonous
2. harvest
3. frightened
4. Mayflower
5. freedom
6. celebration
7. mentor
8. democratic
9. exploring
10. ocean
11. current
12. enemies
13. miracle
14. hindering
15. demonstrated

2. The Pilgrims planned to settle farther south in the area of *Virginia*, but strong winds and the Gulf Stream _____ forced the *Mayflower* north, where they sighted Cape Cod, November 9th. Later they learned that for many reasons this was the perfect place for them to be.

"Being thus arrived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious _____, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth, their proper element." (William Bradford, Governor)

3. The Mayflower was filled half with believing Pilgrims and half with rough living sailors. Getting 110 tired, cold, and frustrated people to agree on the Mayflower Compact was seen as God's special leading. This _____ document contained the seed ideas for the US Constitution.

4. Plymouth, Massachusetts was amazingly the safest place for them from Nova Scotia to the tip of Florida. It was a special place with friendly and helpful Native Americans. Many Native Americans saw all strangers as _____, including other Indians.

5. On their first day of _____ the area they found Indian baskets filled with corn buried in the sand. How many such supplies of corn do you think were lying around waiting to be found? What are the odds of finding it the first day?

Since this was abandoned corn they took some of it with them, and "*noted a special providence of God and a great mercy to this poor people, that here they got seed corn to plant the next year, or else they might have starved, for they had none nor any likelihood to get any.*" [Governor William Bradford]



6. After a hard winter in which several Pilgrims died, on March 16, 1621, an Indian brave walked into the Plymouth settlement. The Pilgrims were _____ until the Indian called out "Welcome" (in English!). His name was *Samoset* and he was an Abnaki Indian. The next day he returned with *Squanto* who spoke better English than Samoset. Squanto had been captured by fishermen who took him to Europe where he learned English. Afterward he



returned to the Americas on another fishing boat. From Canada to Florida there were only two Native American Indians who spoke English. Was it coincidence that brought the Pilgrims to Plymouth where these Indians lived, or was it more?

7. Squanto became their _____ in how to live in the new world. Squanto's importance to the Pilgrims was huge and the Pilgrims agreed they would not have survived without his help. It was Squanto who taught the Pilgrims how to tap the maple trees for maple syrup. He taught them which plants were _____ and which had medicinal powers.



He taught them how to plant Indian corn and other crops. The miracle is that this was an English speaking Indian who became their friend and not their enemy. He was their professor of survival skills. No other Indian in North America could have taught them as he did.

8. The _____ in October was successful and the Pilgrims had enough food for the coming winter. The harvest included corn, fruits and vegetables, fish packed in salt, and meat cured over smoky fires. Why was a harvest so amazing? What must be done to land to make it possible to raise a crop? They had no tractors or horses. The successful harvest the first year in the wilderness was seen as a _____ of God's love. The Pilgrims had much to celebrate: they had built homes in the wilderness, they had raised crops, and they were at peace with their Native American neighbors. Now it was time to celebrate.

The Pilgrim Governor William Bradford proclaimed a day of thanksgiving to be shared by all the colonists and the neighboring Native Americans. They invited Squanto and the other Indians to join them in their _____. Their chief, *Massasoit*, and 90 braves came to the celebration which lasted for 3 days. They played games, ran races, marched and played drums. The Indians _____ their skills with the bow and arrow and the Pilgrims demonstrated their musket skills.



9. This amazing fact - coincidence or more - the Pilgrims didn't know, but you will know.

The Battle of White Mountain happened November 8, 1620. Religious _____ as written in the 1485 Kutna Hora Declaration died that day. The Pilgrims on the Mayflower came to the coast of Plymouth the next Day, Nov 9, 1620. With them began the American experiment in freedom. Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in exile would greatly

influence the steps to freedom, including the writing and signing of the U.S. constitution. But that is another story for another time.

Were the many miracle wonders of the Pilgrim experienced just a coincidence? The pilgrims didn't think so. They believed all these things came together because God loved them, led them and met their needs. What do you think?

The Links

How to Make a Pumpkin Pie

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZR9wGFqAMQ>

Turkeys eat the Pumpkin pie

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CndP1fYC0M>

A Garfield Thanksgiving

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pALGXd3IpcI>

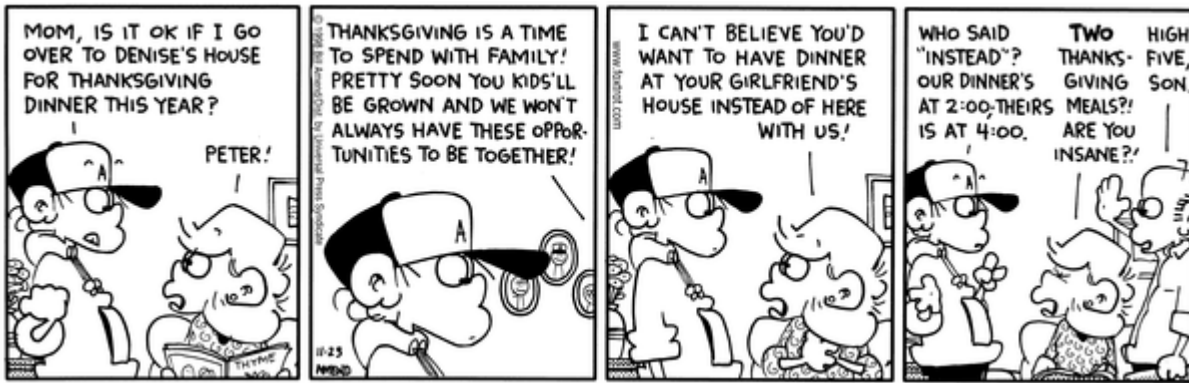
America's most famous Thanksgiving song

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0JVqR8KnF4>

The Laughs

Answers in Correct Order to Fill in the Blanks

Mayflower
current
ocean
democratic
enemies
exploring
frightened
mentor
poisonous
harvest
miracle
celebration
demonstrated
freedom



Q: If April showers bring May flowers what do May flowers bring?

A: Pilgrims!

Q: Why do turkeys always go, "gobble, gobble"?

A: Because they never learned good table manners!

Q: Why did they let the turkey join the band?

A: Because he had the drumsticks

A turkey farmer was experimenting with breeding to perfect a better turkey. His family was fond of the leg portion for dinner and there were never enough legs for everyone. After many frustrating attempts, the farmer was finally successful, and told his friends, "Well I finally did it! I bred a turkey that has 6 legs!" They all asked the farmer how it tasted. "I don't know" said the farmer. "I never could catch the thing!"

Q: What kind of music did the Pilgrims like?

A: Plymouth Rock

Q: Who is not hungry at Thanksgiving?

A: The turkey because he's already stuffed!

Q: How do you keep a turkey in suspense?

A: I'll let you know next week.

Q: Which side of the turkey has the most feathers?

A: The outside.



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