

Thanksgiving – 2020

The first Thanksgiving Day

In 1620, 102 people sailed from England to North America on a small ship called the *Mayflower*. These **pilgrims**, as they we call them today, settled in Plymouth in what is today Massachusetts. The first winter for these families who were new to America was very hard. In the very cold weather, it was difficult to find food and a place to live. Only half of the pilgrims survived. However, when spring arrived, the settlers were taught by the local Native American tribe how to cultivate corn, catch fish in the rivers and which poisonous plants to avoid.

After their first corn harvest in 1621, the pilgrims invited their Native American friends to a meal to show them thanks and appreciation for their help. The festival lasted three days and is considered the first Thanksgiving celebration. This celebration then became a yearly event.

Thanksgiving Day in later years

In 1789, George Washington issued the first Thanksgiving proclamation and called upon Americans to express their gratitude for the conclusion to the country's war of independence. In 1817, New York became the first state to officially adopt Thanksgiving as an annual holiday. In 1941 a bill was passed making Thanksgiving the fourth Thursday in November.

Thanksgiving Day Traditions

The following is a list of common Thanksgiving Day traditions in United States.

Family reunion

One of the most important traditions of Thanksgiving Day is getting together with the family and having the Thanksgiving meal. More people travel for this day than any other day of the year.

Thanksgiving Meal

No Thanksgiving is complete without having turkey on the dinner table. This is accompanied by cranberry sauce, stuffing, pumpkin pie, potatoes and vegetables.

Parades

There are parades held throughout the country though the most well-known one is the Macy's Parade in New York which lasts around three hours.

American Football

A popular tradition is to watch a professional or college (American) football game on TV.

Questions:

1. How many people sailed from England to America in 1620? _____

2. Where in America did the pilgrims first settle? _____

3. How many of the pilgrims survived? _____

4. Name **TWO** things the Native Americans taught the pilgrims:

a. _____

b. _____

5. Why did the pilgrims invite Native American to this very festive (חגיגי) meal?

6. How many years ago did George Washington make Thanksgiving a national holiday? _____

7. When in November does Thanksgiving take place each year?

8. How do we know Thanksgiving is a popular holiday in the US?

9. Name **TWO** things Americans eat at the Thanksgiving meal.

a. _____

b. _____

10. Which sport is associated with Thanksgiving?
