Name: _____ Date: _____

Celebrating Thanksgiving

THE THANKSGIVING STORY

The Pilgrims, who sailed to America abroad the Mayflower ship, were originally members of an English Church. They had earlier fled from their home in England and sailed to Holland to escape religious persecution. There they enjoyed more religious freedom, but they eventually became uncomfortable with the Dutch way of life thinking it was ungodly. Seeking a better life, they set off the Pilgrimage Journey to America.

The Pilgrims set ground at Plymouth Rock on 11th December 1620. Their first winter was hard. They were cold and starving. At the beginning of the following fall, 46 of the original 102 Pilgrims who sailed on the Mayflower had died from the harsh conditions. However, the harvest of 1621 was successful and very bountiful.

The remaining Pilgrims decided to celebrate with a feast including 91 Indians who had helped the Pilgrims survive their first year. It is believed that the Pilgrims would not have made it through the year without the help of the natives. The celebration lasted for three days.

Governor Williams Bradford sent four men fowling after wild ducks and geese. It is not certain that wild turkey was part of their feast. However, most people today eat turkey during Thanksgiving celebrations.

This Thanksgiving feast was not repeated the following year. But in 1623, during a severe drought, the Pilgrims gathered in a prayer service praying for rain. When a long steady rain followed the very next day, Governor Bradford proclaimed another day of Thanksgiving and again invited their Indian friends. It wasn't until June of 1676 that another Day of Thanksgiving was proclaimed.

In 1941, Thanksgiving was finally sanctioned by Congress (in America) as a legal holiday celebrated on the third Thursday in November each year.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Read the passage above then answer the following questions.

1. Before arriving in America, where did the Pilgrims go to worship in freedom.

_____

2. What was the name of the Pilgrim ship? _____
3. Did the Pilgrims have an easy time upon arriving in America? _____
4. The Pilgrims settled in America. When did they arrive?

_____

5. Where did the Pilgrims settled? _____
6. Complete the chart comparing the Pilgrims years in America.

	1621	1623
Persons who help		
Type of weather		
Celebration		

cold	Governor Williams Bradford/natives	Severe drought
Governor Williams	feast	
No feast		

LIVEWORKSHEETS