

CELEBRATIONS

Thanksgiving

Teacher's notes

Age: Teenagers/Adults

Level: Elementary–Pre-intermediate (A1–A2)

Time: 60 minutes

Activity: In this lesson, students will:

1. read a text about Thanksgiving in the USA;
2. talk about things that make them happy and that they are thankful for.

Language focus: vocabulary related to Thanksgiving

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student

Procedure

1. Ask students to read the items in exercise 1 and put a tick in the boxes next to the things that make them happy. Allow them a few minutes to compare where they have placed their ticks. Elicit whether there is a particular time of year in which students do some or all of these things, e.g. at Christmas time or another festival.
2. Students read the text in exercise 2 and find words that match the definitions 1–6.

Key:

1. feast
2. harvest
3. leftovers
4. parade
5. roast
6. stuffing

3. In exercise 3, students write the words in **bold print** in the Thanksgiving text next to the correct pictures.

Key:

Top row (l-r)

Harvest, Sweetcorn, Marshmallows, Gravy

Bottom row (l-r)

Roast turkey, Cranberries, Squash, Pumpkin pie

4. Students answer the questions in exercise 4 and talk about a special meal that they have as part of a celebration in their country or culture. Encourage them to compare their answers with the information in the text. How similar or different is their celebratory meal to today's Thanksgiving dinner in the USA?
5. Working alone, students cut out and complete the two cards in exercise 5 with a few things that they are thankful for. (If they don't want to cut up their worksheets, you could ask them to write on plain paper instead.) Before they write anything, elicit two examples and write them on the board. Make sure that grammatically and structurally one of the sentences uses *for* and the other one uses *that*, e.g.
 - *I am grateful for my children.*
 - *I am grateful that we never need to go to bed hungry.*
6. Tell students that they should not show anyone what they are writing. Check the students' sentences and make any necessary corrections. Collect all the cards. Now get the students to sit in a circle or around a table. Shuffle the cards and place them face up in the middle of the circle or table. Give the students a few moments to read what is on the cards. Tell students they should all take one card that interests them. Taking turns they should now guess or find out who wrote the card they have chosen, and then ask that student one question to find out more information.
7. Working in pairs for exercise 6, students find a recipe for one of the parts of a Thanksgiving meal. Then, each pair should sit with one or two other pairs in groups of four or six and explain their recipe to the others (in lower level groups allow them to do this in their own language). End the lesson with some group feedback in which students say which recipes they talked about and whether they would like to make and eat this item of food.

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Worksheet

Exercise 1: Warmer

a. Tick the things that make you happy:

- dinner with my family meeting with friends watching sports on TV
going to a football match going to a festival a long weekend off work

b. Is there a particular time of year when you can do all of these things?

Exercise 2: Vocabulary

In the United States, Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November. On this day most US Americans meet with their family and close friends for a very special meal.

In 1621, in Plymouth, Massachusetts, pilgrims and Native Americans held a three-day feast to give thanks for the good **harvest** that year. The good harvest meant that they would have food for the winter.

Today, Thanksgiving reminds people that they have a lot to be thankful for.

These days many people have their Thanksgiving dinner around two o'clock in the afternoon and afterwards they watch the National Football League (NFL) games on television. They might also attend a local parade or watch the famous Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade with its large balloons and colourful floats.

The central part of a Thanksgiving meal is the **roast turkey**. This is typically served with stuffing, cornbread dressing, **cranberry** sauce, sweet potato pie topped with **marshmallows**, green beans, **sweetcorn**, **squash**, mashed potatoes, **gravy**, and dinner rolls.

The main course is then followed by a sweet pie: this might be **pumpkin pie**, apple, cherry, blueberry or pecan, and it is served with whipped cream or ice cream.

Of course, there are usually leftovers which are then eaten during the following long weekend.

As Thanksgiving is always on a Thursday, many businesses and schools also close on the Friday, so most people get four days off work or school. Thanksgiving is one of the busiest times to travel in the USA, as people drive or fly to be with their families and friends.

Find a word in the Thanksgiving text that means:

1. a large meal for a lot of people, usually eaten to celebrate something _____
2. the amount of a crop (plants grown for food) that is collected _____
3. the food that remains at the end of a meal after you have finished eating _____
4. a celebration in which a large group of people move through the streets, often with decorated vehicles and bands playing music _____
5. cooked in an oven _____
6. food that is cut into small pieces, mixed, and put inside meat or vegetables _____

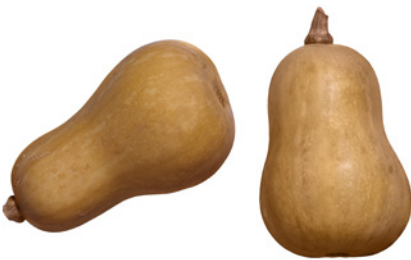
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Worksheet

Exercise 3: Vocabulary

Match the words in **bold print** in the Thanksgiving text with the pictures below.



Exercise 4: Discussion

Talk about a celebratory meal that you have in your country or culture.

- What is the celebration?
- What do you eat for this meal?
- When do you eat it?
- Who do you eat it with?
- Where do you eat the meal?

