

Readers' Theater

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The First Thanksgiving



GRL: J
DRA: 18

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Each reader's part is highlighted in color.

List of Characters

(in order of appearance)

Group 1: Green

Group 2: Blue

Group 3: Orange

Pilgrims: Light Blue

Squanto: Purple

All: Red

When the characters speak in unison,
it is noted as **All**.



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Group 1: Thanksgiving is the time to remember what the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag celebrated many years ago.

All: On this day, we give thanks for all that we have!



The First Thanksgiving

Group 1: On November 20, 1620, people on a ship spotted land.

Group 2: The ship was called the *Mayflower*. The people came to be called the Pilgrims. They had left Europe looking for freedom.



Group 3: The Pilgrims had sailed stormy seas for 66 days. They were hoping to reach Virginia.

Group 1: Instead, they landed in what is now Massachusetts. The Pilgrims decided to stay.

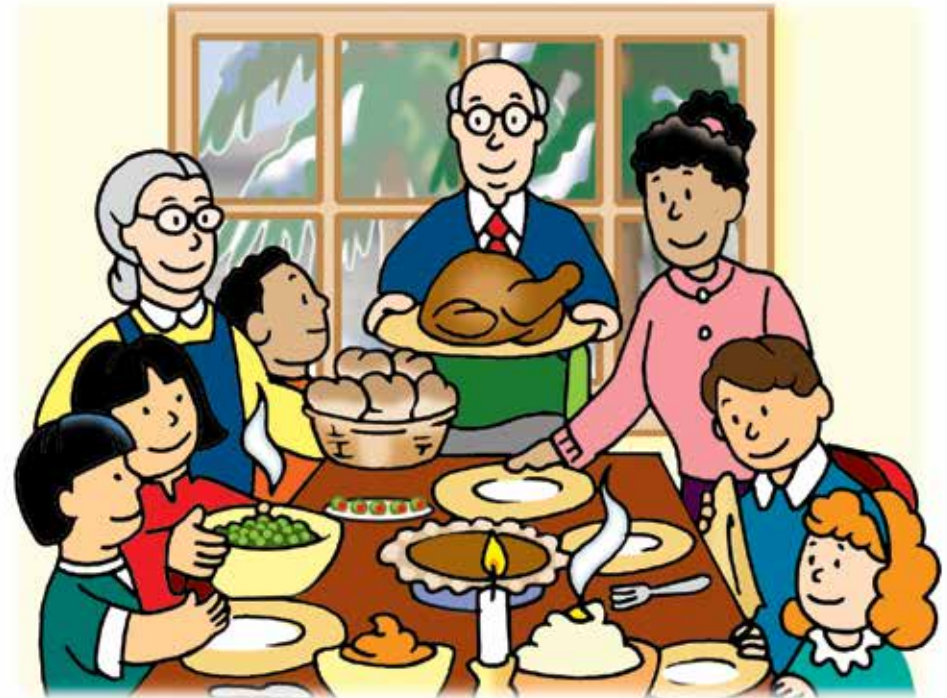
Pilgrims: Others told us how to worship in Europe. But here, we shall be free to live, work, and pray as we like.



Group 2: Families with relatives who came to America hundreds of years ago celebrate Thanksgiving.

Group 3: Families that have lived in America for only a few weeks or months celebrate, too!

All: Most Americans eat turkey and vegetables and pumpkin pie.



Group 1: Through the years, Americans have celebrated Thanksgiving.

Group 2: George Washington celebrated Thanksgiving with his soldiers during the Revolutionary War in 1777.

Group 3: In 1863, Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving a national holiday.

All: On this day, we give thanks for all that we have!

Group 1: Today, Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November.

Group 2: The 102 Pilgrims landed in Massachusetts during the coldest season of the year. It was much colder in America than in Europe.

Group 3: Many of the Pilgrims were sick and weak. Many were hungry and cold. Only 52 of the Pilgrims survived the first winter.



Group 1: To live in this new place, the Pilgrims needed to learn new skills. The seeds they had brought from Europe did not grow well in the soil.

Pilgrims: Who will teach us how to live in this strange new land?



Group 1: The Pilgrims and the Wampanoag ate clams, lobsters, and eels on that first Thanksgiving.

Group 2: They ate turkey, goose, venison, and duck.

Group 3: They ate cornbread and pumpkins, but no pumpkin pie.

All: On this day, we give thanks for all that we have!



Group 1: The Pilgrims decided to celebrate the first harvest with their new friends. They were thankful for many things.

Group 2: In October 1621, about 90 native people came to Plimoth Plantation for the feast. The Pilgrims and the Wampanoag sat and ate together. The native people danced and sang.

Group 3: The feast continued for three days. It was the first Thanksgiving.

All: On this day, we give thanks for all that we have!



Group 2: One day, a group of native people—the Wampanoag—came to visit the Pilgrims. One of the native men spoke English very well.

Group 3: His name was Squanto. Squanto had lived in England for many years.

Squanto: I can show you how to live here. If you know where to look, there is much to eat. There are many plants that grow well in this soil.



Group 1: Squanto showed the Pilgrims how to grow corn, pumpkins, and beans. He put fish in the ground with the seeds. The fish would make the seeds grow better.

Group 2: Squanto showed the Pilgrims how to find clams and eels in the rivers. He showed them how to hunt for deer and turkeys. He also showed them how to make maple syrup.

Group 3: Squanto showed the Pilgrim children where to find nuts and berries.

All: The Pilgrims loved their new home. They named it Plimoth Colony.

