

# History of...(text analysis - intermediate)

Name:

Date:



Thanksgiving is a holiday celebrated in the United States and Canada. It is a day when people give thanks for the harvest and other blessings from the past year. The history of Thanksgiving dates back to 1621. In 1620, a group of people called the Pilgrims left England on a ship called the Mayflower. They were looking for a place where they could practice their religion freely. After a long and difficult journey, they arrived in what is now Plymouth, Massachusetts. The first winter was very hard for the Pilgrims, and many of them did not survive.

In the spring of 1621, the Pilgrims met a Native American from the Wampanoag tribe named Squanto. Squanto taught them how to plant corn, fish, and gather other food. With his help, the Pilgrims were able to grow enough food to survive.

In the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims had a good harvest. To celebrate, they held a feast and invited the Wampanoag people. This feast is often called the "First Thanksgiving." They ate foods like turkey, corn, and pumpkin. This celebration lasted for three days.

Thanksgiving did not become a national holiday right away. Different colonies and states celebrated it on different days. In 1863, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln declared Thanksgiving a national holiday. He decided it should be celebrated on the last Thursday of November. Later, in 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt changed the date to the fourth Thursday in November, where it remains today. Today, people celebrate Thanksgiving by having a big meal with family and friends. Common foods include turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and cranberry sauce. Many people also watch parades and football games. Thanksgiving is a time for people to be thankful for what they have and to spend time with loved ones.

## Select the correct answer

**What is the main reason people in the United States celebrate Thanksgiving?**

- To honor the signing of the Declaration of Independence
- To commemorate the end of the Civil War
- To give thanks for the harvest and blessings of the past year
- To celebrate the establishment of the United Nations

**Which year is commonly recognized as the year of the first Thanksgiving celebration?**

- 1776
- 1621
- 1492
- 1865

**Which group of people celebrated the first Thanksgiving with the Pilgrims?**

- The French
- The British
- The Wampanoag
- The Spanish

**What is the traditional main dish served at most Thanksgiving meals?**

- Chicken
- Beef
- Turkey
- Ham

**Which U.S. President proclaimed Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863?**

- Abraham Lincoln    Thomas Jefferson    Franklin D. Roosevelt    George Washington

**On which day of the week is Thanksgiving celebrated in the United States?**

- Thursday    Friday    Sunday    Monday

**What activity is commonly associated with the day after Thanksgiving in the United States?**

- Black Friday shopping    Setting up Christmas trees    Watching fireworks  
 Easter egg hunts

**Which parade is famous for being held on Thanksgiving Day in New York City?**

- Rose Parade    Veterans Day Parade    St. Patrick's Day Parade  
 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

**Analyze the cultural implications of Thanksgiving celebrations in contemporary American society.**

Thanksgiving in contemporary American society represents a mix of historical tradition and modern influences. It emphasizes family unity and appreciation, yet it also highlights consumerism with events like Black Friday. The holiday can also bring to light issues such as the historical treatment of Native Americans, prompting discussions about its true origins and the nuances involved in its celebration. These aspects reflect broader cultural values and conflicts present in American society today.

**Discuss how Thanksgiving has influenced the socio-economic patterns in the United States.**

Thanksgiving significantly impacts socio-economic patterns in the United States through retail and travel industries. The holiday marks the beginning of the peak shopping season, with Black Friday and Cyber Monday driving significant consumer spending. This period is crucial for retailers' annual earnings. Additionally, the travel industry sees a surge as families gather, influencing airline, hospitality, and local economies. However, this economic boost also highlights disparities, as not all individuals or communities can equally participate in or benefit from these patterns.

**Explain the ways in which Thanksgiving traditions have been adapted or changed by different cultural groups within the United States.**

Various cultural groups within the United States have adapted Thanksgiving traditions to reflect their unique heritages while maintaining the holiday's central themes of gratitude and togetherness. For instance, immigrant communities might integrate traditional dishes from their home countries into the Thanksgiving meal. Additionally, Native American groups may use the holiday as a time to educate others about their history and culture, or to hold events such as the National Day of Mourning. These adaptations demonstrate the flexibility of Thanksgiving traditions and highlight the diverse cultural landscape of the United States.

**Analyze the historical context and impact of Thanksgiving in a short essay.**

Thanksgiving, originating from the early 17th century Pilgrims' harvest feast, reflects a rich historical context. The Pilgrims, European settlers, celebrated their first successful corn harvest with Native Americans in 1621, which laid the foundation for the tradition. This feast symbolized cooperation and gratitude amidst hardship and mutual support. Over centuries, Thanksgiving evolved into a national holiday in the United States, holding significant cultural impact. It emphasizes family reunions, gratitude, and communal harmony. The holiday also plays a crucial role in American identity, reflecting values of perseverance, unity, and appreciation for blessings. Despite debates on its historical accuracy, Thanksgiving remains a powerful symbol of shared history and cultural heritage.