

LESSON PLAN

Thanksgiving 3—Traditions

Level: Literacy, Low Beginning

Suggested Length: 1 class period, depending on class time and level

Civics Test Questions

#100—Name two national U.S. holidays.

Reading Test Vocabulary

citizens, country, American
America, U.S.
Thanksgiving
What
can, do/does, have, is, name
a, for, in, the, to, we
many, one, people

Writing Test Vocabulary

citizens, American
November
Thanksgiving
can, have, is
and, for, in, the, to, we
one, people

Objectives:

Students will:

- understand the importance of Thanksgiving in the United States.
- discuss Thanksgiving traditional foods
- identify Thanksgiving as a U.S. national holiday
- identify November as the month when Americans celebrate Thanksgiving
- name U.S. national holidays

Materials:

Several wall calendars (for display on the wall and for students to review together)

Handouts: **Thanksgiving Day—U.S. National Holiday, Food, Food, Food, Turkeys and Pies**, and **Indian Pudding Recipe**

Optional handouts (Literacy Level Writing Practice): **November**

Thanksgiving 3—Traditions Answer Key



Lesson Overview and Notes to Teacher:

There are three separate lessons on Thanksgiving. The first two cover the historical aspects, and as the title indicates, this third lesson offers cultural information and pictures of how Americans celebrate this holiday. The reading paragraphs, photographs, and discussion questions can be used at your discretion with your class. Students generally enjoy hearing about their teacher's family experiences,

so consider sharing your own holiday traditions in class. As in previous Thanksgiving lessons, the students do not need to know about Thanksgiving traditions, per se, in order to pass the Civics Test, but they should have an understanding of the holiday's importance. They should be able to name Thanksgiving as one of the U.S. national holidays, in addition to other national holidays.

Introduction: Tell the class **Today we will talk about how Americans celebrate Thanksgiving.** Point to a wall calendar and ask **What month do we celebrate Thanksgiving?** Ask a student to come to the calendar and ask **What is the date of Thanksgiving this year?** Ask **What day of the week is Thanksgiving?** Explain that

Thanksgiving is on the fourth Thursday of November and that each year the date of the holiday changes. If you have covered the previous lessons Thanksgiving 1 and 2, you can also review information about the Pilgrim story as a warm-up to this discussion.

Guided Practice: Distribute the handout **Thanksgiving Day—U.S. National Holiday.** Discuss the photos with the students asking **What do you see in the picture?** You can either guide the students through the reading or, if they are ready, allow them to read it silently. If you want to teach the paragraph to the whole class as a group, model

each sentence 2-3 times for students to hear and repeat. At the bottom of the first page, there is a box for New Words. This highlights vocabulary that you can define for the class. See the **Answer Key** for simple definitions that students can copy into the blanks.

Practice: Continue the same method reviewing the sentences and discussion questions on page 2 of **Thanksgiving Day—U.S. National Holiday.** There are more discussion questions on the handout **Food, Food, Food,** which you can review to the extent you wish. The picture

prompts on the handout **Turkeys and Pies** are provided for fun—refer to the **Answer Key** for information about the traditional Presidential Pardon of the Thanksgiving turkey. Explain that this might be in the news a few days before Thanksgiving.

Evaluation: Write the Civics Test item **Name two U.S. national holidays** on the board. Point out that this is an item on the Civics Test. Model the sentence for the students to hear and practice. Ask them to name the ten federal (or official) holidays in the United States and list them on the board in chronological order (**New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas**). Ask the students to identify

the month for each holiday, what it commemorates, and specific date, if applicable. As a follow-up to this, ask your class about other non-federal holidays (or "not official" ones). Although these non-federal holidays, like Mother's Day and Halloween, are not acceptable answers for the Civics Test, students enjoy discussing them and comparing them to their own culture. Ask individual students **What is your favorite American holiday?** or **What is your favorite holiday in your country?**

Follow-up/Extension: The last handout, **Indian Pudding Recipe,** describes the steps for making a traditional Thanksgiving dessert from New England. The recipe has not been re-written in low-level English, but the cooking

terms (beaten, blend, stir, etc.) can be demonstrated. Often, students like to have a pot-luck meal in class around Thanksgiving time, sharing dishes from their culture. Refer to the **Answer Key** for other activity ideas.

Writing Practice for Literacy/Low Beginning Students: The handout **November** is included for optional copy work. Students can fill in the calendar dates for the

month of November for the current year and indicate Thanksgiving and the long holiday weekend.