

THANKSGIVING UNIT STUDY WORKBOOK

Five ready-to-use activities generated through HomeTrail's Nest pack system for a fourth-grade learner. Print the pages you need and use the separate audio episode alongside the workbook.

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Deep Dive

Looking Closely at the 1621 Harvest Gathering

Many people learn a simple story about a friendly “First Thanksgiving.” History is more careful than that. By studying the records that remain and noticing what is missing, we can build a fuller picture of the 1621 harvest gathering and the Wampanoag people.

What the English Accounts Can Tell Us

English accounts give us information about a harvest event in 1621. They show part of the English settlers’ point of view. These records are useful because they are connected to the event. However, they do not tell every person’s thoughts, feelings, or experiences.

What the Accounts Leave Out

The usual story gives little space to Wampanoag voices. The Wampanoag were not a single nameless group. They are a distinct people with their own history and traditions. Their decision to assist the English settlers came after observation, negotiations, and exchanges. The relationship involved political alliances and diplomacy, not simply a new friendship. Cooperation and peace did not last.

Traditions Added Later

The phrase “First Thanksgiving” became a national story much later. In the mid-1800s, English accounts resurfaced and helped inspire romantic paintings and other stories about a friendly meal. Sarah Josepha Hale campaigned for a national Thanksgiving holiday. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln declared a national Thanksgiving in November. Later, schools, books, memorials, and holiday advertising helped spread the familiar story.

Wampanoag Giving Thanks

Wampanoag harvest ceremonies and festivals have been part of Wampanoag life for thousands of years. Wampanoag people practiced daily and seasonal traditions of giving thanks long before the English settlers arrived and long before the United States created a national Thanksgiving holiday. Wampanoag communities continue harvest traditions today. These traditions should not be treated as costumes, crafts, or a pretend version of another culture.

Remember these

- English accounts can tell us about the English side of the 1621 event.
- A record can be useful while still leaving out important voices.
- Wampanoag choices involved diplomacy and political alliances, not only friendship.
- The familiar “First Thanksgiving” story grew much later, especially in the 1800s.

- Wampanoag traditions of giving thanks began long before the national holiday and continue today.

Try this

Make a two-column chart. Label one side "The records tell us" and the other "The records do not tell us." Place "English accounts existed" and "the English point of view" in the first column. Place "every Wampanoag experience" and "everyone's feelings" in the second column. Then discuss why historians should look for more than one perspective.

Think about it

How might the story of the 1621 harvest gathering change if more Wampanoag voices were included?

Sources

- [Rethinking Thanksgiving Celebrations: Native Perspectives on Thanksgiving](http://americanindian.si.edu/knowledge/360/rethinking-thanksgiving-celebrations-native-perspectives-on-thanksgiving/) | Native Knowledge 360° americanindian.si.edu
- [Page Not Found -- 404 -- Library of Congress](http://www.loc.gov) www.loc.gov



What Primary Sources Tell Us About the 1621 Harvest Gathering

Instructions: Read each question carefully and select the best answer. When you're ready, tap Submit to see your results.

0 of 10 answered

1. Which source gives one of the earliest written descriptions of the 1621 harvest gathering?

- ☐ A. A letter written by Edward Winslow
- ☐ B. A speech given at a modern parade
- ☐ C. A recipe book from the 1900s
- ☐ D. A school textbook written today

2. What can primary sources tell us about the gathering more reliably than later stories can?

- ☐ A. Details that people recorded close to the time of the event
- ☐ B. Everything that happened during every meal
- ☐ C. How the gathering became a national holiday
- ☐ D. Exactly what every person thought about the gathering

3. According to Edward Winslow's account, who came to the Plymouth settlement after hearing gunfire?

- ☐ A. A group of French traders
- ☐ B. A large group of children from Plymouth
- ☐ C. Ousamequin, also called Massasoit, with about 90 men
- ☐ D. The governor of England with 90 soldiers

4. Which statement is best supported by the surviving primary sources about the food at the 1621 gathering?

- ☐ A. The sources prove that everyone ate pumpkin pie, cranberry sauce, and mashed potatoes.
- ☐ B. The sources list exactly what each person ate at every meal.

- ☐ C. The sources say that the gathering served only bread and vegetables.
- ☐ D. The sources mention foods such as venison, fowl, seafood, and corn, but they do not give a complete menu.

5. Why should we be careful when calling the 1621 gathering the first Thanksgiving?

- ☐ A. No one in Plymouth or Wampanoag communities had ever eaten together before.
- ☐ B. The gathering happened in winter instead of during harvest season.
- ☐ C. The people at Plymouth did not know how to celebrate anything.
- ☐ D. People in Europe and Native communities had held harvest or thanksgiving ceremonies before 1621.

6. What is one important limit of the written English accounts of the 1621 gathering?

- ☐ A. They contain a complete record of every Wampanoag thought and tradition.
- ☐ B. They were written by people who lived hundreds of years later.
- ☐ C. They describe only events that happened in Europe.
- ☐ D. They mostly show the English settlers' viewpoint, not the full Wampanoag viewpoint.

7. Which statement best explains how Wampanoag perspectives can be included when studying the 1621 gathering?

- ☐ A. Study Wampanoag history, oral traditions, and present-day voices, while separating them from details directly recorded in 1621.
- ☐ B. Assume that later stories are exact copies of the original event.
- ☐ C. Treat every modern picture of the gathering as a primary source.
- ☐ D. Use only the English accounts because Native perspectives are not important.

8. The 1621 gathering was officially called Thanksgiving by the people who attended it.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

9. The modern Thanksgiving holiday, including traditions such as a national celebration and familiar foods, developed over many years after 1621.

☐ True

☐ False

10. A primary source can be useful evidence even when it does not tell us everything about an event.

☐ True

☐ False

Word Search: the 1621 harvest gathering, Wampanoag people, English colonists, primary sources, perspective, tradition, harvest, and gratitude

Explore words connected to the 1621 harvest gathering, including the Wampanoag people, English colonists, primary sources, different viewpoints, traditions, and gratitude.

12 words left to find.

K	A	X	B	E	N	R	Y	R	Z	F	F
B	H	C	U	S	T	O	M	T	H	E	L
E	W	H	A	R	V	E	S	T	A	O	T
H	O	O	F	B	M	C	F	S	F	V	P
H	E	E	U	F	S	P	T	O	X	T	E
I	P	N	C	O	L	O	N	I	S	T	O
S	T	R	G	W	T	G	U	S	H	Q	P
T	X	Q	I	L	P	H	A	R	E	X	L
O	V	R	C	M	I	T	A	T	C	N	E
R	I	D	Q	S	A	S	Y	N	H	E	C
Y	E	O	C	O	Q	R	H	P	K	E	S
Q	W	I	V	Q	K	F	Y	G	V	S	R

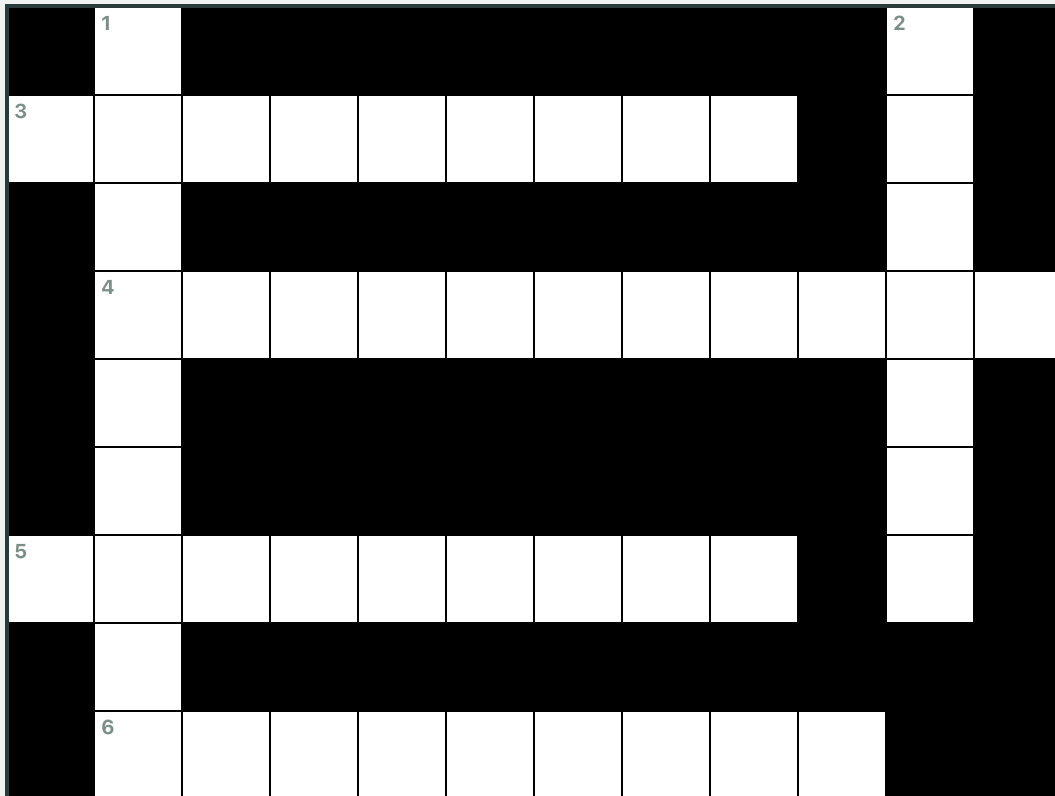
Find these words:

- COLONIST
- HARVEST
- ENGLISH
- PRIMARY
- SOURCES
- HISTORY
- CUSTOM
- THANKS
- PEOPLE
- GATHER
- FEAST
- VIEW

The 1621 Harvest Gathering

Instructions: Tap a clue, then fill each box with one letter. Tap again to switch between Across and Down.

6 clues left.



ACROSS

- 3. The ship that carried many English colonists to North America in 1620.
- 4. The way a person or group understands and describes an event.
- 5. English settlers who built a new community in North America.
- 6. A feeling of thankfulness for something good.

DOWN

- 1. The Native people who lived in the area and shared knowledge with the English colonists.
- 2. The gathering of crops when they are ready to eat.

