

# Thanksgiving Reading and Writing Bundle

Includes Everything From...



Thanksgiving: A Harvest  
Celebration

An Informational Text for  
Comprehension and Close Reading



AND

Thanksgiving Is the Best!  
Everything You Need for a Fun Opinion  
Writing Project

CCSS Connected

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## Thanksgiving - A Harvest Celebration

In early autumn of 1621, a harvest celebration was held in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Celebrating the harvest was a tradition the Pilgrims brought with them from England. In "Of Plymouth Plantation", Governor William Bradford wrote:

"They began now to gather in the small harvest they had, and to fit up their houses and dwellings against winter, being all well recovered in health and strength and had all things in good plenty."

In attendance at the feast were the fifty-three Pilgrims living at Plymouth. Joining them were Chief Massasoit and approximately ninety members of the Wampanoag tribe. This harvest celebration came to be known as the first Thanksgiving at Plymouth.

In "Mourt's Relation", an account written at the time, Edward Winslow wrote:

"...our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a special manner rejoice together, after we had gathered the fruits of our labors; they four in one day killed as much fowl, as with a little help beside, served the Company almost a week, at which time amongst other Recreations, we exercised our Arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five Deer, which they brought to the Plantation and bestowed on our Governor, and upon the Captain and others. And although it be not always so plentiful, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plenty."

### The First Harvest Meal

While you may assume that the food your family enjoys at Thanksgiving today is much the same as that at the first Thanksgiving, there was very little written about the first Thanksgiving meal. We do know from what Bradford and Winslow wrote that venison and fowl



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Thanksgiving - A Harvest Celebration

Please answer the following questions in complete sentences.

How many Pilgrims and Wampanoags attended the harvest feast?

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For how many days did they celebrate?

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Why didn't the Pilgrims serve cranberry sauce at the feast?

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Who was the first president to proclaim a national Thanksgiving Day in 1863?

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When and how did Thanksgiving become an annual holiday?

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**SAMPLE**



Compare and contrast the first harvest feast with Thanksgiving today.

Different	Similar	Different
The First Harvest Feast	First Harvest Feast and Thanksgiving	Thanksgiving of Today

**SAMPLE**



The three ideas you listed above will now become the main ideas of the three body paragraphs of your essay. Don't worry, we'll add the introductory and concluding paragraphs later.

Let's add some tasty details to spice up your main ideas. These details will help convince your readers that your opinion is true - Thanksgiving is a great holiday!

Here is an example to help you get started:

Main Idea (This will become the topic sentence.): The food cannot be beat.

Tasty Detail #1: There is more food to choose from than on any other day of the year. It's the best 'all you can eat' buffet ever!

Tasty Detail #2: Moist, tender turkey smothered in gravy is the star of the meal. Every bite just melts in your mouth. Yum!

Tasty Detail #3: After filling yourself with the main course, a pile of pies waits for you! Pumpkin pie never tastes quite so delicious as it does on Thanksgiving.

Closing Sentence (This sums up the paragraph.): I can't imagine a holiday with more delicious food than Thanksgiving!

Now let's spice up your main ideas. On the next page, we'll repeat your three ideas and add some tasty details. Then we'll add a closing sentence to sum up each paragraph.



In the sample introductory paragraph above, the first underlined sentence, or topic sentence, is the the sentence that tells the reader what your essay is about. The final underlined sentence, the concluding sentence, sums up what the paragraph and the essay are about. Notice that it begins with a **transitional word**, 'certainly'. Transitional words help your ideas flow from paragraph to paragraph. Try to use them in your concluding sentences.

Transitional Words and Phrases

certainly	undoubtedly	to be sure	finally
moreover	indeed	after all	moreover
therefore	in other words	next	additionally
afterwards	in conclusion	also	further



In the space below, write the introductory paragraph for your essay.

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

In the next sentences state the main ideas of your body sentences:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Concluding sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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SAMPLE

