

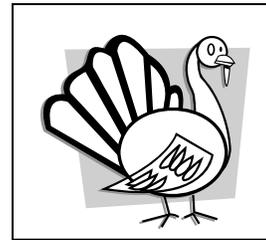
Talk Time Topic: Thanksgiving

Let's get started...

Let's begin today's discussion by talking about the purpose or meaning of Thanksgiving or a Harvest festival. What is the reason for the celebration? Many countries have a similar celebration. Spend a couple of minutes talking about the purpose of most of these celebrations.

Background:

Thanksgiving is celebrated in the United States because of a feast that the pilgrims began in 1621. The pilgrims were a group of people that sailed to America from England because they wanted religious freedom. Native Americans helped the pilgrims survive their first year. They taught them how to grow new crops. Many of the foods were new to the pilgrims. They wanted to have a feast to thank the Native Americans for their help. The Thanksgiving tradition or harvest festival continues today. It is a time to share food with family and friends and it is a time to be thankful.



In pairs for 5 minutes, ask and answer these questions:

Do you or your family have a similar type of feast? Why? What do you eat? What do you do?

In what ways is Thanksgiving different or similar to the feast you celebrate?

What is your favorite part of Thanksgiving or your traditional feast?

Share your partner's answers with the group.

Discussion Questions:

What is the name of a similar type of feast in your country or in another country you know of. Why do people celebrate this feast? What do they do?

What other holidays does your country celebrate nationally? Why do you celebrate them?

On national holidays in the United States, many businesses close. Do businesses close in your country on national holidays? On what holidays?

What is your favorite holiday in the U.S.? Why?

What is your favorite food from all of the holidays you have experienced in the U.S.? In your native country?

Do you know how to make any holiday foods? What foods? Is it difficult?

Would you like to learn how to make some Thanksgiving recipes? Do you know where to look on the Internet?

Will you celebrate Thanksgiving this year? If so, how will you celebrate?

How was your first year or first part of the year in the United States? Was it difficult like the Pilgrims' first year?

How many different harvest festivals are there in the world? Name all of them you can think of.

The main part of a harvest celebration is the feast; however, there are some other events in the holiday. Can you think of some other ways Americans celebrate Thanksgiving?

Do you or your family have some of your very own traditions that you do for a holiday? What are they?

New words and Idioms:

Thanksgiving, harvest festival, giving thanks, plentiful, corn, "The New World", pilgrims, feast, cranberries, squash, sweet potatoes, barley, green beans, pumpkins, deer, turkeys, popcorn, traditional foods, crops, apple pie, pumpkin pie, "my eyes are bigger than my stomach", to be "stuffed", to "say grace", turkey with all the trimmings, to "pig out", "to mind your manners", "thank you for having me", etc.