



NEWSLETTER

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Registration for Spring 2021 is now open!

Our program welcomes students living in Austin, the USA, or anywhere around the globe to register for online classes. Register by December 23, 2020 for a chance to win a \$75 Barnes & Noble College gift card.

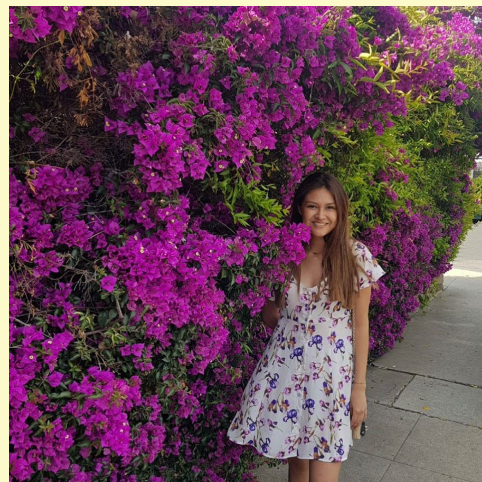
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Enter your answers here

We'll share your answers on ESOL social media on Thanksgiving day!

Thanksgiving: A New Experience



Lorena Guzman
ESOL Student

Thanksgiving is a celebration unknown to people who live outside the United States; those living outside the USA have only heard about it or seen it in movies, but they do not think about the real meaning of this celebration. The first Thanksgiving celebration that I had was when my sister who lives in San Diego invited us to visit her for Thanksgiving. However, I felt strange celebrating something that I did not understand, and I only viewed it as an opportunity to share an early Christmas celebration with my sister and her family. Nevertheless, 4 years after that experience, all is different in my life. Now I live in the United States far away from my family, my country and all my family traditions, which I miss a lot. We are immigrants, and now more than ever I've started to understand the meaning of Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is a day to be grateful for all the blessings that we have in our lives, and it is different from other celebrations like Christmas, Hanukah, or anything else because this is a celebration for everyone. It doesn't matter if you're religious or not. It is a celebration to say thanks for everything that we have and we've received in this country where I am an immigrant and where I found amazing people who gave me their support and help when I needed it to make me feel home. Thanksgiving is not a commercial celebration. It is more like a friendship celebration because, despite being far away from home, Thanksgiving makes us feel at home.

Maria Daniela Tellez
ESOL Student

As an international student, adapting to a different culture and lifestyle can be challenging, but at the same, it can be extremely gratifying. Learning about a particular group of people and their traditions can open up one's mind and allow one to be more understanding of other people and cultures.

My first experience with an unfamiliar tradition was Thanksgiving in the USA. After researching it and asking people about it, I found it very fascinating!

People focus on expressing gratitude during Thanksgiving. I believe gratitude is a humble recognition of others that guides us to see the best part of everything. Therefore, stopping our routines and dedicating an official day to give thanks is wonderful, especially during this time when everyone is busy and in isolation due to the pandemic. I feel expressing gratitude can heal our hearts.

In my country, we don't celebrate Thanksgiving, but gratefulness is part of our culture and personalities. Nevertheless, in our busy lives we sometimes forget to express our feelings towards people around us. For that reason, I find the idea of reaching out to others around us to express gratitude fascinating!

I will definitely bring this tradition with me wherever I go.



Gerhardt Gast

The First Thanksgiving

In 1863 President Abraham Lincoln declared a national day of thanksgiving. The holiday was to be celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November. 240 years earlier, in 1623, William Bradford, the leader of the pilgrims that had come to America to escape religious persecution in England, proclaimed a day of Thanksgiving for having survived a tough winter. They celebrated with Native Americans who had helped them survive.

Today, a traditional Thanksgiving meal consists of Turkey, mashed potatoes or sweet potatoes, green

Vocabulary

- declared** – to officially say something
- persecution** – being unjustly punished
- survive** – to live through a difficult time
- consists** – is made up of
- bitter** – having a taste that is not sweet. Bitter foods include coffee, beer, and fruit peelings.
- lacked** – didn't have

bean casserole, bread, corn, and cranberry sauce or cranberry jelly. Dessert is, of course, pumpkin pie.

It is unknown if the first Thanksgiving had turkey. We only know that they had "fowl" which could have meant ducks or geese. They also ate fish and shellfish (mostly lobster and mussels), deer, nuts, berries, bread, onions, cornbread, cabbage, carrots, potatoes, and perhaps peas. People did not eat cranberries until much later because it was too bitter. Although it was common to eat pumpkins and gourds, they didn't have the pie because they lacked the ingredients for pie crust.

Most of the Pilgrim women had died in the first few years in America. At the first Thanksgiving dinner, there were only 4 surviving women, 22 men, and 25 children and teenagers.

How to write a Thank you Note

Dear [Recipient's name],

[Opening line thanking the recipient.] [Detail about how you enjoyed the experience.] [Something specific, especially the food.] [Closing sentence thanking them again].

Warm Regards,
[Sender's name]



Wassail Recipe

[Find the recipe here](#)



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