

# *The Mayflower Compact*

*In the name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, defender of the Faith, etc.:*

*Having undertaken, for the Glory of God, and advancements of the Christian faith, and the honor of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the Northern parts of Virginia; do by these presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and one another; covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic; for our better ordering, and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.*

*In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the 11th of November, in the year of the reign of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, 1620.*

# A History of Thanksgiving



Before 1492, only Native Americans lived in North America. Europeans were not aware it existed. When Christopher Columbus accidentally landed in the Caribbean on his way to India, European nations, who had spent centuries competing with each other for resources, power, and religious influence, now saw an opportunity to gain natural resources, land for their overflowing populations, and fuel for their power struggles with each other.

In the early 1600s, all English people were required to belong to the state-run church: the Church of England. But a small group of people, known as Separatists because they wanted to separate from the Church of England, began meeting secretly in their homes. This was against the law. After years of struggle, they chose to immigrate to the land in North America that England had claimed. Later, these people would become known as the Pilgrims, because a pilgrim is a person who goes on a spiritual journey.

The Pilgrims sailed on the Mayflower in 1620. 102 passengers left England in September, 1620, and 102 arrived at what is now Massachusetts in November, 1620. One died along the way, and a baby was born: Oceanus. When they landed, the Pilgrims signed a document called the Mayflower Compact. It laid out a plan for how they would be governed. They named the new land Plymouth.

Their first winter in Plymouth was very difficult. Without proper homes, enough food, or the resources they were used to in Europe, half of the Pilgrims died.

In the spring the Pilgrims met two Native Americans, Squanto and Samoset, who helped them trade with the Wampanoag people, taught them how to fertilize the soil, and gave them tips on fishing and foraging the local plants. Thanks to their help, the Pilgrims were prepared for their second winter in Plymouth. To celebrate the end of their harvest, the fifty-three surviving Pilgrims held a great feast and were joined by about ninety of the Wampanoag people and their leader, Massasoit. This became known as the first Thanksgiving. There would be future conflict between these two groups, as well as between other Europeans and Native Americans, but for more than 50 years, the Pilgrims and Wampanoag had a successful alliance.

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day celebration. For two hundred years, each state had celebrated on their own schedule, but during the Civil War, President Lincoln saw an opportunity for the holiday to provide America with a sense of unity. In 1924, Macy's began its Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. Today, America is still a land that constantly receives people from other countries, who come for all different reasons.

# Thanksgiving Timeline

**Before  
1492**

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**Early  
1600s**

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**1620**

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**1621**

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**1863**

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**1924**

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**Today**

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# Thanksgiving Timeline

Cut out strips and glue onto the following page next to the year each event happened.

President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day celebration

America continues to be a land of immigrants.

Native Americans lived all over North America. Europeans did not know the continent existed.

The Pilgrims sailed from England on the Mayflower.

Macy's began its Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

All people in England were required to belong to the Church of England. A group of Separatists began meeting secretly in their homes.

The Pilgrims and the Wampanoag people celebrated a harvest feast that is now known as the first Thanksgiving.

# Thanksgiving Review

Cut out and match each word to a sentence.  
Draw a picture.

<b>Thanksgiving</b>	<b>Immigrants</b>	<b>1620</b>
<b>Mayflower</b>	<b>Mayflower Compact</b>	<b>Squanto</b>
<b>Pilgrims</b>	<b>Plymouth</b>	<b>Native Americans</b>

<p>We are Christians from England who did not like the king's church.</p>	<p>This is the year the Pilgrims sailed to America.</p>	<p>Here is the ship the Pilgrims sailed to the New World.</p>
<p>The Pilgrims wrote this to agree on their rules.</p>	<p>The Pilgrims landed and built a village here.</p>	<p>I helped the Pilgrims learn to plant and hunt.</p>
<p>These people celebrated with the Pilgrims.</p>	<p>This holiday remembers the Pilgrims' and Native Americans' celebration.</p>	<p>We are people who come from other countries; together we built America.</p>

# Thanksgiving Nametags

Dressing up as Pilgrims and Wampanoag has often been a fun way to introduce young children Thanksgiving, and to American history in general. Help them connect to the story even more with these nametags. Each child can be assigned a specific person from the first Thanksgiving to learn about and portray.

Hello, My Name Is:

**Massasoit**

Hello, My Name Is:

**Squanto**

Hello, My Name Is:

**Samoset**

Hello, My Name Is:

**William  
Bradford**

Hello, My Name Is:

**Edward  
Winslow**

Hello, My Name Is:

**Myles  
Standish**