

Reading Comprehension Test

Exercise no. 1: Read the following text

The Thanksgiving Story

The Pilgrims **who** sailed to this country aboard the *Mayflower* were originally members of the English Separatist Church (a Puritan sect). They had earlier left **their** home in England and sailed to Holland (The Netherlands) to escape religious persecution. There, they enjoyed more religious tolerance, but at last they disliked Dutch way of life, thinking it

5 ungodly. Seeking a better life, the Separatists negotiated with a London stock company to finance a pilgrimage to America. Most of **those** making the trip aboard the *Mayflower* were non-Separatists, but were hired to protect the company's interests. Only about one-third of the original colonists were Separatists.

10 The Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock on December 11, 1620. **Their** first winter was devastating. At the beginning of the following fall, they had lost 46 of the original 102 persons **who** sailed on the *Mayflower*. But the harvest of 1621 was a huge **one**. And the remaining colonists decided to celebrate with a feast -- including 91 Indians **who** had helped the Pilgrims

15 survive **their** first year. It is believed that the Pilgrims would not have made it through the year without the help of the natives. The feast was more of a traditional English folkloristic festival than a true "thanksgiving" observance. **It** lasted three days. Governor William Bradford sent "four men fowling" after wild ducks and geese. It is not certain that wild turkey

20 was part of **their** feast. However, it is certain that they had venison. The term "turkey" was used by the Pilgrims to mean any sort of wild fowl. Another modern staple at almost every Thanksgiving table is pumpkin pie. But it is unlikely that the first feast included that food. The supply of flour had been long diminished, so there was no bread or pastries of any

25 kind. However, they did eat boiled pumpkin, and they produced a type of fried bread from their corn crop. There was also no milk, cider, potatoes, or butter. There was no domestic cattle for dairy products, and the newly-discovered potato was still considered by many Europeans to be poisonous. But the feast did include fish, berries, lobster,

30 fried fruit, clams, venison, and plums. This "thanksgiving" feast was not repeated the following year. But in 1623, during a severe dry season, the pilgrims gathered in a prayer service, praying for rain. When a long, steady rain followed the very next day, Governor Bradford proclaimed another day of Thanksgiving, again inviting their Indian friends.

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40 It wasn't until June of 1676 that another Day of Thanksgiving was proclaimed. On June 20, 1676, the governing council of Charlestown, Massachusetts, organised a meeting to determine how best to express thanks for the good fortune that had seen **their** community securely established. By unanimous vote they instructed Edward Rawson, the

clerk, to proclaim June 29 as a day of thanksgiving. It is notable that this thanksgiving celebration probably did not include the Indians, as the celebration was meant partly to be in recognition of the colonists' recent victory over the "heretic and savage natives".

45 October of 1777 marked the first time that all 13 colonies joined in a thanksgiving celebration. It also commemorated the patriotic victory over the British at Saratoga. But it was a one-time affair. George Washington proclaimed a National Day of Thanksgiving in 1789, although some were opposed to **it**. There was disagreement among the colonies, **many** feeling

50 the troubles of a few Pilgrims did not warrant a national holiday. And later, President Thomas Jefferson turned back from the idea of having a day of thanksgiving. It was Sarah Josepha Hale, a magazine editor, **whose** efforts eventually led to what we recognize as Thanksgiving. Hale wrote many editorials championing **her** cause in her *Boston Ladies' Magazine*,

55 and later, in *Godey's Lady's Book*. Finally, after a 40-year campaign of writing editorials and letters to governors and presidents, Hale's obsession became a reality when, in 1863, President Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November as a national day of Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving was proclaimed by every president after Lincoln. The date

60 was changed a couple of times, most recently by Franklin Roosevelt, **who** set it up one week to the next-to-last Thursday in order to create a longer Christmas shopping season. Public disorder against this decision caused the president to move Thanksgiving back to its original date two years later. And in 1941, Thanksgiving was finally proclaimed by

65 Congress as a legal holiday, as the fourth Thursday in November

Exercise no. 2: Find the opposites of the following words:

- earlier _____
- first _____
- beginning _____
- fall _____
- last _____
- true _____
- following _____
- victory _____
- many _____
- later _____

Exercise no. 3: What do these words refer to:

line 1	who
line 3	their
line 5	it
line 7	those
line 11	their
line 13	who
line 14	one
line 15	who
line 16	their
line 19	it
line 39	their
line 49	It
line 49	many
line 52	whose
line 54	her
line 61	who

Exercise no. 4 – What happened in.....?

1620	_____
1621	_____
1623	_____
1676	_____
1777	_____
1789	_____
1863	_____
1941	_____

Exercise no. 5 – Test your knowledge of *Thanksgiving*

1. What year did the Pilgrims have their first Thanksgiving Feast?
 1619
 1620
 1621
 1935
2. What food was probably NOT the Pilgrims's Thanksgiving menu?
 Potatoes
 Corn
 Fish
 Dried fruit
3. In 1676 a day of Thanksgiving was proclaimed to take place during what month?
 May
 June
 October
 November

4. What President didn't like the idea of having a Thanksgiving day?
- ⌘ Washington
 - ⌘ Nixon
 - ⌘ Truman
 - ⌘ Jefferson
5. Who is credited with leading the crusade to establish Thanksgiving Day?
- ⌘ Sarah Jessica Parker
 - ⌘ Sarah Lee
 - ⌘ Sarah Josepha Hale
 - ⌘ Sarah Ferguson
6. Which President first established a Thanksgiving Day as a national celebration?
- ⌘ Jefferson
 - ⌘ Adams
 - ⌘ Lincoln
 - ⌘ Wilson
7. Which President moved the date of Thanksgiving twice?
- ⌘ Lincoln
 - ⌘ T. Roosevelt
 - ⌘ F.D. Roosevelt
 - ⌘ Eisenhower
8. The reason Thanksgiving was moved up a week was....
- ⌘ To fulfil a political promise
 - ⌘ To keep away evil spirits
 - ⌘ Due to public pressure
 - ⌘ To lengthen the Christmas season