



# Whose Story Is Thanksgiving?

Read the passage and answer the questions. (CEFR B1–B2)

Class \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_



- 1 The image of Pilgrims and Native Americans sharing a peaceful meal is one of the most familiar scenes in American culture. Yet the only firsthand account of the 1621 gathering is a short letter by the colonist Edward Winslow, and it never calls the event a thanksgiving. The story of the first Thanksgiving was largely shaped in the nineteenth century, when writers and politicians were looking for symbols that could unite a divided nation.
- 2 For the Wampanoag, the context was very different. An epidemic had devastated their communities only a few years earlier, and their alliance with the newcomers was a strategic decision made from a position of weakness. Within two generations, that alliance had collapsed into one of the bloodiest wars in colonial New England.
- 3 This is why, since 1970, some Native Americans have observed Thanksgiving as a National Day of Mourning. Others see no conflict in celebrating, pointing out that giving thanks for the harvest was part of Native life long before 1621. Today, museums and teachers increasingly try to present both perspectives, treating the holiday not as a simple myth but as a starting point for honest conversation.

## Comprehension

### 1. What is the main idea of the passage?

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (A) The 1621 meal was the first time Native Americans gave thanks for a harvest. | (B) The familiar story of Thanksgiving is simplified, and different groups remember it in different ways. |
| (C) Edward Winslow invented Thanksgiving to unite a divided nation.              | (D) Museums should stop teaching about Thanksgiving because it is a myth.                                 |

### 2. What does the passage say about Edward Winslow's letter?

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|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| (A) It describes the meal as a peaceful religious service. | (B) It was written in the nineteenth century. |
| (C) It says that the Wampanoag were invited to the meal.   | (D) It never calls the event a thanksgiving.  |

### 3. According to the passage, why was the story of the first Thanksgiving shaped in the nineteenth century?

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| (A) Writers and politicians wanted symbols that could bring a divided nation together. | (B) Historians found a new letter about the 1621 meal.  |
| (C) The Wampanoag asked the government to create a national holiday.                   | (D) Museums needed a popular story to attract visitors. |

### 4. What can we infer from the phrase "a strategic decision made from a position of weakness"?

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (A) The Wampanoag were stronger than the English and did not need help.                  | (B) The English forced the Wampanoag to sign the agreement.          |
| (C) After the epidemic, the Wampanoag chose the alliance because they needed protection. | (D) The alliance was a mistake that the Wampanoag regretted at once. |

### 5. In paragraph 2, the word "devastated" is closest in meaning to

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|-------------------------|---------------------|
| (A) badly damaged       | (B) slowly built    |
| (C) carefully protected | (D) quietly visited |

### 6. Why does the writer mention that some Native Americans "see no conflict in celebrating"?

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|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (A) To prove that the National Day of Mourning is wrong. | (B) To show that Native Americans do not all share the same view of Thanksgiving. |
| (C) To explain why Thanksgiving is held in November.     | (D) To suggest that the 1621 meal never happened.                                 |



# Vocabulary, Paraphrase & Summary

Match the words with the definitions. Then rewrite and summarize.

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|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. firsthand   | a. to fail or break down suddenly and completely                                       |
| 2. unite       | b. a particular way of thinking about something, often based on your own experience    |
| 3. epidemic    | c. coming directly from a person who saw or did something, not from someone else       |
| 4. devastate   | d. to join people or groups together so that they act as one                           |
| 5. alliance    | e. a disease that spreads quickly and affects many people in one area at the same time |
| 6. strategic   | f. to damage or destroy something very badly                                           |
| 7. collapse    | g. an agreement between groups or countries to work together and help each other       |
| 8. perspective | h. carefully planned to reach a goal or to get an advantage                            |

Paraphrase — say it in your own words

**1. “Yet the only firsthand account of the 1621 gathering is a short letter by the colonist Edward Winslow, and it never calls the event a thanksgiving.”**

Hint: Start with "But" and use "the only record written by someone who was there". Change "never calls" to "does not describe".

**2. “Within two generations, that alliance had collapsed into one of the bloodiest wars in colonial New England.”**

Hint: Use "Before two generations had passed". Replace "collapsed into" with "broke down and turned into".

**3. “Today, museums and teachers increasingly try to present both perspectives, treating the holiday not as a simple myth but as a starting point for honest conversation.”**

Hint: Split it into two sentences. Use "More and more" and "show both sides".

Summary

Summarize the passage in about 50 words.



# Debate & Opinion Essay

Prepare for a debate. Then write your opinion (100–150 words).

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**Motion: It is acceptable for a national holiday to tell a simplified version of history.**

## FOR 賛成

- A simple story helps children and families understand the main message of the holiday, such as being thankful.
- In the nineteenth century, the Thanksgiving story helped unite a divided nation, so a simple symbol can do real good.
- Holidays are for celebrating together, and schools and museums can teach the full history on other days.

**Add your own reason:**

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## AGAINST 反対

- A simple story can hide the pain of some groups, like the Wampanoag who lost many people to an epidemic and later a war.
- If people only know the simple version, they may believe things that the firsthand record never says.
- Showing both perspectives, as many museums now do, shows that a holiday can be honest and still meaningful.

**Add your own reason:**

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|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Opinion</b>    | <i>I believe / I think that ...</i><br><hr/>      |
| <b>Reason 1</b>   | <i>First, ... For example, ...</i><br><hr/> <hr/> |
| <b>Reason 2</b>   | <i>Second, ... In fact, ...</i><br><hr/> <hr/>    |
| <b>Counter</b>    | <i>Some people say ... However, ...</i><br><hr/>  |
| <b>Conclusion</b> | <i>In conclusion, ...</i><br><hr/>                |