

The Origins of Thanksgiving

Put the paragraphs into the correct order and choose a heading for each one.

A _____

On March 16, 1621, the Pilgrims were visited by an Abnaki Indian named Samoset. Soon afterwards, he paid another visit with a friend called Squanto, whose English was excellent.

B _____

The October harvest was plentiful thanks to the new friends of the Pilgrims. Squanto and the other Indians were invited to join the Pilgrims for a thanksgiving celebration over three days in mid-October.

C 1 *A New Beginning* _____

On November 10, 1620, 65 days after leaving Plymouth Harbour in England, the *Mayflower* arrived at Plymouth Harbour in the New World carrying 110 passengers. They called themselves the 'Pilgrims'.

D _____

With the help of Squanto, the settlers learned how to plant Indian corn, how to tap the maple trees for sap and how to tell the difference between poisonous and medicinal plants.

E _____

For the next 200 years, Thanksgiving was celebrated after the harvest. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln appointed a national day of thanksgiving and since then Americans have officially celebrated Thanksgiving Day on the fourth Thursday in November.

F _____

The winter of 1620 was severe and the snow, sleet and cold hampered their attempts to build adequate shelter. By spring the following year, there were less than 50 Pilgrims left alive.

G _____

The following year was not so successful and the year after that was hot and dry, causing the crops to die in the fields. The governor, William Bradford, ordered a day of fasting and prayer and shortly afterwards the rain came. To celebrate, the Pilgrims proclaimed November 29 Thanksgiving Day.

HEADINGS

- A First Thanksgiving
- A New Friend
- Prayers Answered
- An Official Celebration
- Numbers Falling
- ~~A New Beginning~~
- Survival Tips

Now answer these questions:

- a) Where did the Pilgrims come from?
- b) What problems did the Pilgrims have in 1620?
- c) Why was Squanto a useful friend?
- d) Why did the Pilgrims hold a thanksgiving celebration in mid-October?
- e) What did the Pilgrims do in 1622 to encourage the rain to come?
- f) Who declared the fourth Thursday in November a national day?