

LESSON THANKSGIVING, PILGRIMS, MAYFLOWER BY LINDA LEE HANDY

1. AS THE BIGGEST FAMILY DAY, IS THANKSGIVING JUST ABOUT A DELICIOUS FEAST & SPORTS? Arriving at Cape Cod off the coast of Massachusetts in the brutal cold of November 1620, after a treacherous 66-day voyage, Pilgrims disembarked in a land with no hotels or any form of shelter to greet them. Those who survived got to work and laid the foundations of the United States of America. As Americans we honor the Pilgrims, feeling a great sense of patriotism and positive encouragement in the Pilgrim's memory. The **Mayflower Compact** was an agreement signed by 41 male passengers on the Mayflower on November 11, 1620, before they disembarked in Plymouth. It established a "civil body politic" for the new colony, creating a framework for self-governance and promising loyalty to King James I. **The document was a crucial step toward democracy in America, ensuring that the settlers would create their own just laws for the common good.** The November 1621 Plymouth Feast and Thanksgiving was prompted by a good harvest. The Pilgrims celebrated this with the local Wampanoag Native Americans, who had helped them get through the previous winter by giving them food in that time of scarcity. As President of the United States, George Washington proclaimed a nationwide Thanksgiving celebration in America marking (4th Thursday) November 26, 1789, "as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God".

2. To search for roots, you may find that you are related to early colonists, even from Mayflower era. See the LESSON: DISCOVER YOUR ANCESTORS, BUILD YOUR OWN TREE. In the forward of a family album on Thanksgiving that I developed, it stated, " **This is dedicated to our grandchildren: Learn of the journey of incredible ancestors who traveled on the Mayflower & the Purpose of Thanksgiving.**" It identifies **Stephen Hopkins** (Grandma Linda's 8th great grandfather) who was a Merchant Adventurer. His wife Elizabeth gave birth to the only child born during the journey, and this son was named Oceanus (Latin for ocean.) Hopkins served as asst governor for 3 years. **John Howland** (Grandpa Gary's 9th great grandfather and Grandma Linda's 10th great grandfather) left the docks of London as a 20 year old, indentured servant to Pilgrim John Carver. By his great good fortune, John survived falling overboard on the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean. He is featured in Charlie Brown's "[John Howland Falls Overboard](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5D3veWJiLs)": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5D3veWJiLs>. Search for books that were written about the Pilgrims. Part of the "**Courage in History**" series is about Young William Hawkins and his father Henry, join Giles and Constance Hopkins (Stephen Hopkins' children) and other Pilgrim settlers in their courageous voyage ...struggle to survive in a harsh new land, against all odds...making new friends among the local Native Americans and experiencing fantastic adventures in the wilderness of the "New World." "**Constance The Story of Early Plymouth**" is a classic of historical young adult fiction, recounting the daily life, hardships, romances, and marriage of a young girl during the early years.

4. FAMILY DISCUSSION: How can learning about the Pilgrims help us have "grateful hearts"?

5. RESOURCES: <https://www.christianbook.com/history/colonial-history>;
<https://www.amazon.com/Pilgrim-Courage-Settling-Plymouth-Colony/dp/1440444412> ;
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/constance-patricia-clapp/1120015118>; [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayflower Compact](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayflower_Compact)
[Mayflower Compact - Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayflower_Compact)

THE FIRST THANKSGIVING DAY “PLAY”, for my grandchildren, by Linda Lee Handy

6 CHARACTERS: PILGRIM FATHER, PILGRIM MOTHER, 3 CHILDREN, SQUANTO

Pilgrim Child 1: (happy) Yeah! Today is a FEAST day and we can eat ALL we want to eat! And we can play games!

Pilgrim Mother (to Pilgrim Children): Yes, it will be a fun FEAST day. But when we eat ALL we want, what should all the children remember on this special day?

Pilgrim Child 2: I can remember that I was afraid in our old land, but I am not afraid any more. I’m thankful for our new land of freedom and liberty.

Pilgrim Father: (to Pilgrim Children): Why do you think we are having a FEAST day today?

Pilgrim Child 3: We can remember how cold and hungry we were when we first came to America.

Pilgrim Mother: We want to give thanks to Heavenly Father! I remember that we could not go to our church in the old country and worship our Savior Jesus Christ as we wanted. Now we can.

Pilgrim Father: We are so blessed to survive the cold winter since we sailed to America.

Pilgrim Mother: Many of our families have died of illness and not enough food.

Pilgrim Child 1: Look, here comes Squanto. I am so glad he speaks English!

Pilgrim Father: Why are we inviting our Wampanoag Indian friends to feast with us?

Pilgrim Child 2: Squanto and all his friends have lived here a long time. What would we have done if they had not helped us???

Squanto: Many of my friends have been hunting and are bringing food from our village. We want to live in peace and help each other.

Pilgrim Father: Squanto, we thank you. You have helped us learn about our new land.

Squanto: Yes, I think you Pilgrims did not know much about your new land!!

Pilgrim Child 3: But Squanto, you taught us! Like how to fish. And you showed us how to put a fish in the ground when we plant corn seeds so corn will grow tall.

Pilgrim Mother: Now we have a lot of corn, to make cereal, and corn bread, and corn pudding. We have even learned some new ways to eat corn!

Pilgrim Child 1: Squanto knows so many things! He showed us where to pick berries.

Pilgrim Father: Squanto is a good friend. He showed us how to get “SAP” –the juice inside of the Maple Trees.

Pilgrim Child 2: Yum! I love this new “SAP” . We can make sugar and syrup for our pancakes and Maple candy!

Squanto: Do you want to go with me to find some turkeys in the forest!

Pilgrim Child 3: Yes, Gobble Gobble, watch out! Here we come!

Pilgrim Mother: If you catch a big turkey, I will cook it over our fire!

Pilgrim Child 1: Squanto, Are we going to learn some new games?

Squanto: Yes, we will have many competitions. Everyone will try to win!

Pilgrim Father: On this FEAST Day of Thanksgiving, ALL of us are winners! We have a new land of freedom, and of hope and healing as we worship Jesus Christ.

Pilgrim Mother: We must always remember to be THANKFUL for all our blessings.

Squanto: And always try to make friends and help others.

Pilgrim Child 2: Maybe we should have this FEAST every year!!! Forever!

