

# Thanksgiving Object Lesson: Then and Now

Grade Level: 2+

## Overview

Students examine objects that would have been useful at the first Thanksgiving and objects that are useful at modern Thanksgiving celebrations to explore how times change and what they might have in their own home to be thankful for.



## Lesson Goals

**Students should:**

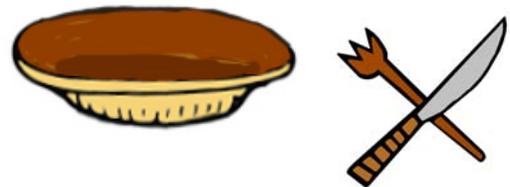
1. Learn about how modern conveniences can make life better or easier.
2. Understand how simplicity was and is a way of life for some, like the Native Americans from the first Thanksgiving.
3. Receive a Thanksgiving Object Over Time worksheet to complete.

## Materials

- Two large baskets
- Examples of tools and objects that would have been used to create the first Thanksgiving feast: fire for cooking, mortar and pestle for crushing corn, clay pot for cooking, bow and arrow for hunting, net for fishing
- Examples of tools and objects that are used today to create Thanksgiving feasts: oven timer, roasting pan, knife, grocery bag, pie tin
- Printable (at end of this lesson)
- Pencil

## Teaching the Lesson

Place one basket at each end of the room and pile all the tools/objects together in the center of the room. Label one basket “First Thanksgiving” and the other “Modern Thanksgiving.”



Ask kids to work as a group and sort the objects properly between the two baskets. When all of the items have been sorted, discuss what each object is used for and whether it was put into the correct basket. Discuss what Thanksgiving would be like today for kids and adults if they could only use the objects from the “First Thanksgiving” basket.

Give each child the Thanksgiving Object Over Time worksheet. Explain that each person should choose any one object they can think of that relates to Thanksgiving and that they are most thankful for. Kids should write down their thoughts on how this item would've looked or been used at the first Thanksgiving, how it's used at a modern Thanksgiving, and how it would be used at a Thanksgiving 100 years from now.



## Lesson Resources

### Websites and Videos

- <https://www.plimoth.org/learn/multimedia-reference-library/discover-collections-and-archives/collections-archaeology>
- <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/wampanoag-interview-kate-waters/>
- <https://www.foodnetwork.com/holidays-and-parties/photos/thanksgiving-cooking-and-baking-tools>
- <https://youtu.be/SmisO7pdMW4>

### Books for Kids

- *Cape Cod Wampanoag Cookbook: Traditional New England & Indian Recipes, Images & Lore* by Earl Mills
- *Cooking Around the Calendar With Kids - Holiday and Seasonal Food and Fun* by Amy Houts
- *Pilgrims of Plymouth* by Susan E. Goodman

## Concluding Activity

Discuss the objects and tools each child is most thankful for. Does everyone agree or are there a variety of answers? Encourage kids to state what they are thankful for at their Thanksgiving celebration, including the object or tool they talked about with you.

## Thanksgiving Object Over Time

Directions: Fill in the blanks then draw a picture of your chosen object in the empty square.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

The one tool or object I am thankful to have for preparing Thanksgiving dinner is:

\_\_\_\_\_

At the first Thanksgiving, this item would have been:

Made from: \_\_\_\_\_

Used for: \_\_\_\_\_



At a modern Thanksgiving, this item would be:

Made from: \_\_\_\_\_

Used for: \_\_\_\_\_



At a future Thanksgiving 100 years from now, this item would be:

Made from: \_\_\_\_\_

Used for: \_\_\_\_\_

