Teaching Accurate and Age-Appropriate History to Elementary Students: Teaching Third Graders about Historic Thanksgiving

Ashley Schepis

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Teaching Accurate and Age-Appropriate History to Elementary Students:

Teaching Third Graders about Historic Thanksgiving

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Bridgewater State University

Submitted in Partial Completion of the Requirements for Commonwealth Honors
in Early Childhood Education and History

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Abstract
This educational and historical research is based on teaching accurate and age-appropriate history to elementary students. Unfortunately, instead of true history elementary schoolers are often taught myths, to avoid teaching children about the embarrassing and gruesome parts of United States history. When history is not taught truthfully, it can perpetuate stereotypes and leave students confused when they reach secondary and higher education and discover that some of what they know is incorrect. The purpose of this project is to investigate what really happened at the 1621 Harvest Feast and its evolution into the holiday that is celebrated today, assess how to teach this information to children based on developmental appropriateness, and create lesson plans for teachers to do so. First, the research in this thesis consists of exploring the actual historical events of the 1621 Harvest Feast, through primary and secondary historical documents. Second, I examine how Thanksgiving is currently taught at the 3rd grade level, by reading teaching materials and books used in third grade classroom and examining the data gathered from an anonymous survey sent to Massachusetts teachers. This research has implications for not only how history is taught to elementary students and for helping teachers figure out how to do that, but also argues for a change in elementary education that can positively change the United States’ and cultural ideas of Thanksgiving.

Keywords: 1621 Harvest Feast, lesson plans, Lincoln, Massasoit, Patuxet, Pilgrims, Plimoth, Plymouth, Puritans, Separatists, social emotional learning, Squanto, Thanksgiving, third grade, Tisquantum, Wamanoag
Myth versus Reality

In November, after a long drive to visit family, one might sit down, surrounded by that large family, ready to feast. On the table sits a “roasted turkey,” “savory stuffing,” “bowls of gravy and plates of vegetables,” maybe even a pumpkin pie (Baker, 2007, 3-4). This traditional Thanksgiving set up is a familiar one to U.S. Americans because if they have not experienced it, they have seen this depiction of the perfect Thanksgiving meal, time and time again. Sarah Hale, the “Godmother of Thanksgiving” (Baker, 2007, 1) introduced this familiar version of the Thanksgiving holiday. However, almost nothing U.S. Americans associate with the fourth Thursday of November came from the 1621 Harvest Feast, shared between Wampanoag people and English settlers.

Assuming that the modern-day tradition of Thanksgiving is nearly the same as it was in 1621 is problematic. The Thanksgiving holiday has undergone many changes since its supposed beginning in 1621, mainly during the nineteenth century. Sarah Hale, a widowed mother of five, and editor of *Ladies Journal*, made it her life’s mission to make Thanksgiving a national holiday; she thought it would help promote national character, and would serve to be a “a national pledge of Christian faith in God, acknowledging him as the dispenser of blessings” (Baker, 2007, 10). President Abraham Lincoln agreed with her that Thanksgiving could play a unifying role in an increasingly divided nation (Baker, 2007, 10) and declared the third Thursday of November a national holiday in both 1863 and 1864. However, Thanksgiving was not established as an annual national holiday until 1941 when Congress passed a bill that Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed into law on November 26, 1941.

Thanksgiving, although a celebration for the white man, is a troubling holiday for Indigenous people across the nation, particularly for the Wampanoag. As a traditional United States holiday, Thanksgiving is often a day of sadness and frustration for Indigenous peoples. In
fact, many Indigenous people celebrate the National Day of Mourning, which aligns with Thanksgiving, on the fourth Thursday of November. The event, held in Plymouth, “is a solemn, spiritual and highly political day” (United American Indians of New England, 2022) as it is a day of remembrance for the “genocide of millions of Native people, the theft of native lands and the erasure of Native cultures” (United American Indians of New England, 2022). Participants also “honor Indigenous ancestors and Native resilience” while protesting “the racism and oppression that Indigenous people continue to experience worldwide” (United American Indians of New England, 2022). The event is held in Plymouth, the site of Plymouth Colony, which is on traditional Wampanoag land.

The English Arrival and its Consequences

Wampanoag or ‘People of the First Light,’ one of many tribes that call Turtle Island home and treasure the Mashpee or ‘Great Water’ (Weeden, 2023). The Wampanoag Nation composed of sixty-nine villages has long settled in modern day Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Today, there are two federally recognized Wampanoag tribes in Massachusetts, the Mashpee, located in the town of Mashpee and the city of Taunton, Massachusetts, and the Aquinnah, located on the island, Martha’s Vineyard. Along with learning how to accurately and age-appropriately teach Indigenous history to students, Land Acknowledgements may be a great way to teach students about the continuous struggles Indigenous peoples, like the Mashpee Wampanoag, face trying to reclaim their land. It may also help students acknowledge that the land their schools were built on once belonged to other people.

The ‘Pilgrims’ did not call themselves Pilgrims; they would have considered themselves Separatists. The Pilgrims were really “colonists, newcomers, squatters, [and] invaders” (Saxine, 2019, 9). The term ‘Pilgrim’ was chosen when nineteenth-century writers “plucked a single
lower-case appearance of the word in Separatist Robert Cushman’s account—used in the generic sense to mean Christians on a journey to heaven—and used it as an honorific description” (Saxine, 2019, 9) for those who voyaged from England to Native America.

The Separatists were a radical group of Puritans that separated from the Church of England because they believed the Church was beyond saving. After escaping to the Dutch Republic to avoid imprisonment in England, they decided they did not fit in there either. So, in 1619, some Separatists decided to go to America with the Virginia Company patent. The Mayflower was supposed to land near the Hudson River in modern day New York. Some of the Plymouth colonists did not intend to stay in North America for long; they wanted to go back to England to fix the Church.

When the English settlers arrived in modern day Plymouth, what the Wampanoag knew as Patuxet, they found land that had been taken care of by a group of people, but they did not find the people that took care of it alive. The Indigenous people they found were “dead & abundantly wasted in the late great mortality,” the English settlers knew that the Natives had been killed by a disease “wherin thousands of them dyed,” sadly many of the Wampanoag died so quickly that they were unable “to burie one another; the skulls and bones were found in many places lying still above ground, where their houses and dwelling had been” (Calloway, 1997, 41). The English colonists believed that God had cleared Plimoth (Patuxet) of Native Americans for their arrival. In reality, many Indigenous people across the Americas were killed by Europeans before they had ever seen one, European diseases spread rapidly amongst populations vulnerable to the disease.

The “deadly pestilence [that] swept the coast of New England in 1616-1617” (Calloway, 1997, 41) was most likely the smallpox pandemic, although it could have been an epidemic of
any European disease. The Mashpee Wampanoag believe that traders in 1616 brought “yellow fever to Wampanoag territory” (Mashpee Wampanoag) this was called the Great Dying. By the time the English settlers came to North America it was a shell of what it had been before. Before disease decimated the Natives in Southern New England, there was a “regional population of more than 90,000,” the Pokanokets accounted for about 12,000 of that total (Bragdon, 1996, 25).

**Settler ‘Thanksgivings’**

The English colonists did not consider the 1621 Harvest Feast Thanksgiving like it is considered in 2022; albeit they were giving thanks. The Separatists gave thanks to their god regularly when something, like a harvest, went well. They also gave thanks to their god when they massacred groups of Indigenous peoples; English settlers celebrated a thanksgiving after the Pequot Massacre of 1637. The English settlers went to Fort Mystic and murdered innocent women and children, burned their village and bodies, and sold survivors into slavery, then they celebrated their second major thanksgiving feast (Weeden, 2023).

William Bradford wrote the earliest description we have of the 1621 ‘thanksgiving,’ in Mourt’s Relation: A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth:

> Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the company almost a week. At which time, amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the plantation and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain and others. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want that we often wish you partakers of our plenty. (Bradford, 1622, 82)
The events of the 19th-Century led to a new interpretation of the 1621 Harvest Feast: the beginning of a cultural shift and a new national holiday—Thanksgiving; “by the middle decades of the nineteenth century [...] the story of the Pilgrims had been transformed into an epic account of the religious and republican origins of New England and America” (Conforti, 171-172). Once looked down upon for their radical ideals the Puritans became Pilgrims, people to look up to. The switch was fueled with nationalism, not only because the United States had recently earned its independence from the same nation that ‘suppressed’ the Pilgrims, but also because New England wanted to strengthen the idea of its “Yankee character.”

**Wampanoag Thanksgivings**

Thanksgiving has always been about giving thanks, even if it was for the wrong reasons. At the 1621 Harvest Feast, the Pilgrims were giving thanks to their god. The Wampanoag, and other Indigenous peoples, have many thanksgivings throughout the year. The Wampanoag have thirteen thanksgivings throughout the year, including Cranberry Thanksgiving, “the thanksgiving for the gathering of all the cranberry ushers in the time of harvest” (Laroze, 2019), which is so sacred “that Aquinnah children are officially given the day off from school to join the harvest” (Verde, 2021).

Indigenous peoples know their land very well, their culture creates a very strong connection between them and Mother Earth. Most of the Wampanoag diet was from the garden. One family would have 1-3 acres of land where they would grow corn, beans, and squash; although the Wampanoag did not have a term for this trio, it is commonly referred to as ‘the three sisters’ today. The Wampanoag women planted these crops in a mound the size of a pregnant women’s belly; the crops were planted together because “the broad leaves of corn provided shelter from the sun; the corn stalk was a living stake for the bean and squash vines;
and the squash vines provided good cover, ensuring maximum capture of rain and minimum erosion.” (Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head).

**The Wampanoag People**

Hindsight makes it easy to point at Native Americans and ask why they aligned themselves with the European invaders, but in the age of discovery, Native Americans did not have the knowledge that people in the 21st-Century have now. At the time, Indigenous peoples saw little reason to war with the English settlers, in fact “they watched the Europeans with interest (and suspicion),” while also considering them to be beneficial to their tribe, even incorporating “them into their alliances,” and trading “with them for the new goods they brought” (Calloway, 2016, 105). Also, since women and children were amongst the English settlers, they were seen as a lesser threat to Native peoples.

As more European settlers came to the Americas and increasingly claimed and stole Native American lands, conflicts grew but the Native Americans were outnumbered and did have all of the resources that the Europeans did. Looking forward to King Philip’s War, the Algonquian tribes were not used to fighting long wars like the Europeans, had no ships to bring in outside supplies, and were split (some tribes, like the Mohegan, who had already been close to destroyed by the English, sided with them because they thought it was their best chance of cultural survival). Although the Algonquians fought hard against the English and, at points, were winning the war, the English prevailed. Losing King Philip’s War meant that most Indigenous peoples were enslaved and were not allowed to be themselves or celebrate their culture, many histories and languages were suppressed, hidden, and lost.

While the term “Indian(s)” has been phased out of our everyday language, many texts and resources still use the term. It’s important to teach children that “Indian” is an outdated and
inappropriate term to some Native peoples. The term can be harmful because it is an incorrect, blanket term given to Native Americans by European colonizers. Although it is widely used in language and in this paper, Native American is not a perfect term either. Indigenous people did not name these continents the Americas, white conquerors did: Indigenous peoples often referred to the Americas as Turtle Island. American Indian is used as a shield, members come from dozens of cultural backgrounds. It is best to refer to Indigenous peoples by what they wish to be called or by their tribal affiliation—"one basic point about Indians that students ought to take away […] is that it is just as important to distinguish between different First Nations as it is to distinguish between European nations" (Sleeper-Smith, et al., 2015, 47).

Native Americans have not disappeared. Many textbooks (The Massachusetts Adventure, 2000, for example) that are used to teach children about the Wampanoag use past tense while teaching about Indigenous peoples. That is why it is important to teach third graders about how the Wampanoag people may have felt during after the arrival of the English settlers in 1620, not just how the English “invaders” felt about landing on Wampanoag land.

The ‘Mayflower Compact’… or Not

However, the Puritans did not intend on coming to New England, they had a charter for Virginia because the Virginia Company received its first charter in 1606. So, Plymouth was not the first area settled by the English, the American Revolution started in Boston, and Plymouth Colony would have failed had it not been for the help of the Wampanoag people and the arrival of the settlers of Massachusetts Bay Colony. Plymouth was not the birthplace of ‘America;’ yet it was painted as such and in turn, created hundreds of years of regional pride.

This regional pride encouraged New Englanders to reshape “the image of the puritans” (Conforti, 172) or in other words, ‘Pilgrimize’ them. This included making changes to the history
of their forefathers, including changing how people look at the “Agreement Between Settlers of New Plymouth,” or inventing Plymouth Rock. There are no accounts of Plymouth Rock in the Separatists’ accounts, nor does it “appear until more than a century after the first settlers landed” (Conforti, 174). For a month after they originally arrived at Cape Cod, the English settlers “explored Cape Cod by land and by sea,” and it is very unlikely “that the Plymouth settlers would have guided their shallop toward a menacing boulder” in the cruel December weather (Conforti 174).

Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework Topic 4 1.a. states, “the purpose of the Mayflower Compact and the principle of self-government”. Most historians would argue that claiming the Mayflower Compact is a founding document of democracy is problematic at best. The English settlers that arrived in modern day Plymouth did not intend for the document to be a document of self-government; signing the document was optional, for men as women were not allowed to sign if they wanted to or not. The document acted as a pledge not to kill one another. In fact, the creators of the ‘Mayflower Compact’ did not name it that. The ‘Mayflower Compact’ as it is referred to as today was originally titled “Agreement Between the Settlers of New Plymouth” and occasionally referred to as the “Plymouth Combination” or “The Combination”. The change from these names to “The Mayflower Compact” happened during the nineteenth century. Although the document is thought of as “America’s first ‘republican’ constitution,” (Conforti, 173) it falls short of this idea for many reasons.

The English settlers did not intend for the “Agreement Between the Settlers of New Plymouth” to be a document of self-government because they still considered themselves subjects of the King of England; not only that, but some of the Puritans also originally intended to go back to England to try and reform the Church of England. The “Agreement Between
Settlers of New Plymouth” was not called the ‘Mayflower Compact’ until 1793. This is a stark example of how the Massachusetts History and Social Studies Frameworks may need to be carefully rewritten. The standards could include how the name of this agreement evolved over time and the cultural significance it has had along the way.

**Challenging Massachusetts State Standards**

The supporting question for Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework Topic 4 is: “What were the challenges for women and men in the early years in Plymouth?” The current standards lack representation of Native people’s history. This is true, not just for Topic 4 but for all Massachusetts state standards; “the distinctive history of Native Americans as colonized people should not result in their marginalization in narratives of American history” (Sleeper-Smith, et al., 2015, 4).

Many of the state standards, having to do with colonization are inaccurate because they leave out the Indigenous perspective—Indigenous people are an integral part of United States history, they have always been here, and the United States was built on the base of their exploitation. In the DESE History and Social Science Frameworks, the supporting question for Topic 3: “European explorers’ first contacts with Native Peoples in the Northeast” is “How did European explorers describe the Northeast and its Native Peoples?” There is no mention in the standards to suggest a third grader should also consider how the Indigenous people who already lived there felt. This is another example of how history and history education is and has been whitewashed at a fundamental level.

An example of how to easily make the standards more inclusive of Indigenous peoples can be found on page 52 of the Massachusetts English Language Arts and Literacy Frameworks from 2017 standards RI.3.6, RI.3.9, and W.3.1 which is as follows:
As they [third grade students] study the colonial period in Massachusetts, students read and view print and digital resources on the colonists’ conflicting views about separating from Britain. Sources include Liberty! How the Revolutionary War Began by Lucille Recht Penner, the PBS website History of US based on Joy Hakim’s book series, and Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak, a collection of primary sources by Kay Winter. Students choose a character from the period and write a letter from the character’s point of view, giving an opinion and supporting either the revolutionary or the loyalist cause with reasons. (DESE)

It is easy to apply this idea to Wampanoag-English settler relations around 1621. Students would choose to write from a Wampanoag point of view or an English settler’s point of view, giving an opinion about how they feel about their new company. In order to do that accurately, children would have to understand some of the unpleasant ways the English settlers treated the Wampanoag people.

However, push back to teaching that accurate history tends to present itself through concern for children learning about death and violence, however, topic 5.2 asks students to

“Explain why Puritan men and women migrated in great numbers to Massachusetts in the 17th century, how they moved west from the Atlantic coast, and the consequences of their migration for the Native Peoples of the region (e.g., loss of territory, great loss of life due to susceptibility to European diseases, religious conversion, conflicts over different ways of life such as the Pequot War and King Philip’s War)” (DESE).

So, there is mention of the Europeans bringing deadly diseases to the Natives.

In the Massachusetts state standards, there is no mention of the complicated relationship, or even the positive relationships, the Natives had with the English settlers. However, this standard does teach children that not everything the English settlers did or the relationships they had with the Wampanoag was good and furthers the notion that Indigenous peoples have vanished.

Using an honorific term to describe the English settlers, intentionally or not, puts the English settlers on a pedestal, above the Wampanoag people. The term Pilgrim is inaccurate and
has no place in the state standards. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [DESE] History and Social Science Frameworks expects students to be able to:

Explain who the Pilgrim men and women were and why they left Europe to seek a place where they would have the right to practice their religion; describe their journey, the government of their early years in the Plymouth Colony, and analyze their relationships with the Wampanoag and Abenaki/Wabanaki people. (DESE)

Instead of referring to the English settlers as Pilgrims, third graders should be taught that there were different groups of people on the Mayflower and their differences. The Puritans were actually a radical religious group that were not welcome in England and did not fit into the Dutch Republic, so they decided to go to America with a patent from the Virginia Company.

Some Puritans wanted to return to England and try to reform the Church, while others, the Separatists, felt that the Church of England was beyond saving. John Winthrop was a Puritan who felt that “‘after the storm,’ they would return to their English ‘mother church’” (Winship, 2018, 77).

The Massachusetts state standards are seemingly trying to be more inclusive of Indigenous voices. However, by leaving out certain facts, or only including Indigenous history when it is absolutely necessary, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education fails to do so. Indigenous history is United States history, the United States was founded on their land, so in order to start decolonizing we must start teaching “the true histories that have purposely been invisibilized” (Laboucan-Massimo, 2023).

**Including an Indigenous Voice**

In 2022, Thanksgiving is used often as a tool for social emotional learning (SEL). There is nothing wrong with using Thanksgiving to teach children about being thankful, but the true origins of the holiday are just as important to teach. Learning about the Wampanoag people and what really happened at the 1621 Harvest Feast is also a great tool to teach SEL and create better
United States citizens; “when teachers embed Native American history more fully in the American story, students are challenged to think in new ways about larger themes in American history such as nation building, economic empowerment, citizenship, and multiculturalism” (Sleeper-Smith, et al., 2015, 4).

Many children learn about the story of Tisquantum, widely known as Squanto, despite historians feeling like he is vastly insignificant. One explanation of this is that it is easy for children to learn about one man than it is for them to remember the names of many. Also, Tisquantum was the last of his people, which makes him significant and someone that students can be taught to greatly empathize with, this makes him a good figure to teach children SEL. Tisquantum was appointed to the English colonists by Massasoit, however, the English observed him “act frequently as if to enhance his own power and prestige,” because of his lies and tricks, Massasoit ordered Tisquantum to be executed in a traditional manner. Despite sending his own knife to the English settlers to carry out the execution, Tisquantum died of disease and many of the Pokanoket believed his death to be because of witchcraft (Bragdon, 1996, 151). Tisquantum was captured and enslaved by Thomas Hunt, alongside Hobbomok. Tisquantum and Hobbomok learned English as they traveled in Europe and England (Bragdon, 1996, 29). Tisquantum was of Patuxet and while he was enslaved disease destroyed his village, leaving him “the only known surviving member of the Patuxet community” (Bragdon, 1996, 151). Tisquantum was an interpreter for Massasoit until his death in 1622, albeit he was not the most trustworthy. Which could be taught to children, it is okay for children to learn that not every person or historical figure is perfect and sometimes deciding who the ‘good guy’ is can be challenging.

Teaching impressionable students that Thanksgiving is a holiday based on English settlers being heroes is not factual. Most of the inaccuracies around Thanksgiving are one way;
the ‘Pilgrims’ were heroes making pilgrimage, founders of democracy in the United States, in search of religious toleration, which was true, but only for themselves. The Puritans were not accepting of other religions, or other peoples.

Field trips are a great way to include Indigenous history into the classroom, or to immerse your classroom into Indigenous history. However, schools may need to consider if their field trip site is an accurate portrayal of the history they wish to teach their students. For example, the Plimoth Patuxet Museum in Plymouth, Massachusetts, is a popular field trip amongst Massachusetts and New England school systems. However, the Wampanoag people do not feel as though Plimoth Pawtuxet accurately represents their people, history and culture. Therefore, schools should consider researching local Indigenous history museums, ran by Indigenous peoples.

To literally include Wampanoag voices school districts should consider working with tribal elders. In a response to an anonymous survey sent to Indigenous third grade teachers or teachers of large populations of Wampanoag students, one teacher said, “the legends are engaging but [they had] been told that only tribal members are allowed to retell them” (Anonymous).

Some school districts may be able to work with the Wampanoag tribes and the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project, to offer Wôpanâak as a world language. Wôpanâak language courses are currently only open to tribal members so this option may only be able to be pursued by school districts on ancestral Wampanoag lands, or with a large Wampanoag population.
Conclusion

It is important to teach students the truth, the United States is not a perfect country, and there are aspects of United States history that are shameful. Children do not need to be taught about genocidal acts or every awful detail, but they can be taught age-appropriate facts.

State standards, school curriculum, and teacher lesson plans should be based on historical research, but state education systems cannot expect underpaid, understaffed, and overworked teachers to do their own historical, scientific, etc. research for every topic. That is why accurate and detailed frameworks are imperative to shifting cultural ideas and guiding children throughout history without changing the facts of history. History includes political analysis, but the Massachusetts’ curriculum framework standards should be based in fact and aimed to further teach students about diversity, culture, and to foster a love for learning. State standards should not be used as a nationalist weapon, but as a tool to create a better United States.

The history and evolution of Thanksgiving is important to teach children because you cannot teach about the Thanksgiving holiday without teaching about the 1621 Harvest Feast, nor can you teach about the National Day of Mourning without teaching about the actual suffering that the Wampanoag and other Indigenous peoples endured. To get rid of Thanksgiving curriculum would be to get rid of the only Indigenous history taught in Massachusetts’ elementary schools. Instead of erasing the Thanksgiving holiday curriculum completely, teaching facts about its history and evolution is an opportunity for students and families to look at the holiday differently. Teaching the accurate history of the 1621 Harvest Feast; Indigenous-European relations; the 19th century evolution of the feast into the holiday known today; and what the holiday has become—a time for to reflect and be grateful, allows educators to teach native and multicultural history to young students.
No one family is the same in the United States of America, which is why it is beneficial for students to be exposed to different cultures at a young age. Also, if Indigenous students felt represented and supported in their classrooms it would likely have a significant positive impact on them. White history is not American history, the history of the United States starts with Indigenous people and has been built by many different people of many different cultures. Facts and representation in the classroom benefit students, “the implication is that even though bad things happened in the American past—wars of conquest, slavery, racism—Americans have demonstrated the capacity to overcome their differences through shared aspirations for civil rights, equal opportunity, and democratic political participation” (Sleeper-Smith, et al., 2015, 4).

Learning facts in the classroom helps students form their own opinion and learn history from a factual perspective, and when students, teachers and their cultures are represented in history, there are benefits for all.

In 1970, Mayflower and Plymouth Colony decedents planned a celebration for the three hundred fiftieth anniversary of the Mayflower’s arrival in modern day Cape Cod. The organizers asked Frank B. James, or Wamsutta, to speak at the event. However, after reading his speech they denied him the right to read his own speech, suppressing him, and requested he read a speech written by a public relations person. Wamsutta denied and refused to speak at the event In his suppressed speech, Wamsutta, the organizer of the first National Day of Mourning, said “What has happened cannot be changed, but today we must work towards a more humane America, a more Indian America, where men and nature once again are important; where the Indian values of honor, truth, and brotherhood prevail” (James, 1970). How can we, as educators and historians, work together to create a more humane America?
References

“Agreement Between the Settlers of New Plymouth”, 1620.


Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Website. [https://mashpeewampanoagtribe-nsn.gov/](https://mashpeewampanoagtribe-nsn.gov/)


Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project. *Community Classes and Programs*.

https://www.wlrp.org/community-classes

Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Website. https://wampanoagtribe-nsn.gov/

Appendix A
Lesson Plans

This lesson plan aims to combine science and social studies frameworks into one lesson by teaching students about plant life cycle and the importance of said plants in Indigenous culture. The students will begin by playing Unit 3 of Plimoth Patuxet’s “You are the Historian” game; this lesson talks about how Tisquantum taught the English about the planting process of corn.

Disclaimer: I created this lesson plan after participating in a teacher’s workshop at Plimoth Patuxet, many Wampanoag people do not believe that Plimoth Patuxet accurately represent their people, history, and culture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>You are the Historian Game Unit 3; Corn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Name</td>
<td>Ashley Schepis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Source and Resources</td>
<td>This lesson is based on Plimoth Patuxet’s You are the Historian Game Unit 3 Mashpee Wampanoag Website Aquinnah Wampanoag Website Plimoth Patuxet Website Article: Native educators say Thanksgiving lessons can be accurate, respectful, and still fun—here’s how</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Essential / Guiding questions | 1. What role did Tisquantum play in the development of agriculture in Plymouth? Who else may have been involved?  
2. How did the English colonists adapt their agricultural practices to life in Patuxet?  
3. What role did corn play in daily life for English and Wampanoag women and children? For English women and children, how were these roles different from those they had back in England?  
4. How are the cultures of the Wampanoag and English colonists similar and different (not right or wrong)?  
5. What is the ‘common course of labor’ and why did it fail in Plymouth Colony?  
6. What is corn and how did it affect the Pilgrims and Wampanoag? |
| Lesson Topic           |  • Encouraging students to use appropriate terms.  
• Tell the story of the Wampanoag. |
| Lesson Duration        | 50-60 minutes                           |
| Standards              |  • 3-LSI-1. Use simple graphical representations to show that different types of organisms have unique and diverse life cycles. Describe that all organisms have birth, growth, reproduction, and death in common but there are a variety of ways in which these happen. |
### TEACHING THIRD GRADERS ABOUT HISTORIC THANKSGIVING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-5.DTC.c.4</th>
<th>Gather and organize information from digital sources by quoting, paraphrasing, and/or summarizing.</th>
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<td>Topic 4</td>
<td>The Pilgrims, the Plymouth Colony, and Native Communities [3.T4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o b. challenges for Pilgrim men, women, and children in their new home (e.g., building shelter and starting farming, becoming accustomed to a new environment, maintaining their faith and keeping a community together through self-government)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o c. contacts with the native leaders Samoset and Massasoit, events leading to a celebration to give thanks for the harvest, and subsequent relationships between Europeans and Native Peoples in southeastern Massachusetts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Learning Outcomes / Objectives

| SWBAT: Compare and contrast Wampanoag and 17th-century Pilgrim objects to understand how the two cultures lived |
| SWBAT: Evaluate evidence and make reasoned judgements to sort objects by cultural origin |
| SWBAT: Use data to answer questions and solve problems |
| SWBAT: Understand the life cycle of corn |
| SWBAT: Consider cultural differences |

#### Materials / Resources

| https://youarethehistorian.org |
| TISQUANTUM DIRECTS THE ENGLISH IN PLANTING CORN: EXCERPT FROM OF PLYMOUTH PLANTATION BY BRADFORD (JOHNSON PGS. 133, 138) |
| EXCERPT FROM EDWARD WINSLOW’S LETTER TO A FRIEND, DECEMBER 1621 |
| PLANTING MOUND WITH HERRING |

#### Setup

Students: Pull up the You are the Historian Game. Students should be seated in a way that allows them to work with a partner. They need a computer to play the game.

Teachers: Pull up the game on the smartboard. Make sure the corn activity is set out for the students.

#### Assessments

| Informal Pre-Assessment: At the start of the lesson ask students what they remember from the previous 2 units of the YATH game |
| Informal check in during the lesson: In class discussions |
| Formal Assessment during the lesson: Padlet responses |

#### Key Vocabulary

Ousemequin, Squanto, Commodities, Provisions, Archeologist/Archeology, Fertilizer, Pilgrims, Wampanoag
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Procedure</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Lesson Opening:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Tell the students to get with their partner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. As a warm up ask the students what they remember from the first two units of the YATHG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Give students time to think and invite them to share their ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This section should be about 8 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. During the Lesson:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Part one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Tell the students to play Unit 3 of the You Are The Historian Game.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Invite students to discuss what they learned about Pilgrim and Wampanoag Cultures. How are they the same and different?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Add these similarities and differences to the Padlet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This section should be about 12 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Part Two</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Tell the students that when they are ready to read “TISQUANTUM DIRECTS THE ENGLISH IN PLANTING CORN: EXCERPT FROM OF PLYMOUTH PLANTATION BY BRADFORD (JOHNSON PGS. 133, 138)” and “EXCERPT FROM EDWARD WINSLOW’S LETTER TO A FRIEND, DECEMBER 1621” that are on the google classroom.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This section should be about 20 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Part Three</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Answer the discussion questions and compare the readings as a class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This section should be about 8 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Lesson Closing / Transition to Science Lesson</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Discuss “PLANTING MOUND WITH HERRING”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Ask why fertilizer is important? What is fertilizer?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This section should be about 10 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Thank students for participating in the activities and encourage them to reflect on the documents and think about why corn was so important during the next lesson.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The goal of this lesson is to help students empathize with the Wampanoag people and to get students to think about other cultures. It is important to teach third graders about how the Wampanoag people may have felt during after the arrival of the English settlers in 1620, not just how the English “invaders” felt about landing on Wampanoag land. Students will work on their brainstorming and writing skills.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>Writing Opinion Pieces to Teach Empathy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Name</td>
<td>Ashley Schepis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Resources</td>
<td><strong>Mashpee Wampanoag Website</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Aquinnah Wampanoag Website</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Article: Native educators say Thanksgiving lessons can be accurate, respectful, and still fun—here’s how</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Essential / Guiding question | - What can we learn when we put ourselves in someone else’s position?  
- How can storytelling help and/or confuse historians? |
| Lesson Topic           | - Students will write opinion pieces in order to try and empathize with the Wampanoag people and/or the English settlers, in order to understand what life may have been like in Patuxet/Plymouth Colony during the early 1620s.  
- Encourage students to use appropriate terms. |
| Lesson Duration        | *Brainstorming and Rough Draft will be 30-45 minutes a day for a week*<br>*Publishing the story will take...* |
| ELA Standards          | - **W.3.1**: Write Opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.  
- **RL.3.6**: Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.  
- **RI.3.6**: Distinguish their own view from that of the author of a text.  
- **W.3.4**: With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.  
- **Topic 2. The geography and Native Peoples of Massachusetts [3.T2]**<br>  - **3.T2.3**: Explain the diversity of Native Peoples, present and past, in Massachusetts and the New England region.  
- **Topic 4. The Pilgrims, the Plymouth Colony, and Native Communities [3.T4]**<br>  - **3.T4.1.b**: Explain who the Pilgrim men and women were and why they left Europe to seek a place where they would have the right to practice their religion; describe their journey, the government of their early years in the Plymouth Colony, and analyze their relationships with the Wampanoag and Abenaki/Wabanaki people  
- **SEL: Social Awareness**: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, & contexts. |
### Learning Outcomes / Objectives
- **SWBAT** write a story with a beginning, middle, and end.
- **SWBAT** show their learning from social studies investigations
- **SWBAT:** Consider cultural differences

### Materials / Resources
- Lined Paper or Writing Journal
- Pencils/Writing Utensils
- Clipboards (if applicable)
- Computers (if applicable)

### Setup
Students should find an appropriate spot in the classroom to focus on their work. Students should have all of the necessary supplies with them (i.e. a pencil, clipboard, book, computer).

*Teachers can dim the lights and put on calming music or do whatever helps their students focus while writing.*

### Assessments
The writing is a formal assessment.

### Key Vocabulary
Wampanoag, English Settlers, Mayflower

### Lesson Procedure
1. **Before the Lesson:**
   1. Explain the prompt to the students.
   2. Start brainstorming as a class.
   3. Ask if there are any questions.
      - This section should be about 15 minutes.
2. **Lesson Opening:**
   1. Remind the students of the prompt.
   2. Tell the students to get their writing materials and find appropriate seating to write their story.
      - This section should be about 8 minutes
3. **During the Lesson:**
   1. Students should be working independently to brainstorm and write their story.
      - This section should be about 30 minutes
4. **Lesson Closing:**
   1. Tell the students to finish what they are writing and put their materials away for the day. Remind them they will still have time to finish.
      - This section should be about 5 minutes.

Students will have the opportunity to learn about Indigenous culture from an Indigenous person. Learning Indigenous culture shows students that Indigenous people are not people of the past and that they are still around. Their ways of life have changed just like other cultures. An Indigenous guest speaker can be extremely important if there are Indigenous children in the classroom.
because they will be learning their history, or a history similar to theirs by someone that looks like them—representation is important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>Wampanoag Guest Speaker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Name:</td>
<td>Ashley Schepis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Source</td>
<td>Centered Around a Guest Speaker from a local Indigenous Tribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Resources</td>
<td>Mashpee Wampanoag Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aquinnah Wampanoag Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article:</td>
<td>Native educators say Thanksgiving lessons can be accurate, respectful, and still fun—here’s how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding question</td>
<td>• What can we learn about history through culture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How can we be respectful of other people’s culture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Topic</td>
<td>• Encourage students to use appropriate terms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teach the story of the Wampanoag.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Invite a local Indigenous tribe into the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Duration</td>
<td>Depends on the speaker, likely around 60 minutes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>• SL.3.1: Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• SL.3.2: Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• SL.3.3: Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• W.3.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting an opinion with reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o W.3.1.a: Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o W.3.1.b: Provide reasons that support the opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o W.3.1.c: Use linking words and phrases (e.g., because, therefore, since, for example) to connect opinion and reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o W.3.1.d: Provide a concluding statement or section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• W.3.4: Produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Topic 2. The geography and Native Peoples of Massachusetts [3.T2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Topic 3: European explorers’ first contacts with Native Peoples in the Northeast [3.T3]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Learning Outcomes / Objectives
- SWBAT learn about Wampanoag culture
- SWBAT demonstrate whole body listening
- SWBAT: Consider cultural differences

### Materials / Resources
- Accommodated seating if necessary
- Whatever the speaker needs to set up (i.e. a table or chair)
- Lined Paper
- Pencils

### Setup
*Teacher: Make sure the speaker has everything they need. Remind students of expected behavior and what they will be learning about.*

*Students: Find an appropriate place to sit, whole body listening and expected behavior.*

### Assessments
- Informal Pre-Assessment: Discuss what students expect the guest speaker to tell them based on what they already know about the Wampanoag and Indigenous cultures
- Informal Post-Assessment: Discuss with students what they learned from the speaker, how does it relate to what they have been learning about?
- Formal Post-Assessment: Written reflection on what they learned.

### Key Vocabulary
- Wampanoag, Indigenous, Native

### Lesson Procedure
1. **Lesson Opening:**
   1. Explain to the students they are going to listen to a guest speaker and go over expected behavior.
   2. Ask the students to choose one thing they learned or want to learn more about so they can write about it later.
   3. Have the class line up to go watch the speaker.
      - This section should be about 8 minutes.
2. **During the Lesson:**
   1. Students should be respectful to the speaker and show expected behavior.
   - This section should be about 60 minutes.
3. **Lesson Closing:**
   2. When back in the classroom, remind students they will be writing about one thing they learned or want to learn more after listening to the speaker.
   3. Transition to writing.
A field trip provides students the ability to actually see what life may have been like for the Wampanoag people not only in the 1620s but also in the 21st century, it is important to stress that Indigenous people are not a people of the past; they are still around—there could even be Indigenous students in your classroom!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>Field Trip to an Indigenous History Museum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Name</td>
<td>Ashley Schepis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Lesson Source and Resources       | *Centered Around a Field Trip to an Indigenous History Museum*  
  *Mashpee Wampanoag Website*  
  *Aquinnah Wampanoag Website*  
  *Article: Native educators say Thanksgiving lessons can be accurate, respectful, and still fun—here’s how* |
| Essential / Guiding question       | • What can we learn by visiting a museum?  
  • What can’t we learn from a museum? |
| Lesson Topic                      | • Encourage students to use appropriate terms.  
  • Teach the story of the Wampanoag.  
  • Cultural appreciation. |
| Lesson Duration                   | *This would be a full day field trip.* |
| Standards                         | • SL.3.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.  
  • SL.3.2: Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.  
  • SL.3.3: Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.  
  • Topic 2. The geography and Native Peoples of Massachusetts [3.T2]  
  • 3.T2.3: Explain the diversity of Native Peoples, present and past, in Massachusetts and the New England region.  
  • Topic 4. The Pilgrims, the Plymouth Colony, and Native Communities [3.T4]  
  • SEL: Social Awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, & contexts. |
| Learning Outcomes / Objectives | • SWBAT understand how the Wampanoag people and English settlers coexisted  
• SWBAT understand how people and different cultures existed in the early 17th-Century  
• SWBAT show good behavior and listening skills while hearing what the teachers and museum workers have to say  
• SWBAT: Consider cultural differences |
| Materials / Resources | • Lunch or Lunch Money  
• Appropriate Clothing  
• Close-toed Shoes  
• Sunscreen/Bug Spray  
• Water Bottle  
• Permission Slip |
| Setup | Students should be on time and have passed in their permission slips. Classes will be bussed to the field trip site. The students will stay with their group and specific chaperone. |
| Assessments | Informal Assessments: Students will be asked to answer questions by the interpreters/museum guides and the teachers on the trip with them. |
| Key Vocabulary | Wampanoag, Pilgrim/English Settler, Mayflower, Plimoth and Patuxet |
| Lesson Procedure | 1. Lesson Opening:  
   1. In the morning, remind the student they should be showing expected behavior while on the field trip. Also, talk to the students about what they may expect to see while on the field trip and how to be respectful of other people’s cultures.  
2. During the Lesson:  
   1. Continually check in with students about what they are seeing.  
   2. Ask the students if they have any questions for you or the people who work at the museum or field trip site.  
3. Lesson Closing:  
   1. When the students arrive back at school ask them what they thought of the field trip. What did they learn? What did they see that connected to what they have been learning in class? |

This is a fun lesson and a great way to get families involved. Students will likely not realize that this ‘party’ is a lesson. Having a classroom harvest feast will emphasize the thanksgiving culture of the 21st century and can incorporate social emotional learning. The lesson can also incorporate things from ‘Thanksgiving past’ such as Indigenous or 19th century dishes. This is also a great opportunity for students to show their parents what they have learned about the
Teaching Third Graders About Historic Thanksgiving

The evolution of Thanksgiving which serves as a review and if students are teaching they are learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>Harvest Feast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Name</td>
<td>Ashley Schepis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Resources</td>
<td>Mashpee Wampanoag Website, Aquinnah Wampanoag Website, Article: Native educators say Thanksgiving lessons can be accurate, respectful, and still fun—here’s how</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Essential / Guiding question**
- How does food bring people together?
- How does sharing bring people together?
- Encourage students to use appropriate terms.
- Encourage students to use appropriate terms.
- Teach the story of the Wampanoag.

**Lesson Topic**
- Encourage students to use appropriate terms.
- Teach the story of the Wampanoag.
- Cultural appreciation.

**Lesson Duration**
However long you normally have class parties/parent activities.

**Standards**
- SEL: Social awareness
- SEL: Responsible decision making
- 3-5.DTC.b.1: Communicate key ideas and details individually or collaboratively in a way that informs, persuades, and/or entertains using digital tools and media-rich resources.
- 3-5.DTC.b.2: Collaborate through online digital tools under teacher supervision.
- Measurements and Data
- 3.T4.1.c: Contacts with the native leaders Samoset and Massasoit, events leading to a celebration to give thanks for the harvest, and subsequent relationships between Europeans and Native Peoples in southeastern Massachusetts.
- SEL: Social Awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, & contexts.

**Learning Outcomes / Objectives**
- SWBAT understand how cultures can coexist
- SWBAT: Consider cultural differences

**Materials / Resources**
Paper Goods: cups, plates, napkins, silverware, bowls
## Setup

**Students:** Students can help prepare for the feast by making a dish in class (another fun and engaging lesson about cultural appreciation), setting out paper goods, etc. Students should still show expected behavior during the feast.

**Teacher:** Send home permission slips in order for students to eat food. Send home a newsletter telling parents about the harvest feast and encourage them to participate. Also, ask parents to bring a dish that they normally eat at Thanksgiving or is a cultural dish. Parents could also help by bringing paper goods such as, napkins, paper plates, plastic cups, plastic silverware. Set up the classroom for the feast by setting out paper goods. The teacher could also read the students a story about the 1621 Harvest Feast and why it was an important cultural activity for both the Wampanoag and the English settlers, or about different cultures.

## Assessments

**Informal Assessments:** Students will discuss what they have learned with their parents and teachers.

## Key Vocabulary

Wampanoag, Pilgrims/English Settlers, 1621 Harvest Feast, Nasaump, Fowl, Maize/Corn

## Lesson Procedure

1. **Lesson Opening:**
   1. Set up for the feast by setting out the paper goods.
   2. Instruct parents where to put their dishes or paper goods.
   3. Thank everyone for coming.

2. **During the Lesson:**
   1. Encourage the students to talk to their parents about what they have learned about the evolution of Thanksgiving, cultural appreciation, etc.

3. **Lesson Closing:**
   1. Ask the students to help clean up.
   2. Thank the parents for coming.

This form is intended to be used as much or as little as the classroom teacher decides. Students are forced to think about what they are truly grateful for (some students may need help from a teacher). This is a great tool to build social emotional skills, like empathy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>Daily Gratefulness Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Name</strong></td>
<td>Ashley Schepis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson Resources</strong></td>
<td><a href="#">Mashpee Wampanoag Website</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="#">Aquinnah Wampanoag Website</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Article: Native educators say Thanksgiving lessons can be accurate, respectful, and still fun—here’s how</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Essential / Guiding question | • What am I grateful for?  
• How can I show someone I am grateful for them? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Topic</td>
<td>• Social Emotional Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Duration</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>• SEL: Social Awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, &amp; contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Outcomes / Objectives</td>
<td>• SWBAT identify and express their emotions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Materials / Resources         | • Computer (or appropriate technology)  
• Google form                     |
| Setup                         | Students will fill out the gratefulness form as an exit ticket for the day, or when technology is already out. Teachers could incorporate this into a morning wellness check in as well. |
| Assessments                   | • This is a formal assessment                     |
| Key Vocabulary                | Grateful, gratefulness                            |
| Lesson Procedure              | 1. Before the Lesson:  
1. The first time the students fill out the form have a talk about gratefulness and the Thanksgiving season (if you do the form for the Thanksgiving season).  
2. Answer any questions they may have.  
   • This section should be about 8 minutes  
2. Lesson Opening:  
1. While students have their devices out, remind them to fill out the form.  
   • This section should be about 2 minutes.  
3. During the Lesson:  
1. Students will fill out the short form honestly.  
   • This section should be about 5 minutes.  
4. Lesson Closing:  
1. Thank the students for filling out the form.  
2. If students are done with their devices, ask them to put their devices away.  
   • This section should be about 2-5 minutes. |
3. Use the data to talk about what students are grateful for and why. Watch students gradually work on becoming more grateful and empathetic. Data can also be used to challenge students to think about why they are grateful for technology or a person.
   - This section could be made a new lesson.

This lesson is intended to show students how history, stories, rumors, etc. change over time. The purpose is to show students how the 1621 harvest feast turned into the Thanksgiving they know and celebrate in their own homes. However, this can also be used as an SEL activity and incorporate why people should not spread rumors and how they can quickly get out of hand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>Telephone Game</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Name</td>
<td>Ashley Schepis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Lesson Resources | Mashpee Wampanoag Website  
|                  | Aquinnah Wampanoag Website  
|                  | Article: Native educators say Thanksgiving lessons can be accurate, respectful, and still fun—here’s how |
| Essential / Guiding question | How does ‘history’ change over time? |
| Lesson Topic     | Social Emotional Learning  
|                  | Understand why interpretations of history have changed over time. |
| Lesson Duration  | 30 minutes |
| Standards        | SL.3.3: Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.  
|                  | SEL: Social Awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, & contexts. |
| Learning Outcomes / Objectives | SWBAT understand how history is changed over time. |
| Materials / Resources | Rug or area for students to sit.  
|                  | List of things to say during the game. |
| Setup            | Students will sit on the rug in a circle. |
| Assessments      | Informal Assessment: Ask the students questions during the game and during the reflection. |
TEACHING THIRD GRADERS ABOUT HISTORIC THANKSGIVING

- Why do you think the phrase changed?
- How does this relate to history?
- Does this happen in real life?
- What have you learned about the evolution of Thanksgiving that you think has changed overtime?

Key Vocabulary

Thanksgiving, 1621 Harvest Feast, Wampanoag, Separatists, English Settlers

Lesson Procedure

1. **Lesson Opening:**
   1. Sit in a circle on the rug or an appropriate place.
   2. The teacher will explain the telephone game to the students and will do a practice question.
      - This section will take about 5 minutes.

2. **During the Lesson:**
   1. The teacher will start and whisper a phrase or sentence to the student beside them and the students will continue to whisper the phrase to each other.
   2. The last student on the other side of the teacher will say what they heard out loud.
   3. Explain to students why the phrase changes.
   4. Repeat the game a few times.
      - Students can move around after rounds or go in the opposite direction, if you’d like.
      - This section will take about 15 minutes.

3. **Lesson Closing:**
   1. Reflect with the students how this relates to history and also spreading rumors.
   2. Ask the students questions such as:
      - Why do you think the phrase changed?
      - How does this relate to history?
      - Does this happen in real life?
      - What have you learned about the evolution of Thanksgiving that you think has changed overtime?
   3. Ask the students to go back to their seats.
      - This section will take about 8 minutes.

Although the book does have some inaccuracies, it is an appropriate book to read aloud to your students or put in the classroom library. The book focuses on the 1621 Harvest Feast and what chores young children may have been doing to help prepare for the feast. The book also introduces students to some key historical figures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Component</th>
<th>Magic Tree House Read Aloud</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Name</td>
<td>Ashley Schepis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Lesson Resources | Magic Tree House #27 Thanksgiving on Thursday by Mary Pope Osborne  
Mashpee Wampanoag Website  
Aquinnah Wampanoag Website  
Article: Native educators say Thanksgiving lessons can be accurate, respectful, and still fun—here’s how |
|---|---|
| Essential / Guiding question | • What can we learn by reading about history?  
• What can we learn by putting ourselves in someone else’s position? |
| Lesson Topic | Learning about the 1621 Harvest Feast through a popular children’s book. |
| Lesson Duration | 20-25 minutes a day |
| Standards | • SL.3.2: Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.  
• SL.3.3: Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail. |
| Learning Outcomes / Objectives | • SWBAT show whole body listening  
• SWBAT recall information from the text  
• SWBAT ask content specific questions about the text |
| Materials / Resources | Magic Tree House #27 Thanksgiving on Thursday by Mary Pope Osborne |
| Setup | Students will sit in an appropriate spot to listen to the read aloud. The teacher will sit and read the book to the class. |
| Assessments | • Informal Assessment: Ask questions through the book like...  
  o What chores do you do on Thanksgiving morning?  
  o What foods does your family eat on Thanksgiving? |
| Key Vocabulary | Thanksgiving, Squanto, Governor William Bradford, Miles Standish, Wampanoag, Plymouth Colony, John Smith, Massasoit, quahog, hearth, Thanksgiving, herbs, Mayflower, |
| Lesson Procedure | 1. Lesson Opening:  
  1. Tell the students to sit on the rug.  
  2. As a warm up, ask the students to think-pair-share what they remember about the book from the last reading.  
  3. Give students time to think and invite them to share their ideas.  
    • This section should be about 5 minutes  
  2. During the Lesson:  
    1. Read to an appropriate stopping point, pausing to ask questions such as...  

1. What chores do you do on Thanksgiving morning?
2. What foods does your family eat on Thanksgiving?
   - This section should be about 20 minutes.

3. Lesson Closing:
   1. Discuss the chapters you just read.
      1. Ask if they found any similarities or differences from what they are learning about in class.
   2. Ask if the students have any questions.
      1. This section should be about 10 minutes

4. Thank students for participating in the read aloud and encourage them to reflect on what they heard and how it relates to what they are learning in class.
Appendix B
Resources

This appendix contains other resources for third grade educators to use in their classrooms while trying to teach the facts of the 1621 Harvest Feast, the evolution of Thanksgiving, the modern version of Thanksgiving, and Indigenous history.

- DESE “Applying the Guiding Principle 2 Planning Questions: Grade 3, Topic 5 The Puritans, the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Native Peoples, and Africans”
- *Lessons from Turtle Island: Native Curriculum in Early Childhood Classrooms* by Guy Jones and Sally Moonmaw
- Books to Use in The Classroom:
  - *If You Lived During the Plimoth Thanksgiving* by Chris Newell
  - *Keepunumuck* by Danielle Greendeer
  - *Clambake: A Wampanoag Tradition* by Russell M. Peters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Trip Ideas to replace Plimoth Patuxet</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Museum</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aquinnah Cultural Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Light Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mashpee Wampanoag Indian Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomaquag Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contact</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(508) 645-7900 <a href="mailto:aquinnahcc@gmail.com">aquinnahcc@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Annawon Weeden to book a classroom program for your school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(508) 477-9339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(860) 396-6839 <a href="mailto:groupsales@pequotmuseum.org">groupsales@pequotmuseum.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(401) 491-9063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 Aquinnah Circle, Aquinnah, MA 02535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>414 Main Street, Mashpee, Ma 02649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 Pequot Trail, Mashantucket, CT 06338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>390 A Summit Road Exeter, Rhode Island 02822</td>
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Appendix C
Survey Questions

• Opening up the Story of Thanksgiving: Survey for 3rd Grade Teachers
  o Are you currently a third-grade teacher?
  o How long have you been, or were you, a third-grade teacher?
  o If your answer to the first question was no, please indicate your classroom role.
  o Is the history of Thanksgiving taught in your classroom?
  o Do you have a set curriculum aiding your teaching of Thanksgiving?
  o What current resources are used in your classroom to teach Thanksgiving?
  o Please provide a brief overview of what students learn about Thanksgiving, Indigenous Peoples and the Pilgrims.
  o Are there any resources you would be able to share with me to use during my study?

• Opening up the Story of Thanksgiving: Survey for Indigenous 3rd Grade Teachers
  o Are you currently a third grade teacher in a school districted located in a town with a federally recognized Wampanoag tribe?
  o Are you a member of the Wampanoag Tribe?
  o Are you currently a third-grade teacher?
  o How long have you been, or were you, a third-grade teacher?
  o If your answer to the first question was no, please indicate your classroom role.
  o Is the history of Thanksgiving taught in your classroom?
  o Do you have a set curriculum aiding your teaching of Thanksgiving?
  o Do you teach Thanksgiving different from Massachusetts standards?
o Do you celebrate Thanksgiving differently in your community?

o What current resources are used in your classroom to teach Thanksgiving?

o Please provide a brief overview of what students learn about Thanksgiving, Indigenous Peoples and the Pilgrims.

o Are there any resources you would be able to share with me to use during my study?

o Is there anything else you can teach me or think I should know about the Wampanoag tribes, children, beliefs, etc.?