

November Activities

from
Laura Candler's
Teaching Resources



Holidays are fun to celebrate, but they also provide opportunities for learning. In this packet you'll find directions and printables for a Veteran's Day activity plus numerous activities for Thanksgiving. You'll also find a list of great books to read aloud or use in small groups during November. Many of the activities use the literature from the suggested book list, but you can sometimes substitute other books. Be sure to check out the Seasonal section of my free virtual file cabinet at Teaching Resources (www.lauracandler.com) for the activities at the bottom of the page.

~ Laura Candler

November Printables in this Packet

- Great Books for November
- Honoring Veterans
- History Hero Character Analysis
- Pilgrim Fact or Fiction
- Thanksgiving Math Puzzlers
- Thanksgiving Then and Now
- Thanksgiving Words in a Word
- Thanksgiving Dictionary Word Sort
- Mystery Vocabulary




More November Activities on www.lauracandler.com

- Thankful Writing: A Complete Expository Writing Lesson
- Pumpkin Pie Fraction Mix Up (Comparing Fractions)

November Activity Directions

Great Books for November

This annotated list contains some of my favorite books for teaching about Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving. The books are referenced throughout this activity packet, so you may want to use it to help you locate the books in advance. Note the  symbol used to identify the book(s) in each lesson.




Honoring Veterans

 Literature: [The Wall](#)

Eve Bunting's book makes a perfect read aloud for Veteran's Day. You can visit <http://thewall-usa.com> to show actual photos of the Wall in Washington, DC. Discuss with your class the phrase, "freedom isn't free," and reflecting on the fact that many lives have been lost in name of freedom. You may also want to have students write thank you letters to send to members of the armed forces or a veteran's hospital.




History Hero Character Analysis

 Literature: [Thank You, Sarah: The Woman Who Saved Thanksgiving](#)

Ask students to define the words "hero" and "superhero." Tell them you're going to share a story about a superhero in American history, Sarah Hale. Read the book aloud and discuss the qualities that made her a superhero. The text repeatedly refers to her as bold, brave, stubborn, and smart. Ask your students to complete the graphic organizer by locating supporting details in the text and writing them next to each trait. This activity can be used with a whole group, in small groups, or for independent practice.



Pilgrim Fact or Fiction

 Literature: [If You Were at the First Thanksgiving](#)

This printable consists of 10 statements about the Pilgrims, but the catch is that only five of them are true. Duplicate and cut apart one set of cards per team. Before reading the book, ask students to take turns discussing each card and sorting them into two piles, Fact (True) or Fiction (False), based on their prior knowledge. Then read the book aloud or have students sort the cards according to the information they learned. (Answer key is provided)



Thanksgiving Math Puzzlers

This word problem worksheet has four problems and can be completed over the period of a week or on a single day. Students must show their work in picture or word form. This worksheet can be used with the Daily Math Puzzler program. For more information about that program, go to www.lauracandler.com/books/dailymathpuz.php.




Answers to Thanksgiving Puzzlers:

- #1** - Answers will vary (subtract 1620 from current year) **#2** - 15 acres
#3 - 12 yards or 36 feet **#4** - About 150 (Estimate $50 + 50 \times 2$)

More November Activity Directions

Thanksgiving Then and Now

 Literature: [Oh, What a Thanksgiving](#) or [If You Were at the First Thanksgiving](#)

If your students could only get a glimpse into the past, they might appreciate the present a little more! To foster this sense of appreciation, read one of the literature selections above and have students compare Thanksgiving then and now. An effective way to do this activity is to pair your students and give one Venn diagram to the pair. Have students take turns adding details to the Venn, then share and discuss as a class. If you have interactive whiteboard, while students are working on their own Venn diagrams, have them take turns adding details to the class graphic organizer.

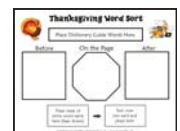


Thanksgiving Words in a Word

Students cut out the letters at the bottom of each page and then move them around to form words. It's best if they each have their own set of letters and a recording page, but they can consult with their partner to find words and discuss spellings. Allow them to use a dictionary to check spellings but not to hunt for random words they don't already know. Proper nouns are not permitted. You can set a time limit or allow students to take the activity home to continue adding words.

Thanksgiving Dictionary Word Sort

Do your students have difficulty finding words in a dictionary? This activity allows them to practice using entry words and guide words. Working with a partner, students sort the word cards into categories depending on whether they go on, before, or after the guide words. Full directions are on page 13.



Mystery Vocabulary

 Literature: [Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving](#)

Your students will love this silly book! But don't show it to them before you start this activity. Tell your students that soon you'll read them a "mystery book" and over the next few days you'll be giving them some clues. Each day you'll introduce one of the 3 pages of vocabulary words and definitions. There are 15 words and definitions, but the activity will work fine if you select fewer words to use in your lesson.



After reading the book, have students work in pairs to complete a graphic organizer with one of their new words. Other suggested activities include choral readings and center games. You'll find complete directions on page 18.



Great Books for November

Anderson, Laurie Halse., and Matt Faulkner. *Thank You, Sarah: the Woman Who Saved Thanksgiving*. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2005. Wonderful book about the history of Thanksgiving in the United States and how Sarah Hale helped make it a national holiday. This book is great for teaching students about the "power of the pen" and how a single person can make a difference. The first part of the book is written as a narrative, but the end of the book contains facts about the holiday.

Bunting, Eve, and Ronald Himler. *The Wall*. New York: Clarion, 1990. Excellent book to read to students when discussing Memorial Day or Veteran's Day.

Kamma, Anne. *If You Were At the First Thanksgiving*. NY: Scholastic, 2001. Great nonfiction book organized in a question and answer format. It contains information about the first Thanksgiving as well as information about how the Pilgrims lived when they first came to America.

Kroll, Steven, and S. D. Schindler. *Oh, What a Thanksgiving!* New York: Scholastic, 1988. Excellent book for comparing and contrasting Thanksgiving today with the traditions observed by the Pilgrims.

Pilkey, Dav. *'Twas the Night before Thanksgiving*. NY: Scholastic, 2004. This hilarious book takes the form of a long, illustrated poem with a single stanza on each page. While the stanzas are similar to the traditional Christmas poem, the story is anything but traditional! Your students will love the surprise ending!



Version



bold

brave

stubborn

smart

Sarah Hale

Read *Thank You, Sarah: The Woman Who Saved Thanksgiving*. Use details from the book to support each character trait.

Bonus: One the back of this paper, name one additional character trait that describes Sarah and provide supporting details from the book.

Character Map

Pilgrim Fact or Fiction



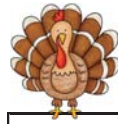
True/False Sorting Cards based on facts in *If You Were at the First Thanksgiving*

Young pilgrim boys wore dresses just like girls.	Pilgrims took only a few baths a year because they thought baths were unhealthy.
Pilgrim children went to school each day until they were old enough to work.	All of the Pilgrims onboard the Mayflower were Puritans.
Squanto taught the Pilgrims to grow corn by planting small fish next to each seed.	The Pilgrims cooked most of their food outdoors.
Pilgrims first saw turkeys when they came to Plymouth.	Pilgrim napkins were 3 feet long by 3 feet wide.
The Pilgrims started the tradition of serving Pumpkin Pie at Thanksgiving.	The Pilgrims drank beer for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Pilgrim Fact or Fiction Answers

True/False Sorting from facts in If You Were at the First Thanksgiving. Refer to the page given on each card to find supporting details and discussion points.

Young pilgrim boys wore dresses just like girls. T - Page 39	Pilgrims took only a few baths a year because they thought baths were unhealthy. T - Page 36
Pilgrim children went to school each day until they were old enough to work. F - Page 15	All of the Pilgrims onboard the Mayflower were Puritans. F - Page 9
Squanto taught the Pilgrims to grow corn by planting small fish next to each seed. T - Page 23	The Pilgrims cooked most of their food outdoors. F - Page 33
Pilgrims first saw turkeys when they came to Plymouth. F - Page 49	Pilgrim napkins were 3 feet long by 3 feet wide. T - Page 46
The Pilgrims started the tradition of serving Pumpkin Pie at Thanksgiving. F - Page 56	The Pilgrims drank beer for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. T - Page 54



Thanksgiving Puzzlers

Name _____

Try to solve each problem **on your own**. Show your work using numbers, pictures, words, or symbols. We will discuss the problems and correct them in class.

1. The first Thanksgiving took place in 1620. How many years ago was this celebration?

Answer: _____
✓ - ✓ ✓ +

2. The Pilgrims planted 20 acres of corn the first spring. If one quarter of the acres were destroyed in a drought, how many acres were left to be harvested?

Answer: _____
✓ - ✓ ✓ +

3. The first Thanksgiving table was made of boards on top of barrels. Imagine that each board was 2 yards long and 1 yard wide. If one long table was made of 6 boards placed lengthwise, end to end, how many feet long was the table?

Answer: _____
✓ - ✓ ✓ +

4. Suppose there were 51 Pilgrims at the first Thanksgiving meal. Chief Massasoit arrived with twice as many Indians as Pilgrims. About how many people celebrated in all?

Answer: _____
✓ - ✓ ✓ +



Comparing Thanksgivings

Thanksgiving Now

Thanksgiving Then



Thanksgiving Word Game

Words in a Word

Partner Activity



How many words can you find in the letters of "Thanksgiving"? Cut out the letters below and use them to help you make words. Work with a partner and take turns finding words and writing them on the lines. Each word must have at least 3 letters. No proper nouns, please!

1. _____ 17. _____ 33. _____
2. _____ 18. _____ 34. _____
3. _____ 19. _____ 35. _____
4. _____ 20. _____ 36. _____
5. _____ 21. _____ 37. _____
6. _____ 22. _____ 38. _____
7. _____ 23. _____ 39. _____
8. _____ 24. _____ 40. _____
9. _____ 25. _____ 41. _____
10. _____ 26. _____ 42. _____
11. _____ 27. _____ 43. _____
12. _____ 28. _____ 44. _____
13. _____ 29. _____ 45. _____
14. _____ 30. _____ 46. _____
15. _____ 31. _____ 47. _____
16. _____ 32. _____ 48. _____



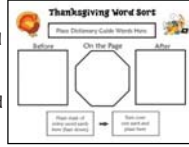
Thanksgiving Dictionary Word Sort



Number of Players: 2
 Materials: Entry Word Cards
 Word Sorting Answer Key
 Thanksgiving Word Sort Gameboard

Directions:

1. Cut apart both sets of entry word cards and make sure they don't get mixed together. The Plantation-Prayer words go together for one game, and the Celebrate-Cornbread words are for another game.
2. Start with the Plantation-Prayer set. Put the guide word strip at the top of the game board. Shuffle the nine entry word cards and place them face down in the left box. Place the Answer Key face down next to the board.
3. To see who goes first, players draw a word card from the deck. The person with the longest word becomes Player 1. Put the cards back on the bottom of the deck.
4. Player 1 turns one word card face up and thinks about where it would be in a dictionary according to the guide words at the top. Would it come before that page, on that page, or after that page? He or she places the card on the appropriate section of the board.
5. Player 2 gives up thumbs up to show agreement or helps Player 1 figure out the correct placement.
6. Player 1 turns over the next card and places it on the board. Player 2 gives a thumbs up or helps Player 1.
7. Continue to take turn sorting the cards.
8. Check the answer key after all cards are placed.
9. Repeat the activity again with the other set of entry word cards.

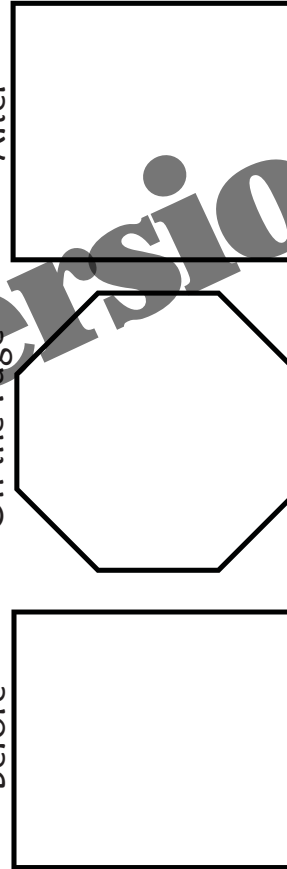


Thanksgiving Word Sort



Place Dictionary Guide Words Here

Before On the Page After



plantation – prayer

platter	pecan	pumpkin
Puritan	Plymouth	religion
pie	Mayflower	planting

celebrate - cornbread

cranberries	colonists	feast
canoe	blessing	cornucopia
corn	carve	cider

Answers (Plantation - Prayer)

Before	On	After
pecan	platter	pumpkin
pie	Plymouth	religion
Pilgrims	planting	Puritan

Answers (Celebrate - Cornbread)

Before	On	After
carve	colonists	feast
canoe	cider	cornucopia
blessing	corn	cranberries

Mystery Vocabulary

Vocabulary from *'Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving* by Dav Pilkey

Materials Needed

Book: *'Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving*
 Vocabulary Matching cards (3 sets)
 Vocabulary Graphic Organizer



Advanced Preparation

For each team or pair of students, you'll need one set of vocabulary words and definitions. There are 3 complete pages, but you may not want to use them all. Decide which sets you plan to use and duplicate them in advance for students. You'll also need one copy of the vocabulary graphic organizer for each pair. Write one of the vocabulary words in the middle of each worksheet. Don't worry if you have some repeats.

- 1. Introduce the Mystery** - Tell your students that you will soon be reading them a "mystery book." But first you will give them some clues to see if they can figure out what the book will be about.
- 2. Present the First Clues** - Give each team or pair the first page of matching cards. Have them cut apart the cards and try to match the words and definitions. Check their answers and discuss the words briefly. Then ask students to make predictions about what the book will be about.
- 3. Repeat the Procedure** - The next day, review the old words and give them a new set of cards. Repeat the matching activity and have them revise their predictions. If you choose to use the third page, repeat the procedure on the third day as well.
- 4. Read the Book** - Finally, reveal the mystery book! Read it aloud and stop periodically to have students predict what will happen next.
- 5. Use the Vocabulary** - Next pair students with a partner and give them one prepared graphic organizer to share. Use a blank graphic organizer to model the procedure for completing each section. For the definition box, have them write a definition in their own words. In top right box, they need to draw an illustration that shows the word. Under the picture, they need to use the word in a caption. Have them list examples and nonexamples in the lower boxes.
- 6. Share Graphic Organizers** - Post the graphic organizers around the room and allow students to do a "gallery walk" in which they move around the room admiring and discussing each other's work.

Extensions

- Centers** - Students working in pairs use each set of vocabulary words to play memory matching games. They can also use all 15 words and place them in ABC order.
- Class Choral Reading** - Assign each team one or two stanzas of the book. Have them write the stanza on a large sheet of paper and practice reading it together. Then have the class read the book aloud. To do this, each team in turn stands up, holds up their stanza, and reads it aloud with expression.

'Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving #1

aloft	a male bird
cockerel	soft and feathery
fetch	gloomy and unpleasant
downy	to go after and bring back something
grim	high up in the air

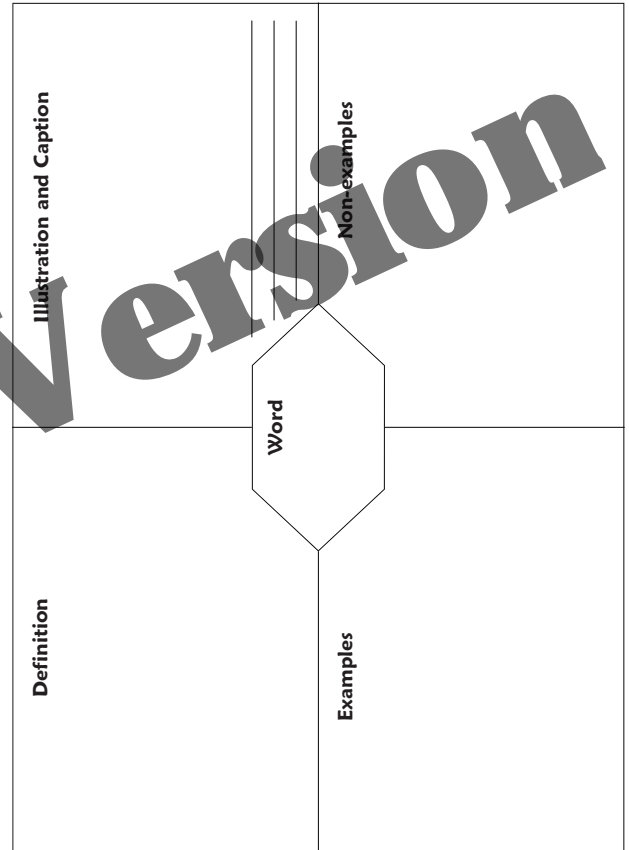
'Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving #2

terrain	the throaty cry of a male turkey
miniature	to walk awkwardly with short steps, swaying side to side
clamor	ground or land
gobble	very small
waddle	to demand something in a noisy way

'Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving #3

abounding	a loud, rattling sound
polyester	the season known as fall
dread	existing in a large amount
clatter	a manmade substance used to make plastic products and fabric
autumn	great fear

Vocabulary Graphic Organizer



Other Seasonal Mini Packs

Click each cover below to find the item on TeachersPayTeachers.



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