

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2008

## A Thanksgiving quiz

Other than the small bit of what I remember some 50-plus years ago when I wasn't trying to dodge social studies class, my knowledge about Thanksgiving and why we sit around a table carving up a bird isn't going to make me top winner on Jeopardy. So, I thought I would scan my faithful friend, the Internet, and see if I couldn't



### Generations

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find some information that I had forgotten about or selfishly missed because I was too busy being a kid.

And lo and behold, courtesy of [www.life-script.com](http://www.life-script.com), I found a question-and-answer spot

about Thanksgiving that I thought I would share with you.

This might serve as a good conversation piece for those who are curious as well or it can conveniently be used for those who want to get away from the guys continuously flipping the remote to catch every football game and every play. It can also be used for those who can't take yet another Lifetime "love gone wrong" movie.

So, for those "tired of football" Thanksgiving guests, pass out a couple of sheets of paper and enough pencils and see how many people get the right answers to the following:

1. The first Thanksgiving was celebrated by Puritans grateful for surviving their first year in the New World.

2. The spot where the Pilgrims first landed is called Plymouth Rock.

3. The Pilgrims spent their first year in the New World fighting off native people so the crop was left unattended and did not yield much.

4. The first Thanksgiving meal consisted of a huge feast including wild turkey, pumpkin pies, rich cheeses and plenty of milk to drink.

5. George Washington declared the first official Thanksgiving Day in the United States.

6. The Mayflower Pilgrims were former residents of Holland, fleeing religious persecution.

7. A Native American by the name of Samoset was the official liaison between the Pilgrims and the native people because he could speak both English and the native language.

8. The wishbone became an icon of good luck in the New World because it symbolized breaking away from the tyranny of England at the time.

9. Thanksgiving became an official American holiday after President Lincoln declared it so in 1863.

10. With the help of the Wampanoag people, almost all of the original Pilgrims survived their first year in the New World.

### Quiz Answers:

1. FALSE. The first Thanksgiving was celebrated by settlers in Virginia, two years before the Pilgrims even landed.

2. FALSE. The Pilgrims first landed at the tip of Cape Cod in what is now known as Provincetown. They next moved on to Plymouth, Mass.

3. FALSE. Natives of the Wampanoag Tribe were kind and helpful to the Puritan settlers, teaching them how to work the land and capture wild game. Without the help of the local people, historians believe the Puritans would not have survived.

4. FALSE. While it is possible that wild turkey was on the menu, there was no flour left to make pies, cakes or cookies of any kind, and no domestic cattle to provide milk for making butter or cheese. The only foods historians are certain

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about were some type of wild fowl and venison.

5. TRUE. George Washington declared Nov. 26, 1789, to be a National Day of Thanksgiving although discord among the colonies led many to disagree with his decision.

6. TRUE. Originally from England, the Puritans fled to Holland in search of religious freedom. After becoming disillusioned with the Dutch people, they returned to England to set sail for the New World.

7. FALSE. Squanto was the name of the Native American who had spent 10 years in Spain and England before returning to the New World in 1618. Samoset was his friend in the Wampanoag tribe.

8. TRUE. The successful breaking of the wishbone represented the successful split between the Pilgrims and the religious persecution of the English crown. The person holding the larger portion of the broken wishbone was said to have one year's good luck.

9. TRUE. In 1863, President Lincoln declared the last day in November to be a National Day of Thanksgiving. However it was President Franklin D. Roosevelt who encouraged

Congress in 1941 to proclaim the fourth Thursday of November as Thanksgiving Day.

10. FALSE. Over half of the original Pilgrims died during that first harsh winter and long wait for the initial harvest.

I hope you all did better than I did. The only one that I was 100 percent sure of was the wishbone question and that's because it was tradition in our house, passed down by my grandmother. My mother used to save the wishbone on the windowsill until it dried out completely and then let my brother and me pull on it. As luck would have it, my brother always seemed to pull the larger half, leaving me with the stub and fear that my wishes would never come true.

Always too tall, geeky and usually an outcast in grade school society, even the wishbone seemed to be against my salvation.

However, my fears were momentary — leftover pie and turkey sandwiches had a way of quelling the uneasiness of wishbone letdown.

Happy Thanksgiving to all.

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