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The Pilgrims' First Thanksgiving



Synopsis

The Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving lasted three whole days. Ann McGovern's simple text introduces children to the struggles of the Pilgrims during their first year at Plymouth Colony and the events leading to the historic occasion we celebrate today - THANKSGIVING.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 460L (What's this?)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Scholastic Paperbacks; Reissue edition (October 1, 1993)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0590461885

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Product Dimensions: 0.2 x 8 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (52 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #49,815 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #42 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > Colonial #62 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > Thanksgiving

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

My children are 3 and 5 at this time (boy and girl) and I have been having a hard time finding a good age appropriate book about Thanksgiving. When they were younger I used "The Story of Thanksgiving" boardbook by Nancy J. Skarmeen. A book that is pretty much on target for the toddler and early preschool crowd. But what to do now? I looked at several books and none seemed to be appropriate. They were either too cynical, or too babyish. This book however pretty much fits the bill. The text talks in terms that preschoolers and kindergarteners understand. And it talks about hardship but isn't too graphic. An example of text follows. The Mayflower was as big as two trucks. But it was not big enough. The Pilgrims and sailors crowded together to sleep. They crowded together to eat. The children had no room to run around. They had no toys. They had to leave most things behind. These are details which my children could relate to. Five Stars. We ran across the older version illustrated by Joe Lasker, and while the new artwork by Ekroby Freeman looks really good (and is the one that's available now on) I wouldn't worry if you wanted to get the older version either.

The previous edition of this book, published in 1973, has been a favorite introduction to the Pilgrims for primary students in our school for many years. Written at about a third grade reading level, it works as a readable chapter book, as well as a quick read-aloud. The black, white and turquoise drawings in the older version were adequate, but the text always deserved more detailed and interesting illustrations. While I have not seen this new edition, it appears that this situation has now been remedied. My students have always taken an interest in the kid's perspective of life aboard the Mayflower and during the first year at Plymouth. They love to know that the Pilgrims took two dogs and a cat with them. They wonder about the "same old salted beef and fish" that had to be eaten. They plug their noses when they think about the Pilgrims wearing "the same clothes every day," even sleeping in them. They marvel at the straw roofs of the new homes being set on fire by sparks that flew up the chimney. They are stunned to learn that good manners meant children had to stand during meals, and that they could only speak when spoken to by an adult. Then my students smack their lips at the many foods that were eaten at the first Thanksgiving: wild turkeys, geese, ducks, deer, lobsters, clams, oysters and fish, not to mention the many vegetables, and of course, popcorn. I look forward to adding the new edition of this classic to our library collection.

Like other reviewers, I also think that this is an appropriate book for children around the theme of Thanksgiving. The book looks at the lives of the children: their hardships, their work, their wonder. Squanto shows up on page 29, seventeen pages after the Pilgrims disembark from the Mayflower onto an uninhabited land. Squanto eventually shows up and teaches the Pilgrims how to hunt for game, forage for edible and medicinal plants, and plant corn (31). He is a storyteller and is the center of the children's attention (32). Other "friendly Indians who lived nearby" show up at the end of the book to help the children find nuts and wild fruit (41). Of course, ninety Indians show up at the three-day feast of Thanksgiving: "There were more Indians than Pilgrims" (46). This is a good book to begin looking at issues around the "mythological history" of the United States. What happened to Squanto and the tribes that the Pilgrims first encountered? Are Native Americans of today thankful for the same reasons that most white Americans are? This book could be the start of some real and wonderful discussion concerning our nations' histories and the real meaning of thanks.

Yes, the information of the first Thanksgiving is there. The information presented was just a little dry. It reminds me of so many history classes where the teacher had told the stories so much that they

have just lost interest. The heart is not there. In my opinion, better options are Squanto and the Miracle of Thanksgiving or If You Sailed on the Mayflower in 1620. Squanto and the Miracle of Thanksgiving is history how it should be told in my opinion. This is by far my favorite Thanksgiving book for my kids. If You Sailed on the Mayflower actually relates what the lives of the Pilgrim children was like. It is broken down into sections so that you can stop and talk about each topic as it compares to the life of your own child. My son really responded to this book because it draws pictures in the child's head of the life a pilgrim child on the Mayflower led. I would strongly advise checking out one of these two books instead.

Wonderful full color, life-like illustrations on every page. You won't waste your money on this PILGRIMS ! Very well done perspective of the pilgrim children's lives. How did they spend their time? Good introduction to Squanto. Happy Thanksgiving !

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