

Make this Thanksgiving Extra Special



Thanksgiving is a special time to come together with family and friends. It is also an opportunity to appreciate the good things that have been bestowed upon us. Don't let Thanksgiving be just another turkey. This year, make your Thanksgiving extra meaningful and special by viewing this time as an opportunity to give of yourself to those that you care about, and you're sure to leave with a smile on your face.

Pass The Talking Fork

Before your family leaves the dinner table this year, raise your fork and demand a story! Try this conversation-starting activity which is sure to become a new tradition.

Pass the Talking Fork is an old storytelling game that has been around forever. Tie a ribbon around a big serving fork. Begin by saying "This fork, although it appears ordinary, has powers that give the user the gift of storytelling, the gift of the silver tongue. While you hold this fork, memories will flow through you and everyone will listen."

Encourage stories about childhood, adventures and funny quirks or sayings. Or you can tell stories about your own children; how they behaved as toddlers, the origins of their pet names or what happened the day they were born.

Applaud as each person finishes, no matter what he or she says. Short story, long story or simply a wisp of recollection, children and adults alike will enjoy this heartfelt interaction.

A few ideas to get the ball rolling:

- 1. CHOOSE ONE FAMILY MEMBER** who you may have lost touch with, or that you would like to get to know better, and make an effort to reacquaint and rekindle your relationship. Find out what's going on in his life, what his passions and concerns are, and how he's doing in work or school. Don't forget the little ones who may benefit most from your interest and attention.
- 2. BRING AN UNEXPECTED GIFT** to an unsuspecting family member. Flowers for Grandma, coloring books and crayons for the kids, or a gift basket for the host are great ways to let people know you're thinking of them.
- 3. START A BOOK SWAP.** Ask everyone to bring three "previously enjoyed" books to swap with one another. This will engage everyone in conversation while getting to know more about each other.
- 4. VOLUNTEER TO SPEAK BEFORE DINNER.** Offer to lead the prayer or word of thanks. If speaking before a group isn't for you, bring along a meaningful poem or article to read before the beginning of dinner.
- 5. BEGIN A NEW THANKSGIVING TRADITION.** The best traditions are those that everyone can participate in. One idea is "Pass the Talking Fork" (see box to left). Another idea is to have each family member share what they are thankful for.
- 6. ASK THE HOST IF YOU CAN HELP OUT.** Participation will add to your Thanksgiving experience. Offer to set the table, assist with cooking, entertain the kids or serve appetizers. Not only will you feel part of the group, but you will also help take some of the stress off of the host.
- 7. EXPRESS YOURSELF.** Thanksgiving is a time to let loved ones know that you love and appreciate them. Vow to tell at least one person how much you care about them.

Make this the best Thanksgiving ever by taking the initiative to do things differently. Appreciate the time that you spend with loved ones, and savor every moment.

Happy Thanksgiving!



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A Thanksgiving Crossword Puzzle

While waiting for that delicious Thanksgiving dinner to be served, make copies of this crossword puzzle to engage the family in a fun game. The winner gets to eat first!

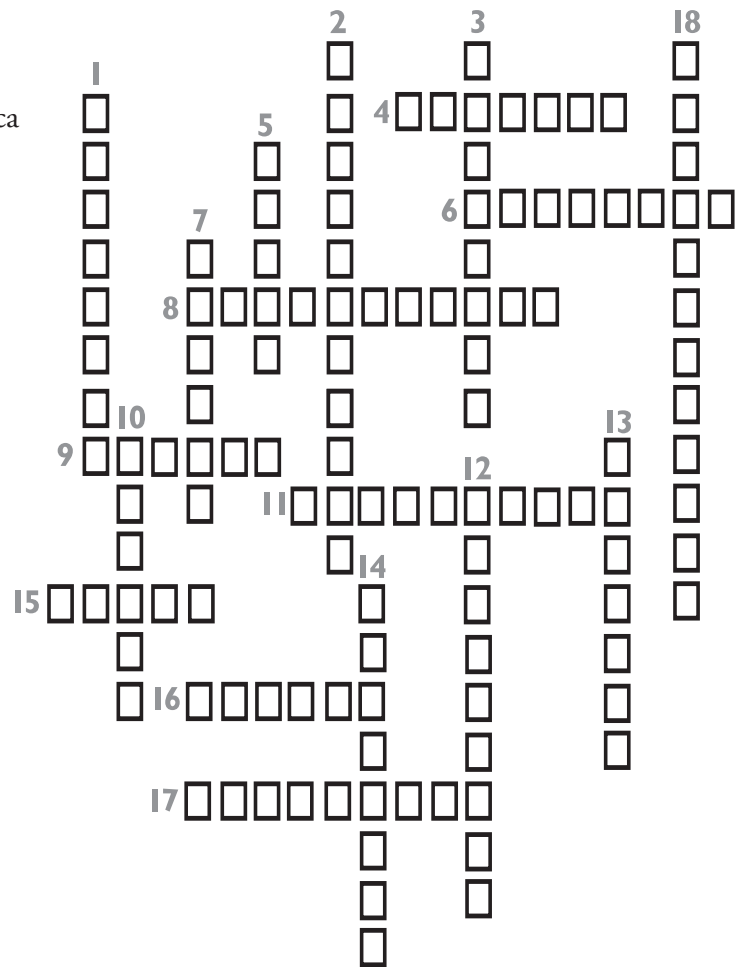
Clues to the 18 word Thanksgiving Holiday Crossword:
(Puzzle answers are at the very bottom of this page.)

ACROSS:

- 4 - one of the band of Puritans who journeyed to America
- 6 - seasoned bread or fillings inside poultry
- 8 - act of watching attentively
- 9 - internal organs of a fowl
- 11 - a horn stuffed with foods, berries etc.
- 15 - synonym for corn; pale yellow
- 16 - group of people who form in a new land
- 17 - name of ship that sailed to the New World (1620)

DOWN:

- 1 - a sauce for salads etc.
- 2 - special activities that commemorate something
- 3 - valued praise, favor or benefit
- 5 - unusually abundant meal
- 7 - distinct cry of the male turkey
- 10 - term also meaning Native American
- 12 - small, sour and dark red berry
- 13 - season when crops are collected
- 14 - one of the oldest towns in SE Massachusetts
- 18 - American harvest holiday in late November



ANSWERS across: 4=pilgrim, 6=stuffing, 8=observation, 9=blibet, 11=cornucopia, 15=maize, 16=colony, 17=Mayflower.
ANSWERS down: 1=dressing, 2=celebration, 3=blessing, 5=feast, 7=gobble, 10=indian, 12=cranberry, 13=harvest, 14=Plymouth, 18=Thanksgiving.

Happy Thanksgiving!