## Slide 1:

[Introduction.]

Our names.

*Thanksgiving day* (Title.)

## Slide 2:

[Overall Thanksgiving day.]

*Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday celebrated primarily in the United States and Canada, dedicated to giving thanks for the harvest and the blessings of the past year.*

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Thanksgiving is a holiday observed in several countries, most notably the United States and Canada, but also in a few other nations in different forms. In the United States, Thanksgiving is held on the fourth Thursday of November, while in Canada it is observed on the second Monday of October. Other countries where similar celebrations occur—though not as prominently—include Liberia, Grenada, and some communities in Germany, Japan, and the Netherlands.

The general idea behind Thanksgiving is a designated day to express gratitude for the harvest, blessings, and good fortune received over the past year. However, the form of the holiday celebrated in the U.S. has become the most widely recognized and has influenced how it is perceived globally.

## Slide 3:

[Origins of Thanksgiving day.]

Thanksgiving originated as a harvest celebration between early European settlers and Indigenous peoples, later evolving into a formal holiday rooted in gratitude for survival, cooperation, and abundance.

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The origins of Thanksgiving trace back to early harvest festivals, which were common in many cultures long before the modern holiday took shape. In what would become the United States, the most widely cited origin is the 1621 gathering in Plymouth, where English settlers known as Pilgrims held a feast to celebrate their first successful harvest in the New World. This feast was made possible largely through the help of the Wampanoag people, who had taught the settlers vital survival skills such as how to grow corn, fish, and store food for winter. The event lasted for three days and was attended by both Pilgrims and members of the Wampanoag nation.

Though the 1621 gathering is often called the “First Thanksgiving,” it was not considered an official holiday at the time, and similar observances occurred in other colonies in various forms. Over the years, colonial leaders would sometimes declare days of thanksgiving for military victories, safe arrivals, or other occasions. A consistent, national tradition did not exist until much later.

During the American Civil War, in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln declared a national day of thanksgiving to be observed each November. His aim was to foster a sense of unity during a time of deep national division. This marked the beginning of Thanksgiving as a recurring federal holiday in the U.S., though it wasn't permanently fixed to the fourth Thursday of November until 1941.

## Slide 4:

[How to celebrate!.]

* Preparing and sharing a large meal, usually centered around turkey
* Gathering with family and friends
* Expressing gratitude for personal and collective blessings
* Watching parades or sporting events (especially football)
* Volunteering or donating to those in need
* Taking part in modern variations like "Friendsgiving"
* Starting the holiday shopping season (Black Friday, in some regions)

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The main activity is the preparation and sharing of a large meal, typically featuring a roast turkey, various side dishes (such as stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, and green beans), and desserts like pumpkin or apple pie.

Another central practice is the expression of gratitude. Many families take time before or during the meal to say what they are thankful for, reflecting on personal milestones, health, relationships, or general well-being.

Social gatherings are key to Thanksgiving. While traditionally centered on family, many people now also celebrate with friends in events known as Friendsgiving, often held before or after the official holiday. These gatherings maintain the food-focused and gratitude-centered nature of the holiday.

Entertainment plays a large role in how Thanksgiving is spent. In the United States, millions watch the televised parades featuring marching bands, giant balloons, and performances. Football games are also a staple, either watched on TV or attended live, often becoming part of the day’s routine.

Finally, the day often marks the beginning of the holiday shopping season, especially in the U.S., where many people prepare for Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving. While this practice is commercial, it has become a cultural extension of the long weekend for many households.

## Slide 5:

[Controversial.]

Thanksgiving is a bit controversial because it overlooks the historical and ongoing suffering of Indigenous peoples resulting from colonization and displacement.

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Thanksgiving is seen by many Indigenous peoples as a symbol of violent colonization and the loss of their lands, cultures, and lives. The traditional story of the “First Thanksgiving” paints an idealized picture of harmony between settlers and Native Americans, which does not reflect the reality. After that event, Indigenous communities faced massacres, forced removals, and brutal assimilation policies that nearly destroyed their societies.

Because of this, many Indigenous groups observe Thanksgiving as a National Day of Mourning, a time to denounce these historical injustices and ongoing marginalization. They reject the traditional celebration and call for acknowledgment of the devastating impact colonization had on their peoples.

Moreover, the commercialization and festivities often ignore this reality, perpetuating a sanitized version of history that makes honest dialogue and reparations more difficult.