Wampanoag Traditions: Thanksgiving

Grade Level: 3rd

Season: Fall

Larger IGS Unit: Farms, Garden

Essential Question: What are food traditions? What can food traditions tell us about our past? What can food traditions tell us about today?

Standards Connections: 3.3 Explain who the Pilgrims were and explain why they left Europe to seek religious freedom; describe their journey and their early years in the Plymouth Colony. (H,G,C,E)

Demonstrate an understanding of the culture of the Wampanoags when the Pilgrims arrived

Objective: Students will understand the various perspectives of the first Thanksgiving. Students will compare food items from the first Thanksgiving to food items today. Students will be able to utilize a few words of Wampanoag vocabulary. Students will be able to grow and cook crops used by the Pilgrims and Wampanoags.

Materials:
- Plimoth Plantation resources: “Growing Food”; “Wampanoag Food” and “Pilgrim Food”, etc.
- Wampanoag and Pilgrim recipes, from Plimoth Plantation
- Online resource: www.plimoth.org; Virtual Field Trip

Introduction: We all have traditions that we follow in our families. Ask students, “What are some of your family traditions?” As students share traditions, make notes on the board of any references to food. Explain that food traditions we follow today come from our ancestors – these are based on traditions that have been happening for hundreds (and sometimes thousands) of years. There is so much we can learn about our own history through these food traditions.

During Colonial America, both the Pilgrims and the Native Americans had their own traditions. As they learned from each other, some traditions began to change. Ask students “Why do we eat certain foods on Thanksgiving? Which Thanksgiving foods do you think came from the Pilgrims? Which came from the Native Americans?”

Activity 1: Comparing Stories
Break students into pairs or small groups. Each group is given a reading, or an excerpt of a reading from the Plimoth Plantation resources. Be sure to give half the class readings from the Wampanoag primary sources, and the other half readings from the Pilgrim primary sources.

As students read, they highlight any clues that could help us figure out their food traditions. Ask students to try to find out answers to the following questions:

- What did they eat?
- Where did their food come from?
- Who grew the food?
- Who cooked the food?
- What types of food do we still eat today?

Come back together as a class and ask one person from each group to share what they found. Create a Venn Diagram (either individually or as a class) that compares and contrasts foods eaten by Pilgrims and foods eaten by Wampanoags.

Closing:
Ask students, “Does any of this food sound good?” Explain that we are going to make some of this food ourselves! Invite students to write one paragraph about the food of the Pilgrims or Wampanoags in their journals. They must include whether or not they would like to eat that food and why. They may draw a picture of the food.

Activity 2: Recipes
Break students into 6 groups. Hand out one recipe per group. Explain to the students that we are going to pick 1–3 of these recipes to make as a class (depending on time). It is their job to present their dish to the class in the most appealing way, and after all presentations the class will vote on which recipes to make for their feast.

In their presentations, students must share:

--- Ingredients
--- Where the ingredients would have been found during the Colonial era
--- Where we can find the ingredients today
  - Which ingredients we can find on the island
  - Which ingredients we can grow in the school garden
--- How the dish was prepared during the Colonial era
--- How the dish could be prepared today
--- When would the dish be eaten? (Season, time of day)
--- What they think the dish would taste like

Give students ~20 minutes to prepare their presentations. After the presentations, take a vote and choose which recipe(s) you will prepare next class. Invite students to bring their recipes home and try them out with their families!
Activity 3: Feast

In small groups, students work together to prepare a dish with one of the chosen recipes. As students are waiting for their turn to cook, they may choose one of the readings from the Plimoth Plantation resources, i.e., Children's Roles, Wampanoag Homeland, Savannah and the Salmon, Daybreak at Planting Time.

When the food is ready, come together and share gratitude for the meal, and for each ingredient that went into the meal. Reflect on the traditions being shared across the table.

After the meal, invite students to write a journal entry reflecting on their own gratitude.

Wrap up/ Assessment:
- Venn Diagram of foods
- Student journal entries
- Recipe presentation
- Feast with Pilgrim and Wampanoag recipes

Extensions:
- Wampanoag Language in the Garden Lesson
- Planting Three Sisters in the Garden
- Colonial America Lesson

Notes/Resources: