

NEWS BREAK

Article: **How these Native Seattleites are ‘taking back’ Thanksgiving**

Section: **THE MIX, E3**

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, November 20, 2022** of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some teachers might use this as a take-home assignment and others might read and answer the questions in a small group or larger, class discussion.

****Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for your students.***

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Objectives:

Students will discuss the historical teachings of Thanksgiving in our American public school system, and whether parents or teachers ever discuss the true relationship between the Native tribes and the colonists? They will also talk about that when sitting down to a meal, do they think about the plant and animal, the harvest time and why they think reflecting on the foods on our plate is such a separated experience?

They will also learn what tribal lands they're living on, and discuss Native stereotypes and how to stop the spread of misinformation. They will talk about whether the holiday name of Thanksgiving should be changed.

Pre-Reading Discussion:



- What do you think the article will be about, using only these pictures?
- Are there any clues?
- What can you infer?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A **context clue** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

“These are a couple of examples of how Seattleites have found personal and public ways to reframe the holiday by centering Native peoples and traditions while rejecting Thanksgiving’s **false narrative** and the accompanying stereotypes about Native people.”

False narrative Guess:

False narrative Definition:

Comprehension Questions:

1. When she was in grade school in the early 1990s, Duwamish tribal council member Desirée Rose Fagan remembers what she was taught about Thanksgiving at school. What did she remember wearing and learning?
2. Now, Fagan spends the holiday with family, but they don't celebrate the traditional story of harmonious relations between Native folk and colonial settlers. Instead, what do they do?
3. The _____ at the Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center is also on Fagan's calendar every Thanksgiving weekend.
4. The truth about Thanksgiving For starters, there was nothing "first" about the "first Thanksgiving." In 1621, there was a shared feast between the Wampanoag tribe members and the new Mayflower settlers, but what story was missing about the Native people and the feasts they shared prior to that one?
5. It wasn't until the 19th century that New England residents looked back to the 1621 feast and declared it the "first Thanksgiving" to fit a narrative of what?
6. What was the reality of the relationship between colonists and Native peoples across the U.S?
7. In fact, since 1970, many Native people have acknowledged the holiday not as Thanksgiving, but as a day of what?
8. Faced with this disconnect between the myth and reality of the holiday, many Native groups have done what?
9. While Thanksgiving seems to take up most of the air this time of year, November is also what?

Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions:

- *What surprised (or stood out to) you in the article?*
- *At first, I thought _____, but now I think _____?*
- *What things did you already know from prior experience?*

What did you learn in elementary school about Thanksgiving? What story was discussed within your family?

"To celebrate Thanksgiving as if the relationship between the United States and Indigenous peoples is cooperative and has been since the 1600s would be convincing yourself of lies and allowing propaganda to inform your reality," said Annicette Gillam (Kiowa), a University of Washington senior and member of First Nations at UW.

- Did your parents or teachers ever discuss the true relationship between the Native tribes and the colonists?

“If we’re going to have a big dinner and we’re going to feast, what does that mean to us? [There’s] the understanding of plant and animal relations for tribes, and it’s also harvest time,” Red Bow said. “There’s a lot of Indigenous knowledge on a plate, and the food doesn’t get the recognition it deserves, but food is a huge holder for culture for our peoples.”

- When sitting down to a meal, do you think about the plant and animal, the harvest time?
- Why do you think reflecting on the foods on our plate is such a separated experience?

In the future, Red Bow would like to see more people rethinking Thanksgiving in educational settings, ensuring stereotypes of Native peoples are not being promoted. She’d also like to see tribal representatives discuss the complexities of the holiday, whether it should be celebrated, or even changing the holiday’s name. “Not enough people take enough time to really reflect on what is this holiday, why do we have it and what does it mean to the people whose lands you’re on,” Red Bow said. In the meantime, she says, just thinking about what’s on your plate is a great place to start: What does it mean to you, whose lands did your food grow on and who are you supporting by buying that product? “Today, many Americans view Indigenous people as extinct and a relic of the past. We are ambiguous enemies in colonist history [against] who U.S. presidents won their first military victories and fodder in Western cowboy movies,” said Gillam, the First Nations at UW senior.

- What tribal lands are you living on?
- What are some Native stereotypes? How can we take action to stop the spread of stereotypes or the spread of false information?
- Should the holiday name of Thanksgiving be changed? Why or why not?
- Do you think it’s important to learn about truth, when it comes to history, even if it’s difficult to hear? Why or why not?

News Break is posted to the Web on Monday. Please share this NIE News Break program with other teachers. To sign-up for the print replica for your class, please [register online](#) or call 206/652-6290 or toll-free 1-888/775-2655.

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