Grade 3
Social Studies

Heritage and Citizenship
• Early Settlements in Upper Canada

Aboriginal Teaching Strategy
Feasts of Thanksgiving
Students explore Aboriginal foods and feast traditions, and make connections between Canadian Thanksgiving and other thanksgiving celebrations.

Related Curriculum Policy
• The Ontario Curriculum: Social Studies, Grades 1 to 6; History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8, 2004

Specific Expectations

Knowledge and Understanding
• describe what early settlers learned from First Nation peoples that helped them adapt to their new environment (e.g., knowledge about medicine, food, farming, transportation)

Application
• re-create some social activities or celebrations of early settler and/or First Nation communities in Upper Canada

Aboriginal Context
In their thanksgiving celebrations, Aboriginal people show gratefulness through prayers of thanks for the abundant gifts and provisions (animals, plants, water, etc.) the Creator has given them.

Teaching Strategies
• Discuss Canadian Thanksgiving as students know it today and as it was observed by the first settlers.
  Teacher prompts: Why do we celebrate Thanksgiving? How do you celebrate this day? What foods do you eat?
• Have students identify foods with Aboriginal origins that are Thanksgiving favourites (e.g., cranberries, root vegetables, squash, corn, wild rice).

Teacher prompts: When the first settlers came to Ontario, what fruits and vegetables did they eat? Who taught them about growing these foods?

• Pair off students and have the pairs gather information about these foods and create a “Did You Know?” information sheet.

• Read aloud stories that feature traditional First Nation feasts.

• Have the class prepare a simple feast of thanksgiving to share the bounty of the earth. Divide the class into four teams and assign one of the following tasks to each team: locate recipes for traditional Aboriginal dishes and plan the menu; prepare the food at school or bring it to school after preparing it at home; create invitations and decorations.

Resources


Caduto, Michael, and Bruchac, Joseph. Native American Gardening: Stories, Projects and Recipes for Families. Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 1996. Using tribal tales as inspiration, the authors provide practical information about seed preservation, planting and maintaining a garden, reaping the harvest, and cooking the harvested food.


Making Community Connections

• Invite an Aboriginal Elder or wisdom keeper to the class thanksgiving feast.

• Brainstorm feasts of thanksgiving from various cultures and invite students to talk about how they and their families celebrate this feast.

ABOUT THE TEACHER’S TOOLKIT

This teaching strategy is one component of Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher’s Toolkit, a collection of resources designed to help Ontario educators bring Aboriginal perspectives into the classroom. Based on the revised Ontario curriculum, the collection includes resources for educators at both the elementary and secondary levels. Other resources in this series can be found on the ministry website, at www.edu.gov.on.ca.