

The Story of Thanksgiving

Paragrafo 1 -The Pilgrims left England for freedom

The Pilgrims, who celebrated the first thanksgiving in America, were fleeing religious persecution in their native England. In 1609, a group of Pilgrims left England for the religious freedom in Holland where they lived and prospered.

After a few years their children were speaking Dutch and had become attached to the Dutch way of life. This worried the Pilgrims. They considered the Dutch frivolous and their ideas a threat to their children's education and morality.

Parola inglese	Significato intuito	Vocabolario
fleeing		
proepered		
frivolous		
morality		

Paragrafo 2 – The Pilgrims decide to travel to America

So they decided to leave Holland and travel to the New World. It was agreed that the Pilgrims would be given passage and supplies in exchange for working for their backers for seven years.

On Sept. 6, 1620, the Pilgrims set sail for the New World on a ship called the Mayflower. Forty-four Pilgrims who called themselves the "Saints," sailed from Plymouth, England, along with 66 others, whom the Pilgrims called the "Strangers."

The long trip was cold and damp and took 65 days. Since there was the danger of fire on the wooden ship, the food had to be eaten cold. Many passengers became sick and one person died by the time land was sighted on November 10th.

Parola inglese	Significato intuito	Vocabolario
Backers		
Damp		
Sighters		

Paragrafo 3 – The Mayflower Compact and the arrival in America

The long trip led to many disagreements between the "Saints" and the "Strangers." After land was sighted, a meeting was held and an agreement was worked out, called the Mayflower Compact, which guaranteed equality and unified the two groups. They joined together and named themselves the "Pilgrims."

Although they had first sighted land off Cape Cod, they did not settle until they arrived at Plymouth.

It was there that the Pilgrims decided to settle. Plymouth offered an excellent harbor. A large brook offered a resource for fish. The Pilgrims' biggest concern was attack by the local Native Americans. But the Patuxets were a peaceful group and did not prove to be a threat.

Parola inglese	Significato Intuito	Vocabolario
Harbor		
Threat		

Paragrafo 4 – The first winter

The first winter was devastating to the Pilgrims. The cold snow and sleet was exceptionally heavy, interfering with the workers as they tried to construct their settlement. March brought warmer weather and the health of the Pilgrims improved, but many had died during the long winter. Of the 110 Pilgrims and crew who left England, fewer than 50 survived the first winter.

Parola inglese	Significato Intuito	Vocabolario
Devastating		
Interfering		

Paragrafo 5 – A new Friendship

On March 16, 1621, what was to become an important event took place. An Indian brave walked into the Plymouth settlement. The Pilgrims were frightened until the Indian called out "welcome" (in English!).

His name was Samoset, and he was an Abnaki Indian. He had learned English from the captains of fishing boats that had sailed off the coast. After staying the night, Samoset left the next day. He soon returned with another Indian named Squanto who spoke even better English. Squanto told the Pilgrims of his voyages across the ocean, and his visits to England and Spain. It was in England where he had learned English.

Parola inglese	Significato Intuito	Vocabolario
Settlement		
Voyages		

Paragrafo 6 - Squanto teaches how to plant corn

Squanto's importance to the Pilgrims was enormous and it can be said that they would not have survived without his help. It was Squanto who taught them which plants were poisonous and which had medicinal powers. He taught them how to plant the Indian corn. The decaying fish fertilized the corn. He also taught them to plant other crops with the corn.

Parola inglese	Significato Intuito	Vocabolario
Poisonous		
Decaying		

Paragrafo 7 – The harvest

The harvest in October was very successful, and the Pilgrims found themselves with enough food to put away for the winter. There was corn, fruits and vegetables, fish to be packed in salt, and meat to be cured over smoky fires.

The Pilgrims had much to celebrate, they had built homes in the wilderness, they had raised enough crops to keep them alive during the long coming winter, they were at peace with their Indian neighbors. They had beaten the odds, and it was time to celebrate.

Parola inglese	Significato Intuito	Vocabolario
Cured		
Wilderness		
Crops		
Beaten the odds		

Paragrafo 8 – The Thanksgiving day

The Pilgrim Governor William Bradford proclaimed a day of thanksgiving to be shared by all the colonists and the neighboring Native Americans. They invited Squanto and the other Indians to join them in their celebration. Their chief, Massasoit, and 90 braves came to the celebration which lasted for three days.

They played games, ran races, marched, and played drums. Exactly when the festival took place is uncertain, but it is believed the celebration took place in mid-October.

Parola inglese	Significato Intuito	Vocabolario
Proclaimed		
Colonist		
Braves		

GLOSSARIO IN INGLESE

Paragrafo 1

fleeing: running away from, escaping

prospered: do well, live well

frivolous: not serious

morality: belief system

Paragrafo 2

backers: financial supporters

damp: wet

sighted: seen

Paragrafo 3

harbor: protected area on the coast

threat: a danger

Paragrafo 4

devastating: extremely difficult

interfering: preventing, making difficult

Paragrafo 5

settlement: place to live

voyages: travels

Paragrafo 6

poisonous: food or liquid dangerous to the health

decaying: rotting

Paragrafo 7

cured: cooked by smoke in order to keep meat a long time

wilderness: uncivilized country

crops: cultivated vegetables such as corn, wheat, etc.

beaten the odds: won something that was very difficult or against somebody

Paragrafo 8

proclaimed: declared, named

colonists: original settlers who came to the North America

braves: Indian warrior

