

Title: What role did Sarah Hale and Abraham Lincoln play in creating a national Thanksgiving holiday?

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Key Words: Abraham Lincoln, proclamation, Thanksgiving, Sarah Hale, analyze

Grade Level: 3rd grade

Time Allotted: Two 50 minute class periods

Lesson Overview	In this lesson, students will analyze primary sources to discover ways in which Sarah Hale and Abraham Lincoln played a role in creating a national Thanksgiving holiday
Guiding Questions	-What roles did Sarah Hale and Abraham Lincoln have in creating a national Thanksgiving holiday? -What steps were taken in creating the national holiday? -Why did Sarah Hale persist in her quest to make Thanksgiving a national holiday? -Why did Lincoln agree with Hale?

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to analyze primary sources
- Students will be able to collect information gathered from analyzing and discussion
- Students will be able to explain the steps taken in creating a national Thanksgiving holiday

Standards of Learning:

3.11b) Identify the contributions of George Washington; Thomas Jefferson; Abraham Lincoln; Rosa Parks; Thurgood Marshall; Martin Luther King, Jr; and Cesar Chavez.

OAH Historical Skills Taught:

Historical Research Capabilities: Students will study primary sources such as Lincoln's Proclamation of Thanksgiving; Sarah Hale's letter to Lincoln; New York state's Thanksgiving Proclamation; George Washington's Proclamation; and James Madison's Thanksgiving Proclamation. Students will be able to pose questions influenced by said sources as well as discover answers to questions posed by teacher.

Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision Making: Students will identify reasons behind Lincoln's decision to proclaim a national day of Thanksgiving.

Chronological Thinking: Students will use a timeline to find dates from several Thanksgiving Proclamations.

Assessment Tools: Completed I-Chart and History frames.

Materials/Resources:

Day 1

- Letter from Sarah Hale to Abraham Lincoln (Day 1)
- I-chart graphic organizer
- George Washington, James Madison, and the state of New York's Thanksgiving Proclamations
- blank exit slips

Day 2

- Lincoln's Proclamation of Thanksgiving
- History Frame graphic organizer
- Thanksgiving PPT
- Timelines (Optional Activity)

Modifications: -Write words such as "proclamation," "Abraham Lincoln," and "Sarah Hale" on the board to accompany images of each
-Cut Hale's letter into smaller pieces to be analyzed
-Group higher ability students with lower ability students/English Language Learners
-Assign certain students to specific jobs in each group (i.e. reader, recorder, etc)

Instructional Procedures:

1. Use a hook to get students interested. Say something such as "Today we are going to unravel a mystery" (the mystery being how did Lincoln play a role in creating Thanksgiving).
2. Tell students that they will begin by looking at a letter written by a woman in 1863 to president Abraham Lincoln.
3. Give each student a copy of the letter from Sarah Hale and a copy of the I-chart.
4. Model how to fill in the I-chart using Hale's letter. The teacher can choose to either read the letter aloud or have students take turns reading the letter. If using the whole letter at once is unmanageable, break it into smaller pieces to be analyzed.
5. Ask questions such as "Who wrote the letter and to whom was she writing?" "Why do you think she chose to write to Lincoln instead of someone else?" "What did Hale ask Lincoln to do?" "What does this document tell you about life in the United States during this time?" Teacher should also give students background information on Hale (she was the editor of a ladies' magazine and had been writing to presidents for several years asking for a national Thanksgiving holiday).

6. At this point, students may begin to ask why Thanksgiving wasn't already a national holiday (they should know about the origins of Thanksgiving from the Pilgrims and Indians). Explain to students that at this point in time, not everyone was celebrating Thanksgiving. Some states chose to celebrate it each year but it wasn't a national holiday like it is now.
7. Break students into groups and explain directions. Students will analyze three Thanksgiving Proclamations and fill in the I-chart just like they did for Hale's letter. Give groups copies of the I-chart, Washington's Proclamation, Madison's Proclamation, and the state of NY's Proclamation. As each document is analyzed, students will place each icon in the correct place on the timeline. They will also need to put in Hale and Lincoln. While students are working in groups, teacher will walk around to ask questions pertaining to the texts and to ensure student comprehension of each text.
8. Come together and as a class discuss findings and I-charts. Questions should include "who was the author?" "what does the author recommend?" "what date does the author set for Thanksgiving?" "How does their Thanksgiving sound different from the Thanksgiving we celebrate today?" and "Why do you think the date for Thanksgiving changed each year?"
9. Begin to wrap up the lesson by asking students to think back to the first Thanksgiving in 1621 and then to think about Sarah Hale writing to Lincoln. Ask "what happened in the years in between, why wasn't there a national holiday for Thanksgiving?" "What was important about the year 1863?" If students don't know this, explain briefly that it was in the middle of the Civil War and the country was torn apart. Lincoln would have been looking for a way to unify the country and Thanksgiving would have been a possible solution. Then ask "Do you think Lincoln agreed to make Thanksgiving a national holiday? How do you know?"
10. Leave the answer to the last question a bit of a mystery. Give each student an exit slip card and have them write their answer to that question ("Do you think Lincoln agreed to make Thanksgiving a national holiday? Why do you think that?")

Day 2

Instructional Process:

1. Open the lesson by showing a picture of Sarah Hale and Abraham Lincoln.
2. Students will do a Think, Pair, Share to recall what they learned yesterday about both people and how they are connected.
3. Ask “do you think Abraham Lincoln agreed with Sarah Hale and made Thanksgiving a national holiday? Why do you think that?”
4. Give each student a copy of Lincoln’s Proclamation of Thanksgiving. The teacher can choose to either read the document aloud or have students take turns reading.
5. Ask questions such as “who was the author?” “what does the author recommend?” “what date does the author date does the author set for Thanksgiving?” “what else did you hear or learn about in this document?”
6. Come together to answer the mystery question: “Did Abraham Lincoln make Thanksgiving a national holiday?” “How did Sarah Hale help?”
7. Students should understand that Lincoln wrote his Proclamation of Thanksgiving during the Civil War as a way to unify a country fighting itself. He and Sarah Hale both thought that by creating a national holiday, the states would come together again one country and the war would end.
8. Give each student a history frame. Model/explain how to fill in the frame. Teacher can choose whether students will work individually, in a group, or as a class. Have students complete the history frame.

Sample Answers to the History Frame:

Title of Event: Thanksgiving: A National Holiday

Problem: Thanksgiving was celebrated by some states, but not all states. It was often celebrated on different days and months of the year.

Participants: Sarah Hale, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Different states.

Where: United States

When: 1863 (During the Civil War)

Key Episodes/Events: Sarah Hale writes letters urging for a regular day of thanksgiving. The American Civil War occurs. Lincoln is look for a way to unify the country during the war.

Resolution/Outcome: Abraham Lincoln agreed with Sarah Hale and issued his Thanksgiving Proclamation in 1863 calling for a national day of Thanksgiving on the 4th Thursday of November.

Lessons: Individuals can make a difference. Thanksgiving may not have ever become a national holiday without the contributions of Sarah Hale and Abraham Lincoln.

9. As a wrap up and a way to help students understand how Thanksgiving evolved into the holiday we enjoy today use the Thanksgiving PPT to review the history frame and lead a discussion using the Thanksgiving PPT. Slide 4 is the best slide to pause and review the answers to the history frame and the ways that Lincoln and Hale influenced Thanksgiving. The final slides help students learn about present day traditions and that Thanksgiving is only celebrated in the United States. Before showing the final slide ask the students if they know of any holidays that are celebrated in only one country, just like Thanksgiving is only an American holiday. If they do not know any, provide them with examples such as Chinese New Year, Canadian Boxing Day, or Bastille Day in France. If there is time you can pull out a calendar and point out the dates of each.