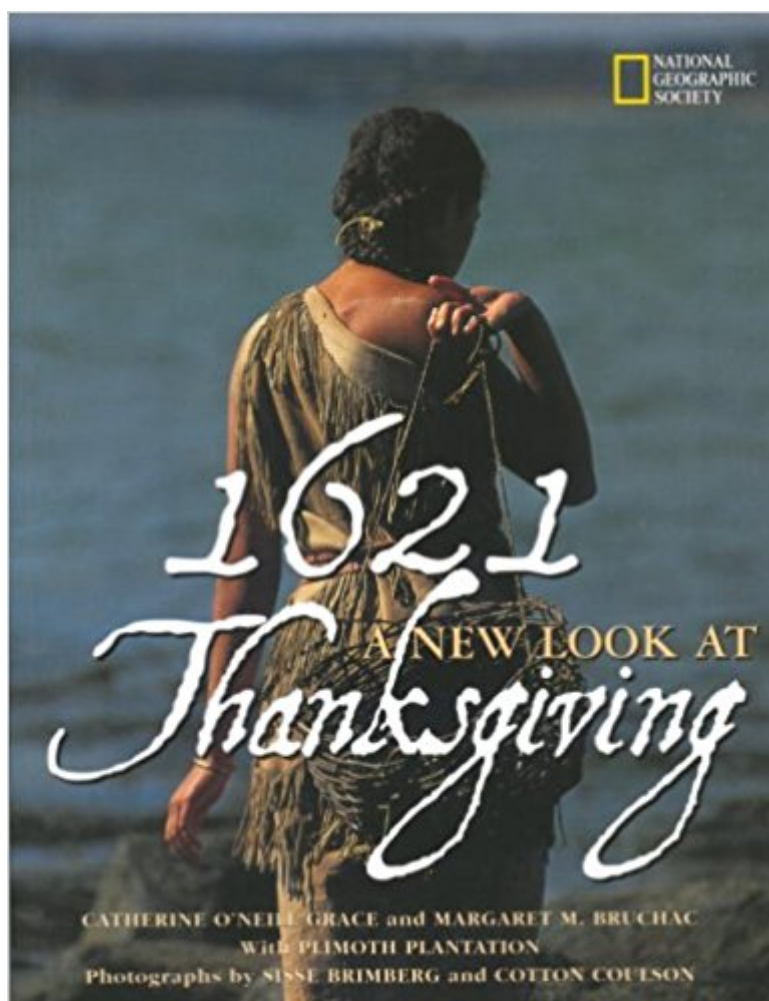


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# 1621: A New Look At Thanksgiving (I Am American)



## Synopsis

Countering the prevailing, traditional story of the first Thanksgiving, with its black-hatted, silver-buckled Pilgrims; blanket-clad, be-feathered Indians; cranberry sauce; pumpkin pie; and turkey, this lushly illustrated photo-essay presents a more measured, balanced, and historically accurate version of the three-day harvest celebration in 1621.

## Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #157,499 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #82 in [Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > Thanksgiving](#) #112 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Native North & South Americans](#) #119 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > Colonial & Revolutionary](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Grace (the I Want to Be... series) and Bruchac (an adviser for the Wampanoag Indian Program at Plimoth Plantation) provide a well-researched, smooth account of the Wampanoag side of the Thanksgiving story. Arguing that "a number of today's assumptions about that event are based more on fiction than on fact," the authors explain a map that shows Wampanoag territory and the ways in which they acted as "caretakers" never owners of the land, and fascinating facts (e.g., the first Bible printed in the New World was in the Wampanoag language). Though some readers may object to the strong tone (e.g., "The history of the English colonies in America is a history of European people imposing their culture, politics, and religion onto Native people"), the authors posit a provocative and convincing view of what actually happened that first Thanksgiving

and note that many modern descendants of Native peoples observe the holiday as a national day of mourning. Crisp, clear photographs taken at Plimoth Plantation showing actors in period dress with 17th-century artifacts, coupled with a perspective that children may never have heard, make this the most memorable Thanksgiving volume of the season. Ages 8-12. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr 3-5-A considerable amount of information is packed into this pictorial presentation of the reenactment of the first Thanksgiving, held at Plimoth Plantation museum in October, 2000. Countering the prevailing, traditional story of the first Thanksgiving, with its black-hatted, silver-buckled Pilgrims; blanket-clad, be-feathered Indians; cranberry sauce; pumpkin pie; and turkey, this lushly illustrated photo-essay presents a more measured, balanced, and historically accurate version of the three-day harvest celebration in 1621. Five chapters give background on the Wampanoag people, colonization, Indian diplomacy, the harvest of 1621, and the evolution of the Thanksgiving story. A brief introduction and an afterword serve to set the stage and bring to a conclusion the story of incipient race relations in 17th-century Massachusetts, the impact of which is felt to the present. While debunking the Thanksgiving story as it is most frequently told, this recounting in no way detracts from the historical importance of the holiday. Pair it with Kate Waters's *Tapenum's Day* (Scholastic, 1996) for a penetrating alternative look at a uniquely American celebration. Ann Welton, Grant Elementary School, Tacoma, WA Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Now it is time to read about the real history that took place on that fateful day in November 1621. It was not initially called Thanksgiving nor was it a holiday. Those two happenings didn't take place until 1947 brought about by a legislation enacted by our President Harry Truman and ratified by our congress. Plus the impromptu feast back in 1621 lasted for three days. Over 90 Native Americans joined with the Puritans (or seperatists if you wish) for the feast. The English settlers, totaling only 52 after their first year at "Plimoth" never referred to themselves as Pilgrims. And there was never an extensive writing about this gathering in 1621. In a letter written in 1621, a total of 115 words described this harvest gathering and later became the basis for the holiday we celebrate today on the 4th Thursday of November, Thanksgiving. The 90 Indians who converged on the Plimoth Colony had nurtured this very land that the English took over just a year earlier for thousands of years. Indians did not believe that anyone could own land. It was simply provided by the great spirit to be used as long as you settled upon it. The Wampanoag Tribe had a history that dated back thousands

of years on this very land. The English settlers had a history of less than a year and certainly had no legal or moral right to the land without bargaining for it with the Indians. The harvest gathering lasted for nearly 3 days, not the usual afternoon at Grannies and then back home with left over in tow. You will read about the fruit and vegetables and fowl and deer that were available at the harvest. Fish and shell fish were also abundant. Unfortunately there were no pumpkin pies, whip cream or cranberries at this feast. You will learn more about the Wampanoag People whose name means "People Of The First Light." . They derived this name from the fact that the sun rose each morning on the eastern shore of the Massachusetts' Colony. Much will be revealed about their language and the colonizing of the new world. Daily activities of both people will be discussed. The Indians were very curious about the habits of the English, and the English owe their first year's survival to their growing knowledge of growing corn that the Indians shared with them. Peace remained between the two nations until 1640 when the Indians broke the peace alliance. The fight for land became the key issue as the English population exploded in this territory and their greed for more land caused problems between the two.. The English even began selling the Indians into slavery to traders in the West Indies. With this story you must appreciate the good that took place between these two people and condemn the bad that both inflicted upon one another. But most importantly you will better understand what actually took place at this time and put to rest all the Hollywood exploitation of the facts just to make a good story that would sell movies and books. History must reflect the truth, and this book published by the National Geographic Society is a quality presentation of fact and visuals. This is a wonderful book that every American child should read or have read to them . History must be told in terms of the truth and should never be embellished in order to exploit others. It is only from the truth that we can help avoid common mistakes in the future. We should start our adventure of the beginning of this history with the truth. And you will be glad that you had this historically correct works for story telling and reference.

This book was recommended to me as an historically accurate portrayal of Thanksgiving. I've learned so much regarding the inaccuracies of my own education since I began college and it's incredibly sad. We've almost successfully erased indigenous Americans from this land and from the history books. When we do include them, we turn them into mythical, historical beings and ignore the bloody truth of how we, as settlers, treated them and continue to treat them. I don't want my son to have to wait until he's in his twenties to learn more accurate historical lessons. Not only is this book interesting to me as an adult, it is written in a way that is easy for children to understand, also. I love that the photographs are present-day reenactments with Wampanoag artisans, scholars,

performers, & educators who work with the Wampanoag Indian Program at Plimoth Plantation. I wish our schools would present this information instead of dressing the kids up as "pilgrims" and "indians" each year and claiming that it's done to honor the first Thanksgiving. It's insulting & inaccurate.

I like the realistic photographs in this book. It is a 7.1 level Accelerated Reader book. There are 46 pages of text with glossy photographs on every other page. Each page has about three paragraphs of material. Each paragraph has 4 to 6 sentences. The story of Thanksgiving is more realistically portrayed in this book's text. It dispels the myths, and allows a more truthful story of what the feasting was about. It also shares the truth about disease on both sides (Natives and settlers).

As a teacher, this book is great! But... I got it for my family hoping it would be something we could read as part of our Thanksgiving program. It was a bit lengthy so we just read bits and pieces. Overall, outstanding book... just want not quite what I was wanting for my needs.

This is absolutely the best book available for kids to learn the truth about the events surrounding the coming of the Pilgrims to Plymouth and the relationships between them and the local people. Very balanced and honest, this book offers a respectful view of this time in native and U.S. history.

a wonderful pictorial presentation of Plymouth life and history which gives more accurate information relating to the first settlement at Plymouth, and more information of the Wampanoag Indians and their valued assistance to the settlers and the first Thanksgiving

Excellent way for children to find out about history and tradition in an unbiased way. National Geographic quality. Text is challenging enough to actually teach vocabulary, especially for the younger readers. The book is targeted to 3rd grader and up, but I think that younger readers might find it interesting too, if someone reads it to them.

Fantastic, balanced account of the encounter between colonists and Wampanoag, illustrated with photos from Plymouth Plantation. Read aloud in small chunks to kids age 5 and up. Read-alone for strong readers 3rd grade and up.

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