

Celebrations Across Our Nation

Activate Prior Knowledge

There are many ways in which people honor their country. Tap students' prior knowledge of this topic by asking the questions that follow.

Ask:

- How do you honor or show respect for the United States? by saying “The Pledge of Allegiance”? by singing “The Star-Spangled Banner”? by taking holidays off from school?
- How does honoring the United States make you feel? Why do you think you feel that way?
- Why do you think we honor the United States? the leaders of the United States?

Build Background

special events

Help students build background for the lesson by having them think about special events they know about or have participated in. Ask: **What special events, such as birthday parties or holidays, have you been a part of?**

Encourage students to think about different cultures for examples. Record students' responses in the left side of a chart such as the one below. Then ask: **What kinds of things do people do at or for these events?** List students' responses in the right side of the chart. Conclude the activity by asking: **Why do people or communities have special events? What is the purpose of special events?**

Special Events	Things People Do for Special Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • birthdays • parties • weddings • holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat special food. • Play music and dance. • Spend time with family and friends. • Stay home from work or school.

Access Content

Preview the Lesson

Read aloud the lesson title, “Celebrations Across Our Nation,” as well as the first section heading, “Holidays for Freedom.” Help students distinguish the difference between a celebration and a holiday. Explain that a celebration is a way to honor or recognize something special that has happened. A holiday is a day when most people do not go to work or school and use the day for pleasure and enjoyment.

Suggested Questions:

- What are some holidays you know about?
- What are some holidays that are celebrated in the United States?
- How do you celebrate things that are important to you?

Picture Walk



Help students preview the lesson content by engaging them in a discussion about the pictures and text elements.

- Page 120** ■ I see that **Plymouth, Massachusetts, and Washington, D.C.,** are shown on the map. Because this lesson is about celebrations, I think that some important celebrations took place in these cities. What do you know about Washington, D.C.? What celebration might take place there?
- Page 121** ■ Read aloud the section heading, “Holidays for Freedom.” What do you think you will learn about in this section? Why?
- The men in the upper right picture are called veterans. A veteran is someone who served in the armed forces during a war. What war did these veterans serve in?
 - What do you think Martin Luther King, Jr., might be speaking about in this picture? How does the section heading help you answer this question?
- Page 122** ■ The section heading is “Being Thankful.” Look closely at this picture. Why do you think these people might be thankful? What do you think they are celebrating?

My Lesson Guide



You may wish to have students go back over the lesson with a partner and practice defining each boldfaced word in the text. These definitions will help them complete *My Lesson Guide*.

My Lesson Guide

Directions: Complete the chart using the information below.

- to honor those who fought and died in wars for the United States
- to celebrate the life and ideas of a special man
- to give thanks for the good things that happened during the year
- to honor people who served in the armed forces

Holiday	Why It Is Celebrated
Veterans Day	
Thanksgiving Day	
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	
Memorial Day	

Talk About It

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wanted equality for all people. Work with a partner or a small group. Discuss what Dr. King may have said in his speeches for equal rights. Write a list of your ideas. Start with these questions: What may he have said about equality? Why is equality important to all Americans?



Notes for Home: Your child learned about national celebrations.

Home Activity: Ask your child to tell you why Veterans Day is celebrated.

Extend Language

In this *Extend Language*, students learn about synonyms. Synonyms are words that have similar meanings.

*“Their first winter in Plymouth had been **hard**.”*

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hard The Pilgrims had a hard time during their first winter at Plymouth. What do you think *hard* means in this situation? (difficult)

Hard and *difficult* are synonyms. Synonyms are words that have similar meanings.

Write this sentence on the board and read it aloud:

They ate good food at the Thanksgiving celebration.

Think of some synonyms for *good* in this sentence. (delicious, tasty)

Name some other synonyms. (big/large; cold/chilly)

Hard: difficult, not pleasant

Root: Old English—*heard* meaning *hard*

Other synonyms: small/tiny; bright/shiny

Word	Synonym
hard	difficult
good	delicious, tasty
big	large
cold	chilly

Conversation Starter

Read this sentence from page 122 to students: “Across the country we give thanks for the good things that happened during the year.”

Ask students to explain some things for which we might be thankful today. **Why might the things for which we are thankful different from the things for which the Pilgrims were thankful? Name some things appreciated by both people today and the Pilgrims.**