

# NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION FOR ALL RESOURCES

Partnership of IllumiNative and the National Indian Education Association



ILLUMINATIVE



Grade Level

**3-5**

Subject

**Social Studies**

Lesson Title

**Giving Thanks: A Haudenosaunee  
Message of Thanksgiving**

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- WiFi access (optional)
- Printed copy of the [Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address Greetings to the Natural World](#)
- YouTube video of the book [Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message](#) read in English and Mohawk by Chief Jake Swamp
- Paper and pencil
- Crayons or coloring pencils

## STEPS

This activity is for children to do with a person from the family or community, but it can also be done by the child alone.

### **Activity Steps:**

1. Talk about some things that you are thankful for today and why you are thankful.
  2. Watch the YouTube video of Chief Jake Swamp (Mohawk) reading the book [Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message](#)
- AND/OR
- Read out loud the printed version of [Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address Greetings to the Natural World](#)
3. Share your answers to the questions in the section "Helpful Tips."
  4. Think of something in your home or community that you are thankful for. On a piece of paper, write a short thanksgiving message that you would add to the one you just heard.
  5. Draw and color a picture to do with your message.

### **After the Activity:**

Think about how you can practice giving thanks each day that you wake up. You can also share the thanksgiving message and the one you wrote with others.

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## HELPFUL TIPS

**Parents and caregivers:** This is an opportunity for families to share their value of the natural and spiritual world or discuss cultural traditions for giving thanks. After listening to the thanksgiving message, ask your child to share responses to these questions:

- What are some of the things Chief Jake Swamp is thankful for in the message?
- What things does nature or mother earth give to us?
- Why does the message call some of the parts of nature by family names such as “brother” for the sun or “grandfather” for the thunder?
- How can you use this giving thanks message in your life each day?

After answering these questions, help your child spend time outdoors sharing thanks for the natural and spiritual world.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

**Families and Educators:** This activity may open other talking points around character building, traditional customs for giving thanks, or even the myths behind the celebration of the Thanksgiving holiday. If you or your child want to learn more, visit these websites:

- To learn more about sharing the holiday of Thanksgiving in a culturally appropriate way see this learning plan from [Native Knowledge 360° by the National Museum of the American Indian \(NMAI\)](#)
- To learn more about the the Haudenosaune, an alliance of Six Native nations, read [NMAI's Haudenosaunee Guide](#).

### Activity Resource Links:

- Printed version of the *Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address* [https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01\\_02\\_Thanksgiving\\_Address.pdf](https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01_02_Thanksgiving_Address.pdf)
- YouTube video of *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggfVuY4LJuo&t=24s>

### Additional Links:

- NMAI: Native Knowledge 360° *American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving* <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/resources/American-Indian-Perspectives-on-Thanksgiving>
- NMAI's *Haudenosaunee Guide* <https://americanindian.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/HaudenosauneeGuide.pdf>