

#10061  
**GIVING THANKS:  
 A NATIVE AMERICAN  
 GOOD MORNING MESSAGE**

WESTON WOODS STUDIOS, 1997  
 Grade Level: K-4  
 8 mins.

**DESCRIPTION**

Speaking in English and Mohawk, Chief Jake Swamp narrates a traditional Native American Thanksgiving address of peace and appreciation of mother earth, all her inhabitants, and her gifts of animals, weather, and the heavens. Based on his book by the same name.



**ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

**Subject Area: Grades K-4 history—Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago**

- Standard: Understands the history of a local community and how communities in North America varied long ago
  - ◆ Benchmark: Understands the daily life and values of early Hawaiian or Native American cultures (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1.)

**Subject Area: Geography—Environment and Society**

- Standard: Understands how physical systems affect human systems
  - ◆ Benchmark: Knows how communities benefit from the physical environment (e.g., people make their living by farming on fertile land, fishing in local water, working in mines; the community is a port located on a natural harbor, a tourist center located in a scenic or historic area, an industrial center with good access to natural resources) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 2.)

**Subject Area: Language Arts—Reading**

- Standard: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts
  - ◆ Benchmark: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of familiar literary passages and texts (e.g., fairy tales, folktales, fiction, nonfiction, legends, fables, myths, poems, nursery rhymes, picture books, predictable books) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 4.)

## INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To introduce the Native American culture.
2. To illustrate things on earth to be thankful for.
3. To appreciate the diversity of our nation's people.
4. To promote the reading of children's literature.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This Native American message of thanks is presented alternately in English and the Mohawk language.

## VOCABULARY

- |                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. animals      | 9. moon               |
| 2. foods        | 10. spirit protectors |
| 3. give thanks  | 11. stars             |
| 4. Great Spirit | 12. sun               |
| 5. human beings | 13. thunder           |
| 6. inhabitants  | 14. trees             |
| 7. life         | 15. water             |
| 8. mother earth | 16. wind              |

## BEFORE SHOWING

1. Discuss the variety of things that the natural world provides for people, including the sun for warmth, rain for drinking water, etc.
2. Read the book *Giving Thanks, A Native American Good Morning Message* by Chief Jake Swamp. Discuss how the author feels about the earth and how it makes readers/viewers feel.

## AFTER SHOWING

### Discussion Items and Questions

1. What is this story based on? What is the reason the Chief is giving thanks?
2. Why is it an honor to be a human being?
3. What does mother earth give people?
4. Why do they give thanks to the water?
5. What makes the earth's floor beautiful?
6. For what plants do they give thanks? Why?
7. Why do they thank the trees for warmth?
8. For what do they thank the animals and birds?
9. How do the wind and thunder help the people?
10. Why do they thank the sun, the moon, and the stars? Why do they call the thunder "grandfather," the sun "brother," and the moon "grandmother"?
11. Discuss the spirit protectors of past and present. Who are they and how do they help the Native American people?
12. Who is the Great Spirit?

## Applications and Activities

1. Paint a large mural showing a variety of natural things to be thankful for. Emphasize that some of the best and most important things on earth are free for all to enjoy.
2. Take a walk outdoors. Notice the colors, shapes, textures, sounds, and smells of things in the environment. Discuss the wonders of the natural earth.
3. Write or draw a picture about what the earth provides that you are thankful for.
4. Plan and make a meal. Invite another class to the meal. Discuss the pleasures of inviting friends to share a meal and the fun of working together to create it.
5. Research and report on a Native American tribe. Include location, beliefs, daily life, homes, foods, transportation, population, history, and current tribal information.
6. Locate and share other famous Native American messages. Create a display of the various messages with pictures or drawings of the authors.
7. Investigate the Mohawk language. Compare it to English and to other Native American languages.
8. Investigate Native American sign language systems and compare them to American Sign Language.

## SUMMARY

This story is based on the "Thanksgiving Address," a Native American message of peace and thankfulness for all the blessings of the earth.

## CMP RELATED RESOURCES

- *The Woodland Indian World* #8956
- *How the West Is Fun: American Indian Culture* #8763
- *Thanksgiving Shared: Native Americans and Pilgrims* #8920

## World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **CHIEF JAKE SWAMP**

[http://www.kidscare.org/kidscare/nov03\\_author.html](http://www.kidscare.org/kidscare/nov03_author.html)

This site includes an introductory biography of Chief Jake Swamp and is followed by an interview with him. There is also a list of discussion questions.



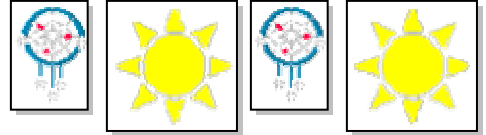
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- **NATIVE AMERICAN RESOURCES**

<http://marilee.us/nativeamericans.html>

This is a valuable site for teachers, containing links to tribes, craft projects, legends, songs, dances, teaching aids, and class projects.

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- **NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURES**

[http://edsitement.neh.gov/view\\_lesson\\_plan.asp?id=347](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=347)

Here is a lesson plan on teaching Native American cultures to children. Includes links to other sites.

