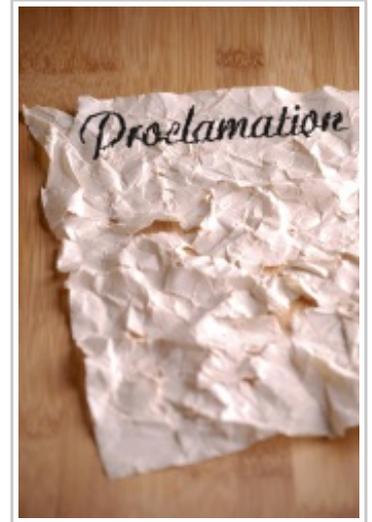


Write a Thanksgiving Proclamation!

Thanksgiving has been around for a long time, and so have Thanksgiving proclamations, starting with the first issued in 1777. Helping your child write his own "Thanksgiving Proclamation" is a great way to get into the spirit of gratitude that this holiday is all about. Writing a proclamation sounds hard, but it's really nothing more than a statement of what you're thankful for. With a bit of tea or coffee, you can also dye the proclamation to look like an antique document!



What You Need:

- Regular white paper
- Tea or coffee, brewed (keep it weak)
- Shallow pan for soaking the paper
- Calligraphy pen or special marker
- Matches or a lighter (optional)
- Candle (optional)

What You Do:

1. Start by helping your child make a list of what he's thankful for. Encourage him to think of things big and small, such as a warm and cozy house to live in, mom and/or dad, siblings, friends, books to read, plenty to eat, snow (or rain, or sun) to play in, toys to play with, etc. You get the idea—get detailed and go over the list together. Encourage him to think beyond himself (his iPod may be at the top of the list but here's your chance to help him think a little more deeply).
2. Dye the paper in tea or coffee to give it an "old" look. Take a sheet of white paper and crumple it up really well, then dunk it in the tea until soaked. Take the paper out and lay it flat until dry. For a burnt-edge look, light a match and carefully burn the edges of the paper.
3. Now on to writing. A calligraphy pen is great here in keeping with the historic theme, but any marker that's special to your child works. Have your child sign the proclamation to make it official, and note the location and date underneath his signature.
4. You can also add an official seal to your child's proclamation under the signature by melting a bit of candle wax and letting it drip onto the paper, then etching your child's initials into it as it cools and hardens.

Did You Know? A Brief History of Thanksgiving Proclamations

The first national Thanksgiving proclamations were issued by the Continental Congress between 1777 and 1784, and were official statements of gratitude toward God for blessings received. In the midst of the Revolutionary War, Congress released a proclamation calling for a special day reserved for giving thanks.

Fast forward a few years to the first presidential Thanksgiving proclamation, made by George Washington in 1789. With the War over but still fresh in his mind, Washington asked that all Americans take Thanksgiving to give God thanks for protecting the nation during the war.

During the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln focused his 1863 proclamation on giving God thanks for victorious battles and the overall preservation of order and harmony. Lincoln's proclamation set the official day of Thanksgiving as the last Thursday in November, which we still observe today.

All other presidents who have issued Thanksgiving proclamations have followed the same basic theme,

a statement of thanks for blessings and benefits the country has enjoyed.

© Copyright 2006-2012 Education.com All Rights Reserved.