

Lesson 9: Picturing the First Thanksgiving

Unit 5
Grade 4



Introduction

You will be looking at two paintings of a famous event.

Your task is to determine:

1. Are there any details in the painting that might be inaccurate?
2. Which of the two paintings is probably the most accurate representation of what it looked like at the first Thanksgiving?



Resource 1: Van Gogh's Bedroom in Arles



Van Gogh is one of the most recognized artists in the world. He was born in the Netherlands and lived from 1853-1890. His paintings sell for millions of dollars!

Let's think!

- 1. Do you think the painting of Van Gogh's bedroom is accurate?**
- 2. How might we know?**



What is corroboration?

It is what historians do to check their conclusions. They search for sources that either support or refute (disagree) details in a document or image.

Resource 2: Van Gogh's Explanation of bedroom in Arles



This is a painting of my bedroom "I have painted the walls pale violet. The ground with checked material. The wooden bed and the chairs, yellow like fresh butter; the sheet and the pillows, lemon light green. The bedspread, scarlet coloured. The window, green. The washbasin, orange; the tank, blue. The doors, lilac. And, that is all. There is not anything else in this room with closed shutters. The square pieces of furniture must express unswerving rest; also the portraits on the wall, the mirror, the bottle, and some costumes. The white colour has not been applied to the picture, so its frame will be white...I have depicted no type of shade or shadow; I have only applied simple plain colours..."

Vincent Van Gogh
Note to his brother Theo
October, 1888

Historical Analysis

You are now going to look at two paintings of the first Thanksgiving.

The paintings were drawn in 1914 and 1915. The first Thanksgiving took place in 1621.



Do you think the artists were present at the first Thanksgiving?

Are the paintings primary or secondary sources?



Historical Analysis



Title: The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth
Brownscombe Painting, 1914.

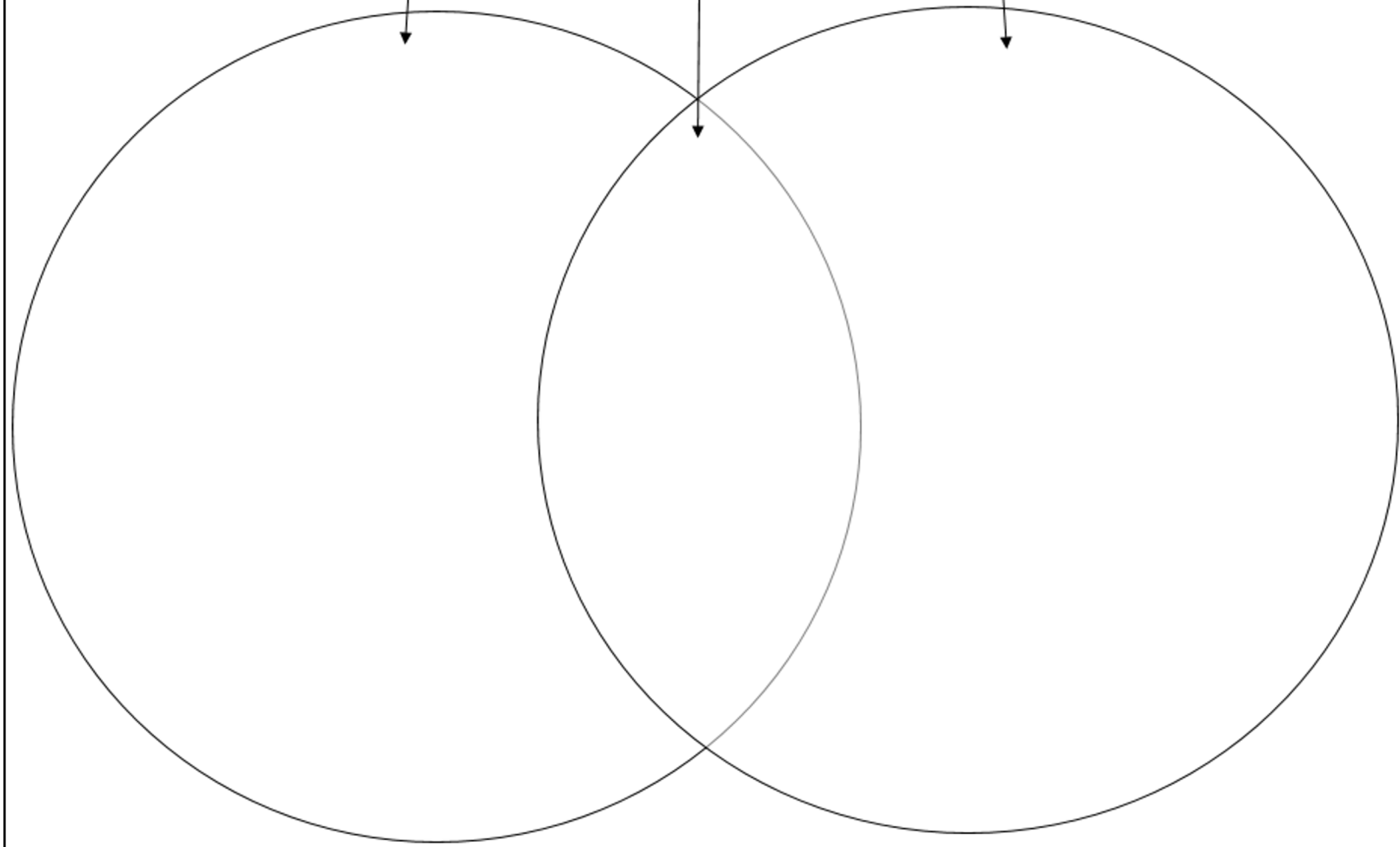


Title: The First Thanksgiving
Ferris Painting, 1915.

Unique to the Brownscombe Painting

Unique to the Ferris Painting

Found in Both Paintings



Which one do you think might be more accurate?

How might we know?



Title: The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth
Brownscombe Painting, 1914.



Title: The First Thanksgiving
Ferris Painting, 1915.

Resource 4

This is the earliest account of what happened at the first Thanksgiving, and it is an account created by someone who was there. His name was Edward Winslow and he was the Assistant Governor for the Plymouth Colony (where the first Thanksgiving took place).

Resource 4: Edward Winslow's Description of the First Thanksgiving

After we brought in our crops at the end of the growing season, our governor sent four men to hunt for fowl - chickens, turkeys, pheasant, and ducks - so that we could celebrate after working hard to plant and take care of our crops. The four men killed as much fowl as we needed to feed us for an entire week. We played some games and fired our guns for entertainment. Many of the Indians came, including their great king Massasoit with approximately 90 men. We entertained and feasted with them for three days. They went out and killed five Deer which they brought back and gave to our Governor to help feed everyone. Because of God's goodness, we have plenty to eat and need nothing.

Edward Winslow
Traveled on the Mayflower
Asst. Governor of Plymouth Colony
Published in 1622



Directions: list ways that the Brownscombe and Ferris Paintings stick to Edward Winslow’s description of the first Thanksgiving, and ways that the paintings STRAY from Winslow’s description.

Sticks What are some ways that the paintings <u>STICK</u> to the evidence?	Strays What are some ways that the paintings <u>STRAY</u> from the evidence?


Which, if either of the paintings, is an accurate representation of the First Thanksgiving based on the account of someone who participated in the event?



Title: The First Thanksgiving at Plymouth
Brownscombe Painting, 1914.



Title: The First Thanksgiving
Ferris Painting, 1915.



Create your own drawing of the first
Thanksgiving that STICKS to Edward
Winslow's 1621 account.

Why might your drawings give a different visual account of the same event (The First Thanksgiving)?



Fun fact:
Pilgrims did not wear buckles on their hats and shoes!



THANKFUL

