

### Time's running out for turkeys.

Are turkeys a part of your culture? They are over here in the U.S. You have probably heard about the Thanksgiving turkey. Did you know that the tradition of celebrating by eating a turkey started with the Native American Indians? It was the Wampanoag tribe, specifically, that in 1621 shared food that was naturally available locally, with the European Pilgrims at Plymouth Plantation in Massachusetts. They celebrated having survived a cruel winter, and having made important friendships with the Native Americans. There were other, earlier Thanksgiving celebrations by the Canadians and the Spaniards, but the American celebration of 1621 seems to be more famous. The native bird chosen as an important part of the feast was the turkey. That bird is also native of Mexico. It's an American bird, and a big one, come to that. A healthy turkey can easily weigh 20lbs or more. If you're going to cook one, you have to make sure first of all that your oven is big enough! In recent years, people have taken to deep frying them. You need an enormous deep frying pan for the job. And, it is actually quite a dangerous undertaking because of the large amount of boiling oil. Though the turkey cooks more quickly than it does in the oven, it has to be supervised at all times because of the risk of fire. Apparently, though, it is the best way to eat the bird because it stays extremely moist. Yes, turkey eating is big business here. In 2006, farmers raised 270 million turkeys to do almost 8 billion dollars worth of business. A third of those turkeys were consumed at Thanksgiving. So, if you're a turkey, run and hide! If someone offers you lots of corn, and a comfortable nest, don't be fooled. Thanksgiving is coming soon! I came across two lucky turkeys the other day during my trip to a petting zoo. They are caged, and on display, - not for eating. They really are odd looking things. Their colors are quite vibrant, but their heads are so ugly. They have the long, red flesh that hangs from the top of their beaks called the 'snood' in English, and the similar 'wattle' that hangs from underneath. The black and white body is more attractive, as it is nicely proportioned and looks like it is wearing a pretty skirt. That is what interests most people because, unfortunately for the turkeys, it is that part that will be served with stuffing and vegetables!

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary: to take to, to raise, on display.

1. He has taken to walking his dog every morning; it's so good for both of them.
2. I was raised on a farm, and now I am raising chickens and goats.