

READING

Do American Indians celebrate Thanksgiving?

In thinking about my earliest memories of elementary school, I remember being asked to bring a brown paper sack to class so that it could be decorated and worn as part of the Indian costume used to celebrate Thanksgiving. I was also instructed to make a less-than-authentic headband with Indian designs and feathers to complete this outfit. Looking back, I now know this was wrong.

The Thanksgiving Indian costume that all the other children and I made in my elementary classroom trivialized¹ and degraded² the descendants of the proud Wampanoags, whose ancestors attended the first Thanksgiving popularized in American culture. The costumes we wore bore no resemblance to Wampanoag clothing of that time period. Among the Wampanoag, and other American Indians, the wearing of feathers has significance. The feathers we wore were simply mockery, an educator's interpretation of what an American Indian is supposed to look like.

The Thanksgiving myth has done so much damage and harm to the cultural self-esteem of generations of Indian people, including myself, by perpetuating negative and harmful³ images to both young Indian and non-Indian minds. There are so many things wrong with the happy celebration that takes place in elementary schools and its association to American Indian culture.

Dennis W. Zotigh, www.indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com, 2012.

1. made it unimportant - 2. insulted - 3. dangerous, damaging



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METHODS :

BEFORE READING :

Look at the title and at the elements at the bottom of the text.

Write one sentence to introduce the document and one sentence to say what you think the document may or might be about.

1st reading :

Take 4 different colours and highlight words referring to :
people – places – time - verbs

What tense is mainly used ? What can you deduce ?

What tense is used at the end ?

2nde reading :

Read again and say what is the main purpose/ goal of the text.

3rd reading :

Give a title to each paragraph to show you understood the main idea.

Now, using the methods, **write a report** of the document.