

SENECA THANKSGIVING

Background A Thanksgiving ceremony was an ongoing part of the Seneca culture long before the Pilgrims arrived. The Seneca people were the largest division of the League of the Iroquois, a tribe of Native Americans. Today, about 7,000 Seneca live in New York, Ontario, and Pennsylvania.

The Ceremony The Seneca thanksgiving was a ceremony that the leaders of the group would hold when they would gather together for an important occasion. The original thanksgiving therefore was not restricted to autumn.

Here are a few of the statements of appreciation from the Seneca ceremony:

- ❖ **The earth, which holds up our feet.**
- ❖ **The young, who are taking their places among us.**
- ❖ **The elders, who share their wisdom with us.**
- ❖ **The birds, that are always free.**
- ❖ **The faith-givers, who help us in many ways.**

Interpret

Identify: Whom do the Seneca thank?

Analyze: How could you classify what the Seneca appreciate?
Label the columns in the chart. Then draw pictures to show what would fit in each column.

Infer: What else might be included in the ceremony? Add it to your chart.

Summarize: Write a sentence that summarizes your chart.

Synthesize: Write your own Chicago thanksgiving ceremony.