

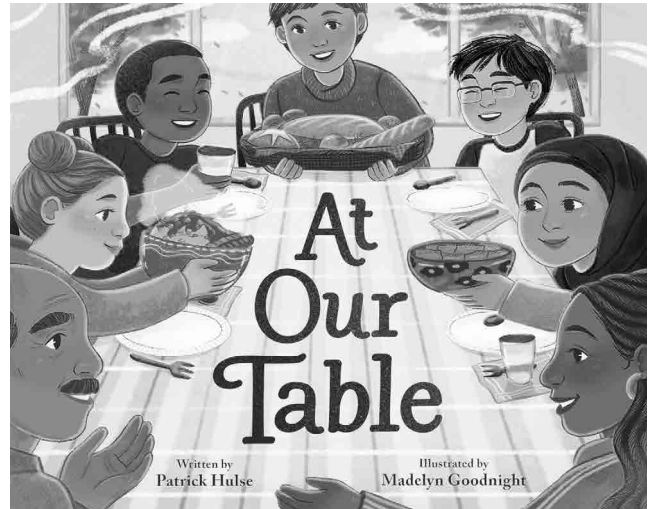
# Educator Guide: At Our Table

Written by Patrick Hulse

Illustrated by Madelyn Goodnight

Published by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

Educator guide developed by Chris Hulse



## Introduction

### Food for Thought: A New Thanksgiving Perspective

Many cultures around the world celebrate holidays similar to American Thanksgiving as a way to gather and share gratitude. In the United States, the holiday is often paired with false depictions of Indigenous people and their relationships with colonial settlers. Inaccurate stories and images of “the first Thanksgiving” hurt Native communities and paint them as figures of the past. For this reason, the United American Indians of New England instead acknowledge a National Day of Mourning each year.

A 2018 study conducted by Reclaiming Native Truth found that there is a strong need for tribally specific, contemporary content featuring Native people:

- 87% of state history standards do not mention Native American history after 1900.
- Twenty-seven states make no mention of a single Native American in their K-12 curriculum.
- 72% of Americans report rarely encountering or receiving information about Native Americans.

*At Our Table* was illustrated by Madelyn Goodnight, a tribally enrolled member of the Chickasaw Nation. On one spread, a group of First Americans is shown visiting the statue of Wampanoag tribal chief Ousamequin

to mourn and pray. The next page depicts a diverse range of Native people sharing their unique gifts: through sports, art, and more.

Thanksgiving is an opportunity to rethink how we talk about Native people in classrooms. Instead of sharing inaccurate myths about the past, we can discuss the many contributions made by real native people throughout history as well as the infinite ways they contribute to society in the present day. Additional resources to aid these conversations are available at the end of this guide.

Many people have Thanksgiving memories and traditions that they love. Looking critically at the things we love can be scary, but doing so can help all of us to better understand the holiday, our country, and each other.

## • • • • • Sample Lesson Plan • • • • •

### 1. Before Reading

#### Discuss Family Traditions

What is a family tradition?

- A family tradition is something a family does over and over again to celebrate.

Share examples of family traditions:

- Blowing out candles on a cake for birthdays
- Making tamales or baking special cookies at Christmastime
- Having an Iftar pizza party during Ramadan
- Taking a family photo on vacation

#### Discuss Perspective

Show your students a quarter. Have one child describe the head of the quarter, pointing out what they notice: a portrait of George Washington, words, and numbers.

Have another child describe the tail of the quarter. **Why did they see different things if both children were looking at a quarter?** Because they had different perspectives! It is not until we look at all sides of something that we can fully understand it.

**Perspective** is the way we look at, think about, and experience the world. People's perspectives are different because people's experiences are different.

### **Set a Purpose for Reading**

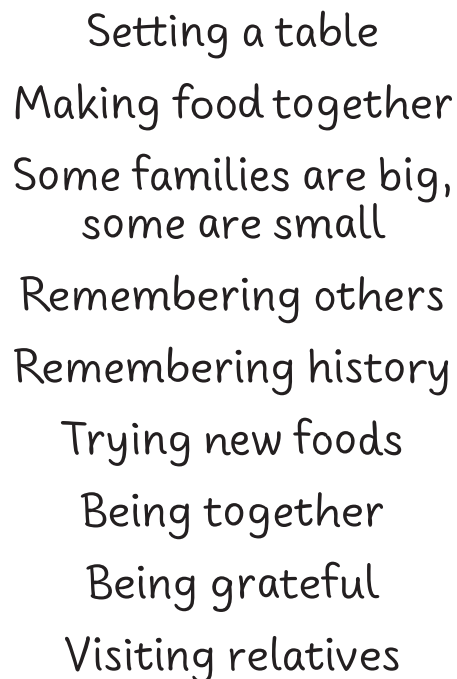
Ask students to think about the different perspectives and family traditions they see in the book as you read.

2. Actively read *At Our Table*.

3. Revisit the purpose for listening to the story.

### **Discuss themes from *At Our Table***

What were some family traditions and experiences in the book? Create a chart and list examples:



Setting a table  
Making food together  
Some families are big,  
some are small  
Remembering others  
Remembering history  
Trying new foods  
Being together  
Being grateful  
Visiting relatives

Students may have additional experiences with Thanksgiving that are not mentioned in the book:

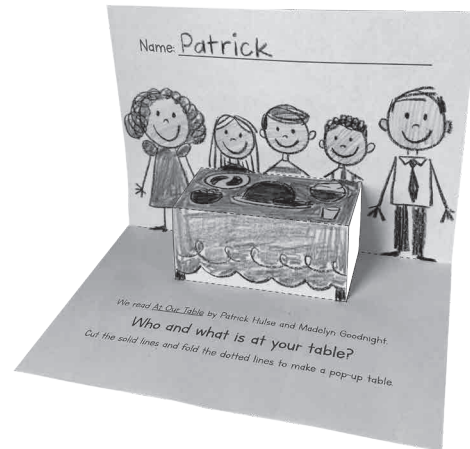
- Watching football
- Going to a parade

## 4. Individual Follow-Up Activities and Extensions

### Activities for Grades K-2

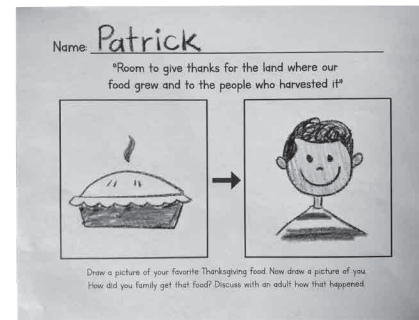
Who and what is at your table?

- Make a pop-up Thanksgiving table using the printout at the end of this guide.
- Ask students to draw and decorate their Thanksgiving table.



Where does our food come from?

- Use the worksheet at the end of this guide to discuss how food gets to the Thanksgiving table.



### Activity for Grade 2

What is your Thanksgiving perspective?

- Use the printout at the end of this guide to visualize perspective.
- Ask students to draw and describe the ways their family celebrates Thanksgiving.
- Fold and glue the worksheet to create a prism. Have students share their work with one another. Encourage them to look at all sides of their partner's perspective.



## • • • • • Additional Resources • • • • •

NCAI Becoming Visible Report

National Congress of American Indians

[https://archive.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications/NCAI-Becoming\\_Visible\\_Report-Digital\\_FINAL\\_10\\_2019.pdf](https://archive.ncai.org/policy-research-center/research-data/prc-publications/NCAI-Becoming_Visible_Report-Digital_FINAL_10_2019.pdf)

## **Reclaiming Native Truth Report**

Illuminative

<https://illuminative.org/research-action/>

## **American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving**

National Museum of the American Indian

<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/resources/American-Indian-Perspectives-on-Thanksgiving.cshhtml>

## **Meet the Three Sisters Who Sustain Native America**

Andi Murphy, PBS

<https://www.pbs.org/native-america/blog/meet-the-three-sisters-who-sustain-native-america>

## **Thanksgiving: The National Day of Mourning**

Allen Salway, Paper

<https://www.papermag.com/thanksgiving-native-american-history#rebelltitem1>

## **Sean Sherman's 10 Essential Native American Recipes**

The New York Times

[https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/04/dining/native-american-recipes-sioux-chef.html?unlocked\\_article\\_code=1.FE4.qUvB.0wATTjrf0wkh&smid=url-share](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/04/dining/native-american-recipes-sioux-chef.html?unlocked_article_code=1.FE4.qUvB.0wATTjrf0wkh&smid=url-share)

# ..... Picture Books .....

### ***Powwow Day***

Written by Traci Sorell

Illustrated by Madelyn Goodnight

### ***We Are Grateful***

Written by Traci Sorell

Illustrated by Frané Lessac

### ***Rock Your Mocs***

Written by Laurel Goodluck

Illustrated by Madelyn Goodnight

### ***We Are Still Here!***

Written by Traci Sorell

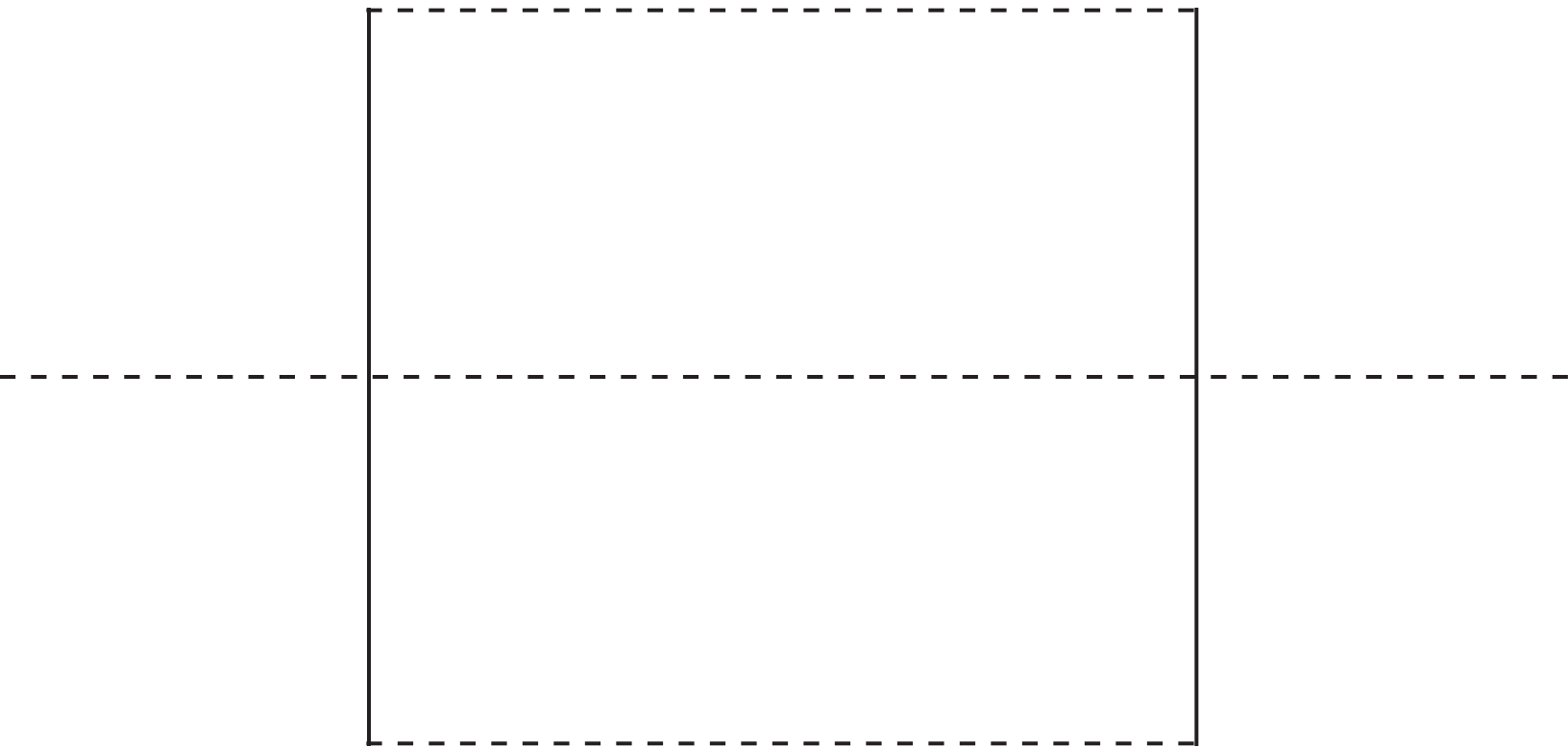
Illustrated by Frané Lessac

### ***Berry Song***

Written and illustrated by Michaela Goade

Questions about this guide? Feel free to reach out at [hulsepk@gmail.com](mailto:hulsepk@gmail.com)  
[patrickhulse.com](http://patrickhulse.com)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



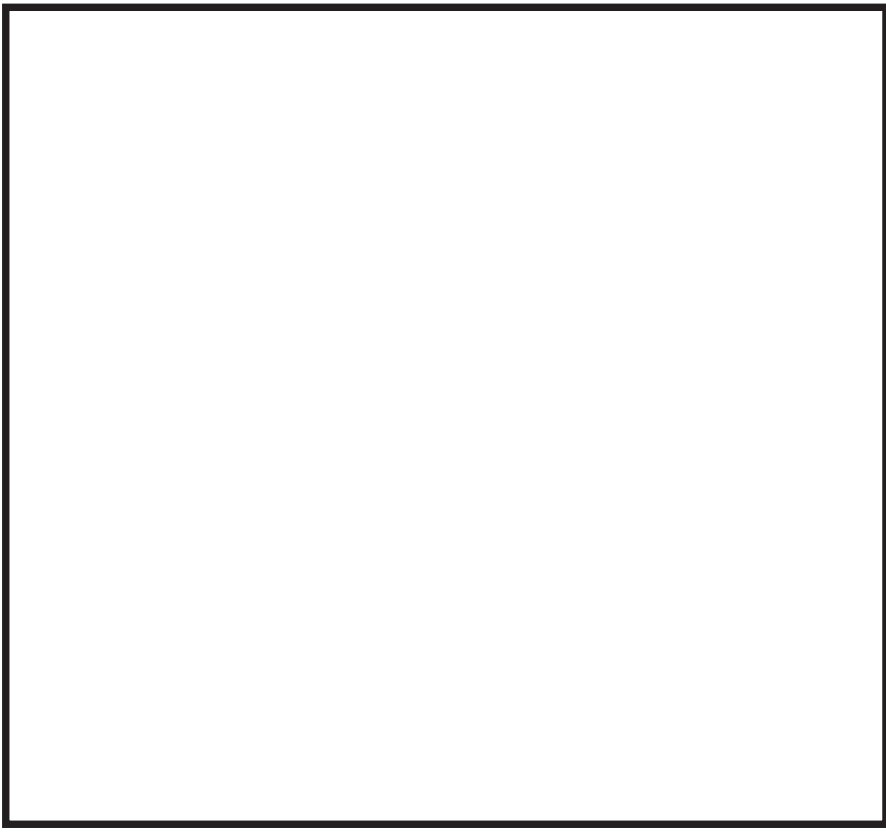
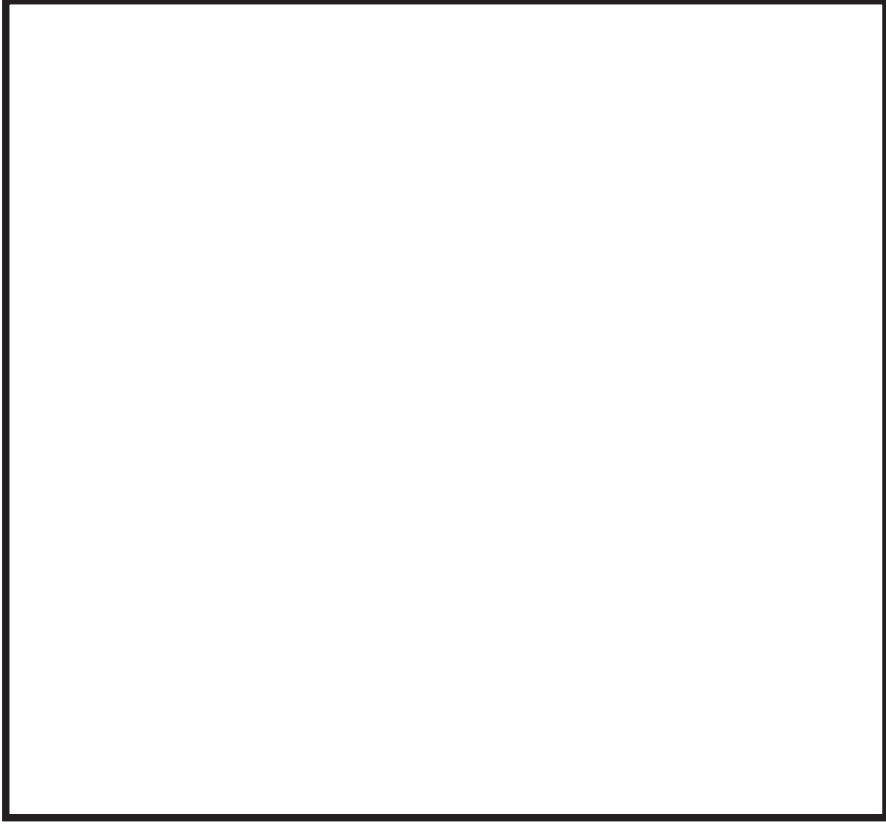
We read At Our Table by Patrick Hulse and Madelyn Goodnight.

Who and what is at your table?

Cut the solid lines and fold the dotted lines to make a pop-up table.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

“Room to give thanks for the land where our  
food grew and to the people who harvested it”



Draw a picture of your favorite Thanksgiving food. Now draw a picture of you.  
How did your family get that food? Discuss with an adult how that happened.

We read At Our Table by Patrick Hulse and Madelyn Goodnight.

How does your family celebrate Thanksgiving?

Illustrate and write your ideas to share with others.