

Thanksgiving Readers' Theater

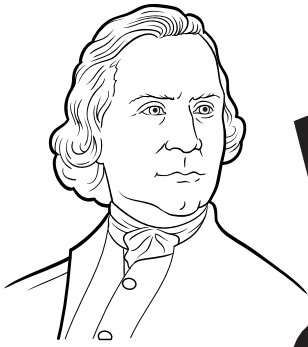
Practice oral reading skills and build comprehension with this four-character script!

Directions: Print four sets of the script and use a highlighter pen to highlight all parts for a different character on each set. Assign parts to individuals or small groups in your classroom and read aloud together.

Meeting Individual Needs

Note that the lines in the script are similar in terms of difficulty, but some vary in frequency and length. Students of all abilities can rotate character roles and try different parts. However, some students—such as struggling readers and students learning English—might need additional assistance.

To help these students, you can pair stronger readers with struggling students and learners of English, and let them read one character's lines together. The partner reinforcement will allow all students to participate fully in the activity, while helping less advanced students build confidence in their reading abilities.



IN A NEW WORLD



Characters:

Narrator

John Cooke

Miles Standish

Squanto

- Narrator:** It is winter in New England in the year 1620. A ship called the *Mayflower* is out in the bay. Some men are rowing a small boat from the ship to the beach.
- Miles Standish:** Pull the boat up here, men! See if you can find some fresh water.
- John Cooke:** I will go and look in those woods.
- Miles Standish:** Be careful, John! Watch out for Indians. They may not be friendly.
- John Cooke:** Yes, sir.
- Narrator:** The men did not know it, but someone was watching them from the trees. His name was Squanto.
- Squanto:** (speaking to himself) Who are these people? Why are they here?
- Narrator:** Squanto listened to the men talking. He could speak English, so he knew what they were saying.
- John Cooke:** I have found fresh water!

- Miles Standish:** Well done, John. This is a good place. We can build our homes here.
- Squanto:** Ah! These people have come to live here. This used to be my home. Now, they will build a town here.
- Narrator:** Squanto went back to his tribe. He told the leader, Massasoit, what he had seen. They talked about what to do. Were the English people enemies?
- Squanto:** We will keep watching them. We will see what they do.
- Narrator:** The people the Indians were watching were called Pilgrims. Over the winter, the Pilgrims built a town.
- John Cooke:** I wish spring would come! I am tired of being cold and hungry.
- Miles Standish:** This winter has been very hard. It is no wonder that so many of us are sick!
- Narrator:** Almost half of the Pilgrims died that first winter. But they did not give up.
- Miles Standish:** The *Mayflower* is going back to England soon. Will you go with them or stay here?
- John Cooke:** This is my home now. I will stay.
- Miles Standish:** Spring is almost here. We must plant our crops.
- Narrator:** The Pilgrims had brought many seeds with them. They had found corn seeds, too.
- John Cooke:** Do the Indians know we will pay them back for the corn?

- Miles Standish:** I hope so. But we have not talked to them yet. When they see us, they run away.
- Narrator:** That day, the Pilgrims met an Indian named Samoset. He spoke some English. The Pilgrims told him they wanted to be friends. Samoset took this news to Massasoit and Squanto.
- Squanto:** This is great news! We will go and talk to the English.
- Narrator:** Massasoit met with the Pilgrim leaders. They agreed that their people would help each other. Squanto taught the Pilgrims how to find food and grow crops.
- Miles Standish:** Thank you, Squanto! We have learned so much from you. Our crops are doing well.
- John Cooke:** The corn plants are taller than I am!
- Squanto:** That is because we planted fish along with the seeds.
- Miles Standish:** You have shown us other things, too. You showed us how to catch fish and where to find berries.
- John Cooke:** And how to get syrup from trees!
- Narrator:** Squanto also showed the Pilgrims how to grow beans and squash. He helped them hunt for wild turkey, deer, and other animals.
- Miles Standish:** We will have plenty of food this winter. We must have a big party! You can come and bring your families. That way, we can thank you for all your help.

- Squanto:** That would be very good! I will tell Massasoit.
- Narrator:** About 100 Indians and 50 Pilgrims came to the party. The Indians brought wild turkey and deer. The Pilgrims made corn bread and pumpkin pudding. For three days, they ate food, played games, and talked together.
- Miles Standish:** Squanto, how did you learn to speak English?
- Squanto:** I will tell you, but it is a sad story. You are not the first English people to come here.
- John Cooke:** Who came before us?
- Squanto:** People hunting for fish and furs. Some of them hunted for Indians, too. One caught me and took me to England on his ship.
- Miles Standish:** Now I know why you were afraid of us.
- Narrator:** Squanto told them about his life in England. He lived there for many years. He learned to speak English. But, he always wanted to go back to his home.
- Squanto:** Finally, I was able to come home. But when I got here, my home was gone. All of my friends and family were dead.
- John Cooke:** How sad!
- Squanto:** Yes, I was very sad. Massasoit's tribe took me in. But, I missed my family and friends.
- John Cooke:** Well, now you have us for friends!
- Squanto:** That is true! And I am thankful for it.