



**GRANDMA'S  
THANKSGIVING  
VISIT**  
A Discovery Play

*Recommended for Ages 3 to 6*  
*PreK to Grade 1*

### **A Reproducible Learning Guide for Educators**

This guide is designed to help educators prepare for, enjoy, and discuss **Grandma's Thanksgiving Visit**. It contains background, discussion questions and activities appropriate for Ages 3-6.

Programs are made possible, in part, by generous gifts from:

**The Nora Roberts Foundation**  
**Smithsonian Women's Committee**



Smithsonian Associates

[www.DiscoveryTheater.org](http://www.DiscoveryTheater.org)

## ABOUT THE SHOW

Grandma has arrived for the holiday—and that can only mean making puppets, cooking together, washing the car, and learning lots of fun new things. This musical play with a great big heart brings the whole audience into the family with singing, fingerplay, and call-and-response as we all give thanks for being together.



## ABOUT LEARNING PLAYS

Playing 'pretend' as characters in stories encourages **sequencing** (*What comes next?*), **verbal skills** and **vocabulary** (*What color flowers? Why did it happen like that?*), **math** (*How many cupcakes? Let's count the pennies we need to buy the balloon!*), **pre-science** (*What do we need to get these clothes clean?*) and **problem solving** (*Oh no! How can we help?*). Each of these skills is highlighted in plays that surround different themes (zoos, field trips, veterinarians, habitats, etc.).

## 'CRAFT' A PLAY

You can make what you saw on stage today. After our shows in schools, the Creative Tools for Teaching ensemble visits Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms to help classes craft some of the sets, props, and costumes, so they can play family too. Using **both readily available and recycled materials**, we invite audiences to "play the play" at home or in the classroom. Sing songs, make puppets, build forts, and use your imagination to bring these classic stories to life.

## FAMILY TRADITIONS

Holidays are a time to spend with family and friends reflecting on the values and beliefs of one's community and culture. *Grandma's Thanksgiving Visit* introduces early learners to pre-literacy, pre-numeracy, and inquiry based learning while exploring topics of family, tradition, and community values. Learn more about how to incorporate these topics in lesson plans on the following pages.



## MAKE A TURKEY WITH YOUR HAND!

Turkeys are a Thanksgiving icon! Use paint, markers, or any other materials to create this cute Thanksgiving gift!

### Materials:

Paper

Paint/ Markers/ Colored pencils/ Crayons/ etc.

Popsicle stick (optional)

### Instructions:

1. Paint each finger a different color and the whole palm brown
2. Carefully press your hand onto your piece of paper
3. Add an eye, a beak, and feet – and you've got your turkey!

### OR

1. Using a marker, trace the outline of your hand
2. Color in the fingers with multiple colors
3. Add an eye, a beak, and feet
4. To make a puppet – cut out the turkey once completed and glue to a popsicle stick
5. Decorate with any other materials you have available to make a unique thanksgiving turkey!



## CREATE A PLACEMAT TOGETHER!

Creating something with family and friends is a fun way to bond. Follow these instructions to make a simple placemat for your Thanksgiving feast.

### Materials:

Construction paper

Scissors

Glue

Old magazines

Family photos (use with a parent's permission)

Lamination machine or transparent tape

### Directions:

1. Cut out different pictures that represent things you are thankful for.
2. Arrange them on the construction paper and glue them down.
3. Laminate the finished product or use transparent tape to cover the pictures to make them food and waterproof.
4. Use your placemat at Thanksgiving dinner!



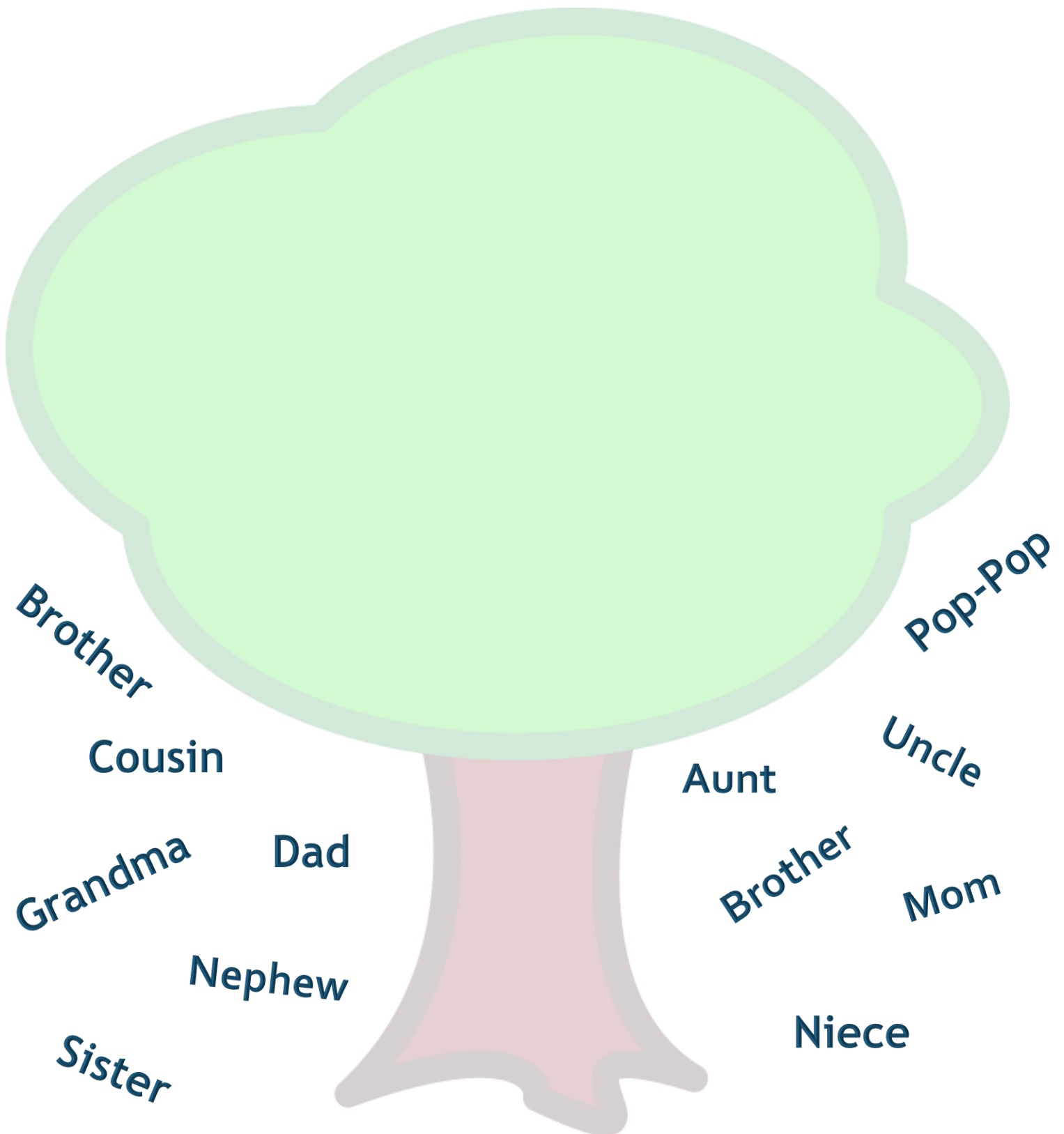
## DRAW YOUR OWN FAMILY PORTRAIT



Draw a picture of your family or a favorite holiday memory & then describe it in the space below:

## CREATE YOUR OWN FAMILY TREE

Draw pictures of each of your family members, write their names, and connect them to each other according to their relationships. Who was born first? Put them at the top of the tree.

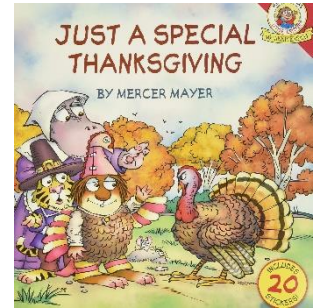


## READ...

### Little Critter: Just a Special Thanksgiving

**By:** Mercer Mayer

Little Critter is about to have a Thanksgiving he'll never forget. From the school play to a surprise dinner for all of Critterville, celebrate along with Little Critter and his family as they give thanks this holiday!



## SMITHSONIAN CONNECTIONS



### Turkey Figure

**Object type:** Sculpture/Carving

**Materials:** Pottery, paint

**Link:** [Turkey figure | Smithsonian Institution](#)

## Thanksgiving in North America - Smithsonian Institution

[Thanksgiving in North America | Smithsonian Institution](#)

## Julia Child's Kitchen

[Julia Child's Kitchen | National Museum of American History](#)



## RESOURCES

Find more activities related to the family theme here: [www.prekinders.com/families-theme/](http://www.prekinders.com/families-theme/)



Since 1979, Discovery Theater, the unique, DC-based museum theater has served as a gateway to Smithsonian exhibitions, collections, and themes. Through the joy of live stage performances, students from pre-K through 6th grade are immersed in global cultures, eco-science, living history, and traditional arts. Discovery Theater performances are created to complement students' classroom-based learning; to enrich audiences' knowledge of the arts, history, sciences, and cultures of the world; to foster a love of live theater; and to provide entertaining, educational museum-based interactive experiences.

## Don't miss our other Discovery Plays...



### Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood

Wed.-Fri., Apr. 23-25, 2025 at 10:15 and 11:30 a.m.

Recommended for Ages: 3 to 6 / PreK to Grade 1

### Jojo's Backyard Safari

Wed.-Fri., May 28-30, 2025 at 10:15 and 11:30 a.m.

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