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Winter 08-09

Thanksgiving
Reflections

The Night
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[/Letters/](#)
[/Profiles/](#)
[/Search/](#)
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A Thanksgiving Reflection By Rosemary Schmid for Her Students and Friends

Rosemary Schmid shared this note with her ESL students in Charlotte, North Carolina, and forwarded her reflections to a list of family, friends, and colleagues at Thanksgiving time. She has given her permission to have this wonderful text reprinted as an article in the ESL MiniConference newsletter.

On Thursday, parents and children and grandparents and aunts and uncles and cousins will gather to enjoy a feast of “traditional” Thanksgiving food. For many, it’s “turkey and all the trimmings,” but cultural and regional specialties are also on the table. Thanksgiving is for love of family.

Besides family gatherings, members of various religions and community groups will put together a feast and invite those who are without family, those who are poor, and those who are homeless to come in for dinner together. Anyone who comes is welcomed, no questions asked. Thanksgiving is for caring about each other.

Cities like New York and Charlotte will have Thanksgiving Day parades, with high school marching bands and clowns and people riding floats through the streets. People along the way will stand with their friends and family and strangers to enjoy the spectacle. Thanksgiving is for relaxation outdoors, with some razzle dazzle thrown in.

Football rivals will battle each other on the gridiron and the crowds in the stadium will shout and cheer and groan at missed plays. Thanksgiving is for football.

Everywhere Americans are - military folks, and travelers, and other people who are apart from the country and their loved ones will “make” a family for the day. They’ll laugh and talk about how they celebrate Thanksgiving “back home”. Thanksgiving is for “I remember when...” stories that help make new friends.

On Thursday, as Americans sit down for a feast, around many tables, the discussion will grow serious. One by one, children and adults alike will search their memories and feelings and answer a simple question: what

are YOU thankful for? Thanksgiving is for giving thanks to God and to all who have given us a reason to be grateful.

Happy Thanksgiving!

By Rosemary Schmid
Charlotte, NORTH CAROLINA

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