

## NOVEMBER

# Build a Turkey

**Activity Description:** Students will create a class turkey while celebrating things for which they are thankful.

### MATERIALS

- Paper grocery bag
- Scissors (one pair for teacher)
- Large paper feathers cut from colored paper (approximately 12" x 2", one per student)
- Crayons
- Buttons, paper scraps or other small craft items
- Glue
- Push pins/staples

### Activity Steps

**Activity Prep:** Using scissors, open the paper grocery bag. Cut out a body (including head and legs) of a turkey. Using colored paper, cut one large feather for each student.

**Step 1:** Give each student one large feather.

**Step 2:** Ask the students to think of one thing for which they are thankful. Help the students write a word or draw a picture representing this item in the center of the feather.

**Step 3:** Allow students to use craft supplies and crayons to decorate their feather.

**Step 4:** Hang the turkey body on the wall. Add students' feathers when they are dry.

### Processing Questions

- What color are most farm-raised turkeys? Listen for students to say, "white." Wild turkeys are shades of brown, but the breed of turkey most often used for meat is a broad-breasted white turkey.
- Ask students to think of the food nutrition groups. In what nutrition group does turkey belong? Listen for students to identify "protein."
- How do turkeys get to us? Listen for students to share that farmers raise them, they are taken to a grocery store/farmers' market/restaurant and we purchase them.

### Extension Opportunity

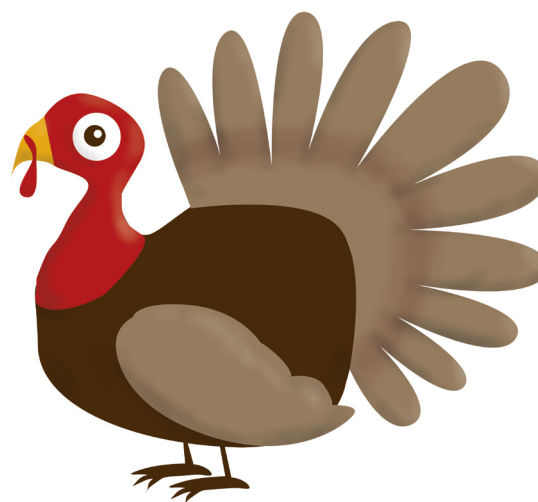
Introduce the turkey lifecycle by creating a bulleting board. Include an egg, followed by a hatching egg (28 days), young turkey, and finally a female with egg (28 weeks).

### Commodity Turkeys

**Featured State**  
Missouri

**Suggested Book**  
*Thanksgiving Is . . .*  
by Gail Gibbons

**Make a Snack!**  
Add a pickle and cream cheese to a turkey slice, roll and eat!



## Meet a Farmer!

### Don Steen

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**Don Steen**  
*Turkey Farmer, Missouri*

### Dear Students,

I'm Don Steen, and I raise turkeys in Elden, Missouri. My dad started the business in 1943. I have been working on the farm since 1973. My wife and I take care of the turkeys. There are both hen and tom turkeys. A hen is a female and a tom is a male. Water is very important to a turkey's survival. Poultry need to be able to drink water at all times. The turkeys eat a corn, soybean and mineral mix. The feed is made at a local feed mill. We have a high level of biosecurity on our farm to protect the turkeys. Cars and trucks are washed when entering and exiting the farm. My wife and I even wear special clothing in the barns to protect the turkeys too.

There is a hatchery twenty miles from our farm. When the turkeys hatch out of their eggs, they are sent to our farm. We get the chicks when they are less than a day old. We have four flocks every year. Each flock is 11,000 chicks. Once the turkeys are six weeks old we move them to a larger house. We keep the turkeys inside a large poultry house with controlled temperature. This keeps the turkeys healthy and our food safe. The turkeys are raised until they are 16 weeks old. A 16-week-old turkey is called a fryer. Hens are sold as whole birds. Toms are sold for deli meat and other cuts of meat too. Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are a busy time for our farm!

In addition to being a farmer, I have served as a Missouri State Representative and have worked in many government jobs. My wife and I love to travel the country. We also like to spend time with our grandchildren. I enjoy my work because it's a family tradition that I'm proud to be a part of.

Sincerely,  
**Don Steen**  
Turkey Farmer

