

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

# The Turkey's Lucky Day: Presidential Pardon

By Mikki Sadil

“Please, Pa, he’s my friend. I’ve raised him since he was a chick. Please don’t let Ma cook him for Thanksgiving dinner!”

This is what historians think Tad Lincoln might have said to his father, President Abraham Lincoln, about his pet turkey.

President Lin  
and allowe  
that this was  
“presidentia



George W. Bush

**PREVIEW**

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Many years passed before there was another pardon, however. Ever since 1947, the *National Turkey Federation* has presented a very large turkey to the President in a ceremony at the White House. Most of the time, the presidents have eaten the turkey. In 1963, President Kennedy said, “Let’s just keep him,” so that turkey was saved. When the first Thanksgiving of President George H.W. Bush’s term came in 1989, the President made a big show of “officially pardoning” the turkey for the first time, and for every Thanksgiving after that during his term of office.

Since that time, Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama have continued the tradition. It has become a big White House event for the President to officially pardon the turkey when it’s presented to him.

What happens to the turkeys after they are pardoned? From 1989 to 2004, the turkeys were sent to a petting zoo called Kidwell Farm, at Frying Pan Park in Herndon, Virginia. Since 2005 the turkeys have been flown to Disneyland in California. They serve as the Grand Marshals for the Disneyland Thanksgiving Parade, and after that, they spend the rest of their lives at a Disneyland ranch.



On November 26, 2009, President Barack Obama officially pardons a Thanksgiving turkey.

If you were a turkey and had just been pardoned from being the main course of someone's Thanksgiving dinner, don't you think living the rest of your life on a ranch in sunny California would be a pretty nice perk?



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1. A turkey that is pardoned....
  - a. will be eaten at the White House
  - b. will become the president's pet
  - c. will not be eaten
  - d. will be allowed to live in the yard that surrounds the white house
  
2. Why did Abraham Lincoln pardon a turkey?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What ha



4. Which turkey visited Disneyland?
  - a. the turkey pardoned by George W. Bush in 2003
  - b. the turkey pardoned in 2009 by Barack Obama
  - c. the turkey pardoned by Abraham Lincoln
  - d. the turkey pardoned in 1989 by George H. W. Bush
  
5. What happened to most of the turkeys presented to the White House between 1947 and 1963?
  - a. They were eaten.
  - b. They were pardoned.
  - c. They were given to children.
  - d. They live at the White House.

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Match each vocabulary word on the left with its definition on the right.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. chick

a. large farm where animals live

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. historians

b. place where children can feed and

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. c



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ony

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. pardon

d. baby bird

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. petting zoo

e. people who study events from long ago

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. ranch

f. save from punishment

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Grand Marshal

g. an event to celebrate an occasion; event where speeches are given

## ANSWER KEY

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1. A turkey that is pardoned.... **c**
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  - b. will become the president's pet
  - c. **will not be eaten**
  - d. will be allowed to live in the yard that surrounds the white house

2. Why did Abraham Lincoln pardon a turkey?

**His son Tad had become attached to it and begged his father not to kill it.**

3. What happened to the turkey pardoned by George W. Bush in 2003?

**It was sent to a farm in Virginia.**



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**n, Virginia.**

4. Which turkey visited Disneyland? **b**
- a. the turkey pardoned by George W. Bush in 2003
  - b. **the turkey pardoned in 2009 by Barack Obama**
  - c. the turkey pardoned by Abraham Lincoln
  - d. the turkey pardoned in 1989 by George H. W. Bush

5. What happened to most of the turkeys presented to the White House between 1947 and 1963? **a**
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