



**Opportunity**  
**Education**  
Foundation

"Educating Children Around the World"

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## GIVING THANKS FOR YAMS?

Yams, you either love 'em or hate em'. Either way, chances are good you will be celebrating with them on your Thanksgiving table.

Gathering around a Thanksgiving table is not unique to the United States. Many countries and cultures have much longer traditions of harvest or thanks giving festivities.

In South India, Pongal, is a four-day harvest festival that honors the creators of their bounty. The first day, families honor Indra, the king of rain and clouds. The Sun God is honored on the second day with a special dish called sarkkarai pongal and sugarcane stalks. On the third day, shepherds pay thanks to their livestock by painting and decorating the animals. On the final day, people travel to see family members to share their crops and give thanks for a successful harvest, much like the American tradition.



While yams may be an American Thanksgiving side-dish, in Ghana, these orange, power veggies get their own festival. To ward off famine and thank the spirits for a bountiful harvest, Ghanians gather to celebrate this vital crop by digging up the roots to be blessed by the chief. The day then follows with a ceremony to honor the deceased as well as twins and triplets in the community.

Yam dish favorites, like mashed yams with hard-boiled eggs or kpekpele (cornmeal mash and palm oil) are set upon the table while Ghanians adorned in beautiful, bright colored togs dance to ceremonial drums. Of course, families all gather together to enjoy a feast of thanksgiving, much like the American tradition.

Learn more about how your pen pals give thanks and get your students involved. Yams are common to many of your pen pals' tables. Look up international yam recipes or how to make sarkkarai pongal. Students can join in the fun of thanking the rain gods by making a rain stick. (Cover both ends of a paper towel tube, filled with dried rice and decorate it with symbols of your culture.) And of course, always gather together to give thanks for the many blessings you have!

## VISIT THE CRADLE OF HUMANITY & OEF!

The Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania may be where humans got their start, but OEF loves Tanzania for another reason.

Our first OEF school, Sotwa Wilson School, was founded in Arusha, where we will be visiting schools and taking a safari – hopefully with you, in July, 2014!

The OEF Education Experience Trip, July 2014 is open to educators, high school/college students, professionals – anyone willing to share their English skills & experience.

The trip includes spending time Monday through Friday teaching, learning and sharing in OEF schools followed by a 3 day safari to some incredible wildlife parks (see links below).



### **Ngorongoro Crater**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ngorongoro\\_Conservation\\_Area](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ngorongoro_Conservation_Area)

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/39>

### **Tarangire National Park**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarangire\\_National\\_Park](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarangire_National_Park)

<http://www.tanzaniaparks.com/tarangire.html>

The 12 day trip is scheduled for July 10 to July 21, 2014. An estimate of total trip cost is \$3,500–\$4,500. The estimated cost includes all lodging, food and travel. The majority of this cost is airfare (about \$3,000) – and we are still negotiating group airfare rates.

We will be offering scholarships, for more information, email [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org)

We had an awesome experience in Uganda and Ghana – and we encourage you to watch the videos on our website (linked below) to learn more.

<http://www.opportunityeducation.org/videos/load/ugandashort/> and

<http://www.opportunityeducation.org/videos/load/ugandalong/>

The following video tells the stories of students that we strive to serve – stories like these are what you will discover on our Education Experience Trip in Tanzania.

<http://www.opportunityeducation.org/videos/lost-children/>

Please email [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org) if you have any questions and forward this email or [brochure](#) to anyone you think might be interested in going.

Still deciding...take the words of Cathy Intemann, a two-time OEF trip participant (who will hopefully make it three)!

"Do not hesitate to come if you want to immerse yourself in another culture and if you want more than a tour. You will learn in ways you could never anticipate and you will receive more than you could ever give. And OEF and their staff will insure that you are well-cared for and that you will have an unforgettable experience. Do not miss this Opportunity for your own education."



## THIS SCHOOL NEEDS PEN PALS!

WAMA-Nakayama Secondary School is located in Tanzania.

The school was established in 2010 through the efforts of the First Lady of Tanzania, H.E. Mama Salma Kikwete, who solicited funds from different donors. The school is serving marginalized girls who might not otherwise be able to attend school.

OEF was recently honored by a visit from Tanzania's First Lady where she shared her vision for the future of education in Tanzania.

OEF is also proud to be developing a digital tablet to be used in secondary schools, including WAMA.

Writing letters to this school is an excellent opportunity to learn more than textbooks or even the internet can offer...just email us and we will put a Welcome Folder in the mail to you today!

Email [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org) and you can start writing today!

If you already have a pen pal, refer a friend to our [OEF Pen Pal](#) link.

If you prefer a different school, simply email us and note what grade and country you would like to write to and we can get you writing, right away!



The First Lady of Tanzania, H.E. Mama Salma Kikwete celebrating with students at WAMA

## WELCOME NEW SCHOOLS

We welcome the following schools to our free, international pen pal program which is a fun and easy way to meet Language Arts, Social Studies and History/Civics standards  
[share this link to invite others to join.](#)

A special thanks to all the wonderful educators who joined our pen pal program during the Utah Education Conference and at The Association for Middle Level Education Conference!

Welcoming the following schools to OEF!

Qingdao Amerasia International School, Qingdao, China

Cheonggok Elementary School, South Korea

SMA Kristen 2, Indonesia

Lake Taylor Middle School, Norfolk, VA

Madison West HS, Madison, WI

Rumford Elementary School, Rumford, ME

Gloucester High School, Gray, ME

Thomas Jefferson MS, Dubuque, IA

Southeast Polk Jr High, Pleasant Hill, IA

The Altamont School, Birmingham, AL

Thomas Middle School, Arlington Heights, IL

Three Rivers Educational Campus, Cleves, OH

Seward Middle School, Seward, NE

Kenyon Wanamingo, Kenyon, MN

LaSalle Middle School, Cedar Rapids, IA

Red Lake Middle School, Red Lake, MN

Visitation School, Mendota Heights, MN

LaCrescent MS, LaCrescent, MN

Rock Valley Community School, Rock Valley, IA

Hamlin School, Hayti, SD

Phelps School District, Phelps, WI

Peoria Christian Middle School, Peoria Heights, IL

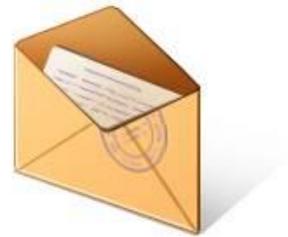
Daniel Wright Junior High School, Lincolnshire, IL



We have hundreds of schools waiting for pen pal partners email today and start writing tomorrow or stop by and visit me in Boston at the NCTE conference, November 22-24.

## FEATURED SCHOOL & GIFT CERTIFICATE WINNER

Congrats to Maria I.  
a great pen pal educator from Clear Creek High School in Evergreen,  
Colorado!



On behalf of your pen pals from Nepal, thank you for sending letters. Send me an email at [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org) to claim your prize!

Want to win next month?

Just email [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org) after you mail your letters and you are entered to win!

## START WRITING – RIGHT NOW!

Start your year off right by writing your pen pals!

No lesson plan is needed, but if you need one – we have them!

Writing letters is a perfect activity to keep students productive during homeroom, study hall or downtime.

You can also integrate cross-curricular objectives into lesson plans that we have created to maximize learning through letters.

[Click Here for Letter Ideas and Resources](#)

[Click Here for Letter Lesson Plans](#)



We also have 4 options to stay up to date with our international pen pal program.

OPTION 1: To keep up with our "Friends" – we have a Facebook page just for you!  
Visit our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/OpportunityEducation>

OPTION 2: Unable to get on Facebook? No worries.  
Visit our Pen Pal Blog. <http://opportunityeducation.wordpress.com/>

OPTION 3: Pinterest. <http://www.pinterest.com/opportunityed/>

OPTION 4: Twitter. <https://twitter.com/OpEdFoundation>

Check out our social media for interesting ideas, stories, and links to help generate enthusiasm and discussion about education plus lesson plans to integrate pen pal letters into your standard requirements.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

### Write Your Pen Pals!

Even if it's been a while, now is still the best time to write. The name, address and mailing instructions are available on our website start by [clicking here](#).

You can also email:

[Schools@OpportunityEducation.org](mailto:Schools@OpportunityEducation.org)



### Get Others to Write!

We have 421 schools very eager to have English speaking pen pals.

Share the following link – and make sure you CC [schools@opportunityeducation.org](mailto:schools@opportunityeducation.org) – to get a gift certificate.

[Click Here to Refer A Friend and Get a Gift Certificate!](#)

### Visit an Opportunity Education School!

Take a life-changing trip to teach, share and learn in an Opportunity Education school in Africa or India.

[Click Here to Learn More.](#)

TERESA ROLL  
OUTREACH & SISTER SCHOOL COORDINATOR  
OPPORTUNITY EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
[www.OpportunityEducation.org](http://www.OpportunityEducation.org)  
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*STAY CONNECTED*

