



4 Eco-friendly Thanksgiving Activities for Kids to Celebrate and Express Gratitude

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Thanksgiving creates a perfect opportunity for parents to spend quality time with their kids while teaching them how to reflect on what's important and express their gratitude. Last month, we discussed wholesome ways to celebrate Halloween by creating sustainable, DIY costumes. This month, let's continue to explore ways to create fun, fall decorations and crafts by reusing materials found around the house.

Keep reading below to find Thanksgiving-inspired DIY ideas to craft with your kids this November. Many of the activities will take you and your little learner on an adventure outside to gather natural materials, while others will allow you to recycle and reuse everyday items to create meaningful decorations. All the while, enjoy quality time together and discuss the importance of the Thanksgiving holiday and careful approach to nature.

1. A Fall Nature Collage Cornucopia

Enjoy a nature walk outside to gather materials for this exciting collage!



Materials Needed:

- Old cardboard, such as from a shipping box
- Hot glue gun and glue
- Markers or crayons (optional)
- Collage materials from outside (varies)
- Bucket, basket, or bag to collect items

What to do:

First, find an old shipping box, hot glue gun with glue, and markers and put aside to use once all the collage materials are collected. Then head outside with your kids to go on a nature walk! Instruct children to be on the lookout for anything that catches their eye and would make a beautiful collage. They can find and collect small stones, leaves, twigs, acorns, flowers, or anything else that can naturally be found in nature, but please, no bugs or any other living creatures! Gather the items in a bucket or basket and head back inside to make the collage. Help learners arrange the items on the cardboard and glue using the hot glue gun. Use markers to give the collage a name and optionally label all the items! Display the collage in the house as a festive fall decoration!

2. A Thankful Tree

Teach your child the meaning of gratitude with this meaningful Thanksgiving project that can be displayed across the entire holiday season!



Materials Needed:

- Old cardboard, such as from a shipping box
- A paper towel roll
- Scissors
- Glue
- Sticks gathered from outside
- Yarn
- Hole punch
- Construction paper or cardboard

What to do:

Help kiddos cut about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the paper towel roll and glue the bottom upright to the old cardboard. Next, gather sticks outside, making sure to choose those that aren't too long or thick to fit in the paper towel roll. Try to find sticks that are at least double the length

of the paper towel roll, when standing up. Once back inside, place the sticks inside the roll. Using construction paper or cardboard, instruct children to cut out leaf shapes that can be hung from the sticks like ornaments. Have them write something they are thankful for on each “leaf”! Punch a hole in each leaf and use the thread to make an ornament hanger. Affix the leaves to the tree and encourage learners to attach a new leaf each day!

3. A Thanksgiving Treat Jar

Why buy new jars or bowls for holding desserts and treats when kids can easily make their own from reused items? This project is a great way to create something meaningful and functional!



Materials Needed:

- Construction paper
- Crayons or markers
- Scissors
- Googly eyes, craft feathers, pom poms (optional)
- Hot glue gun and glue

- Old pasta, preserves, or mason jars (and lids)

What to do:

Carefully clean and dry the old jars. Help kids measure and cut out strips of construction paper that can cover the jars before using glue to wrap the strips around them. Using crayons, markers, and any other optional materials, encourage learners to decorate the jars any way they like! They can create Turkey faces using googly eyes and by drawing a beak and glueing feathers to the back to make it look like a turkey tail, or they can simply decorate them using fall colors and any materials they would like. Use the jars on Thanksgiving Day to store small treats like pieces of candy, small cookies, or appetizers.

4. A Soda Bottle Cornucopia

Your kids will love making this table centerpiece that can be used before and during Thanksgiving dinner!



Materials Needed:

- A 2-liter soda bottle, empty and cleaned
- Sharp scissors (for parent use only!)

- Brown construction paper
- Tape
- Markers or crayons (optional)
- Colorful items to fill the cornucopia! These can be hand-made can be real fruits and vegetables!

What to do:

To get started, cut the spout off the soda bottle to create a wider opening. Parents only for this part, please! Afterwards, instruct kids to use wrap the construction paper around the bottle, securing with tape. Cover the entire bottle and be sure that extra paper hangs off the end (or bottom) of the soda bottle. Simply pinch the loose ends together to form a pointed end, like a cornucopia. Children can choose to decorate the cornucopia by drawing lines to make it more realistic. Fill the cornucopia with hand-made items, toy food, or real fruits and vegetables. Set it in the middle of the dinner table to make it a cute centerpiece!

If you're looking for some holiday-related brain teasers for your little ones, head over to [Kids Academy to find a whole host of Thanksgiving-themed online learning worksheets!](#)

From all of us here at Kids Academy, we wish you and your family a happy Thanksgiving! Keep checking back for more ideas and learning activities all throughout the holiday season!

