LIFE AFTER ABA CLASSROOM · PRINTABLES CLUB



# THANKSGIVING SENSORY BINS PACK

A friendly, low-prep November printable for sensory play + calm moments

### 5 No-Stress Thanksgiving Bins

Simple ideas using easy-to-find supplies.

### 🔍 Thanksgiving Texture Hunt

Explore soft, squishy, bumpy and more.

### 🌬️ Calm Corner + Breathing Cards

Quick visual breathing prompts for home, school or therapy.

### 🧡 Low-Cost + Flexible

Swap materials to fit age, preference and sensory needs.

**Designed for:** parents, caregivers, educators and professionals supporting sensory needs.

**Tip:** Laminate the texture hunt, breathing cards and visual schedule for repeat use.

WHAT'S INSIDE · 7 PAGES

1 · Cover  2–3 · 5 No-Stress Bin Recipes  4 · Thanksgiving Texture Hunt
5 · Calm Corner + Breathing Cards  6 · Quick Setup Guide  7 · Big-Day Visual Schedule (optional)


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# 5 No-Stress Thanksgiving Sensory Bin Recipes

Keep it simple: choose a shallow bin, add one base material, a few themed objects and a scoop or tongs.

**Always select materials that are appropriate for the person's age, developmental level and mouthing risk.**

## 1. Harvest Corn Scoop Bin 🌽

**Base:** dried corn kernels, dried beans or lentils

**Add:** scoops, cups, small baskets, silk fall leaves, mini craft pumpkins

**Play ideas:** scoop and pour, fill and dump, sort by color, hide-and-find the pumpkins, practice in/out and full/empty.

**Easy swap:** use crinkled paper shreds or fall-color pom-poms as the base — a fully non-food bin.

## 2. Pumpkin Pie Oobleck Bin 🥧

**Base:** oobleck — mix 2 cups cornstarch with about 1 cup water (a pinch of pumpkin pie spice if scent is welcome)

**Add:** pie tins, spoons, whisks, cookie cutters, droppers

**Play ideas:** stir, pour, "bake" pies, watch it ooze and firm up, draw shapes and watch them melt away.

**Easy swap:** put the oobleck in a sealed zip-top bag for a no-mess squish — same feel, zero cleanup.

## 3. Turkey Feather Pom-Pom Bin 🦃

**Base:** large pom-poms in red, orange, yellow and brown

**Add:** cups, muffin tin, tweezers or tongs, craft feathers, turkey face cards

**Play ideas:** color sort, "feed the turkey," make patterns, transfer games, quiet repetitive scooping.

**Easy swap:** this is already a great non-food option — the same pom-poms return every season.

## 4. Cranberry Scoop Bin 🍒

**Base:** cranberries in water (fresh or frozen — they float, sink and bounce)

**Add:** ladles, whisks, clear cups, ice cube tray, small strainers

**Play ideas:** scoop, strain, splash gently, count berries into cups, watch them bob and dance.

**Easy swap:** trade berries for large red pom-poms or red felt balls in a dry bin.



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# 5 No-Stress Thanksgiving Sensory Bin Recipes

### 5. Gratitude Leaves Water Bin 🍂

**Base:** water with a drop of yellow or orange food coloring

**Add:** silk leaves (write one thing you're thankful for on each with a marker), ladle, droppers, small bowls

**Play ideas:** fish out leaves, float and sink, sort by color, stir and pour, read the thankful words together.

**Easy swap:** skip the color — plain water with a ladle and cups is just as engaging.

## Quick tips for a happy bin

- ☐ **Start small** — a few cups of base material is plenty.
- ☐ **Model first** — show one play idea, then step back and let your person lead.
- ☐ **Store it lidded** — most bins keep for another day if you seal them.

**Sensory choice matters:** it is okay to observe, use a tool, wear gloves, or skip a texture. Bins are invitations, not requirements.



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# Thanksgiving Texture Hunt

Explore your home, classroom, a family dinner or a fall walk. Check each box when you find something that matches the sensory clue.

- ☐ Something soft
- ☐ Something squishy
- ☐ Something bumpy
- ☐ Something that smells like fall spices
- ☐ Something warm
- ☐ Something cool
- ☐ Something smooth
- ☐ Something crunchy
- ☐ Something that makes a quiet sound
- ☐ Something that makes a loud sound
- ☐ Something orange
- ☐ Something brown or red
- ☐ Something you can squeeze
- ☐ Something light
- ☐ Something heavy
- ☐ Something that makes you feel calm

My favorite sensory find:

_____

One texture I want to try again:

_____

One texture I would rather skip:

_____

🖍️ Draw it!

Draw your favorite sensory find — or the bin you want to make next.

**Sensory choice matters:** it is okay to observe, use a tool, wear gloves, or skip a texture.



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# My Calm Corner + Thanksgiving Breathing Cards

Hang the mini-poster where your person can see it, and cut apart the cards. Practice when calm so the pattern feels familiar when extra regulation is needed.

## MY CALM CORNER

This is my calm corner. I can:

- ☐ take slow breaths
- ☐ hold something soft
- ☐ ask for a break
- ☐ come back when I'm ready

### TURKEY BREATH

Fluff up like a turkey.
**Breathe in** slowly through your nose for 4 as you puff up your feathers.
**Breathe out** long and slow for 5 as they settle.
Repeat 3 times.

### PIE-SLICE TRACE

Picture a pie cut into slices.
**Trace one slice up** as you breathe in.
**Trace back down** as you breathe out.
Move around the pie — one slice per breath.

### WISHBONE STRETCH

Reach your arms **up tall like a wishbone**.
Hold for **3 slow breaths**.
Then fold gently forward and rest.
Repeat if you need it.

### CIDER SIP

Pretend to hold a warm mug.
**Breathe in** and "smell the cider" for 4.
**Breathe out** and "cool it" for 5.
Repeat 3 times.

**Reminder:** Never force deep breathing. If breathing exercises feel uncomfortable, try a different calming strategy such as stretching, squeezing a pillow, rocking, listening to music or taking a quiet break.



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# Quick Thanksgiving Sensory Setup Guide

Use this page as a simple planning sheet for future sensory play.

1. **Pick a base**
   corn kernels • beans • pom-poms • oobleck • water • paper shreds
2. **Add 3–5 items**
   silk leaves • scoops • pie tins • cups • feathers • ladles
3. **Add a simple goal**
   scoop • sort • match • count • find • pour • pretend
4. **Offer choice**
   hands • scoop • tongs • gloves • observe • skip
5. **Keep cleanup easy**
   tray underneath • towel nearby • small portions • lidded storage

**NOTES**

**Printable use note:** Adult supervision is recommended. Avoid choking hazards, allergens, sharp natural materials, and any item that is unsafe for the individual's age or sensory profile.



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# Big-Day Visual Schedule

Thanksgiving day can be big. Lay the day out in order, point to each card as it happens, and let your person cross it off or move it to "done."

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 🛏️ **Wake up** | 🚗 **Travel to family** | 🤗 **Arrival & hellos** |
| 🍽️ **Dinner time** | 🧘 **Quiet break** | 🌙 **Wind-down & pajamas** |

## Cut-out choice cards

Cut the cards below apart. Hand them to your person so they can make a choice without needing words.

🚗 Time to go | 🍽️ Dinner | 🧘 Quiet break | ✋ All done

### 📝 My Thanksgiving plan

Who we'll see:

_____

One thing I want to do:

_____

One thing I can skip if it gets too big:

_____

**It is okay to skip the big dinner entirely.** A quiet plate at home with a favorite bin counts too.



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