

An autumn book basket

Five picture books for slow afternoons, changing leaves, and cozy read-alouds. A starting shelf for preschool and early elementary families.

Borrow a few from your library, find a blanket, and begin.

01 Goodbye Summer, Hello Autumn

Written and illustrated by Kenard Pak

A walk through woods and town becomes a gentle welcome to the changing season.

Make together: Autumn window: Sandwich fallen leaves between two sheets of clear sticky paper. Hang your little woodland window in the light.

02 Leaves

Written and illustrated by David Ezra Stein

A young bear experiences his first autumn and wonders about the falling leaves.

Make together: A bed for Bear: Draw a sleeping bear on paper, then tuck him under a blanket of torn tissue-paper leaves.

03 Apple Cake

Dawn Casey · Illustrated by Genevieve Godbout

A child gives thanks for nature's gifts as a family gathers ingredients for an apple cake.

Make together: Gratitude apples: Cut paper apples together, draw something you love on each, and tape them into a garland for your reading nook.

04 Too Many Pumpkins

Linda White · Illustrated by Megan Lloyd

An unwanted pumpkin patch leads to a generous harvest and a gathering of neighbors.

Make together: Storybook pumpkins: Glue orange paper circles onto a card, add curly paper vines, and draw tiny doors for a pumpkin village.

05 The Leaf Thief

Alice Hemming · Illustrated by Nicola Slater

Squirrel wonders who is taking his leaves in a playful story about autumn and change.

Make together: Woodland puppet: Draw a squirrel on card, add a curled paper tail, and tape it to a craft stick for a tiny leaf-theft puppet show.

Craft with a grown-up for cutting and assembly. Tap each title for its publisher page: Macmillan, Penguin Random House, Quarto, or Sourcebooks. Original craft ideas by Wildflower Motherhood.