

Welcome Bulletin Boards

A Bright Bunch

"On the first day I take a digital photo of each of my kids wearing sunglasses. I print off a copy of each on circles - my photo editing program has this option - about 6 inches (15 cm.) in diameter. I mount the pictures on suns, and label the bulletin board 'I have a hunch, This is a bright bunch!'"

A Spotlight

"I made a picture of a large spotlight, and then yellow paper for the light widening across a black background. Then I have the names of all the students at the end of the light. You could have photos or self-drawings of the students, too. I titled the board 'Grade Two is in the spotlight!'"

Acrostics

"I have my Grade Three students write acrostics using the letters in the first names. They print their names going down the page in fancy print - bubble letters are usually the most popular - and then print a word or words beginning with each letter that describes the student. For some letters we brainstorm ideas."

My Summer Vacation

"I have my kids decorate a paper plate with their name and pictures of what they did on their vacations. I make a bulletin board look like a picnic table, with a red and white checkered cloth and then set the table with the plates around the edge. In the middle was a list of vocabulary words. Then we decorated the whole thing with small black ants!"

Fall into Grade One

"I made a tree with falling leaves with the students' names on them. The leaves could be hand prints in fall colours."

"I set up a white background by putting up white paper on the wall and the floor. Then I took photos of the kids pretending to fall. They had great fun with this! Some pretended to fly, and others pretended to fall forward or bent backwards. Then I printed the pictures and we cut around them and then mounted them on a white bulletin board with falling autumn leaves. The pictures were adorable, and I got a lot of compliments and laughs from the parents!"

Apples for the Teacher!

"We do an apple theme in September, so I do an apple bulletin board to greet the kids. I cut out a lot of large apples - maybe 6 inches across - in red, yellow and apple green. On the first day we talk about the colour of the apples and the children tell me their favourite coloured apple. I print the names on the apples. Then I put them in a big apple tree on the bulletin board. We graph the colours and do some math with the numbers. It gives me an idea of the math knowledge the children have."

You are Tee-riffic!

"I put up a 'clothesline' across the back of my classroom. I pre-cut t-shirt shapes in different pastel colours of paper, and on the first day each child chose a shirt and decorated it with their name, pictures or other designs. We hung the finished shirts on the clothesline with coloured clothespins. They are very cute!"

Me!

"I have my Grade Threes write a story about themselves but without their names, and while they are doing this I trace their silhouettes on black construction paper, using the overhead projector. Then they cut out the silhouette and it is mounted with the anonymous person description. I put them up on a bulletin board in the hall, and the parents read the board and try to find their own child."



Nice

Always on time

Terrific

Actress

Likes to read

Interesting

Everyone's friend!

Bulletin Boards

Our Apple Orchard or The Apples of My Eye!

Make a large tree from brown butcher paper. Make the branches wider than you want them and then scrunch them in your hands lengthwise so they look three dimensional and have ridges along them. Cut out large apples, one for each child. Put a child's photo on each and the names.

Here's a Great Bunch!

Cut out purple circles about 9" (22 cm.) in diameter. Outline with black pen. Print a student's name on each. Pin them up to form a cluster of grapes. Add a green stem and leaves. Take several 3" green circles and cut to the centre in a spiral. Add these to the stems.



Fall into Reading!

Print this poem: The leaves are falling One by one. Summer's over School's begun. Cut out (or purchase) brightly coloured autumn leaves and print a child's name on each. Staple these falling leaves at random over the board. Or.... in the first week have the students fingerpaint on 9 x 12 paper in orange, yellow and red. When dry, cut out leaves as large as possible. (You can draw the shape on the back of the paper and they can cut them out.)

Grade _____ is Hopping With Excitement! or Leap Into Grade _____!

or Welcome to Our Pad!

On a blue background, cut out light green lily pads and dark green frogs.

Swinging into Grade _____

Have the students draw themselves on a swing... or go out to the playground on the first day and take a digital picture of each child on the swing, pretending to be swinging high. Print them out on plain paper - and if you want to save ink, in black and white.

Welcome to School!

May this school year bring You happiness galore, And may you enjoy it Right to the core!
Have a large apple core on the bulletin board and add the students' names.

Welcome to Our Bear-y Wonderful Class! or You Are Bear-y Special!

Print each child's name on a picture of a bear or teddy bear.

Blast Off into Grade _____

Draw a very large rocket ship with lots of windows. Put a photograph of each child's face looking out a window. Make the background black or dark blue and decorate with stars and planets.



A Class With Many Flavours!

Have ice-cream cones with a great variety of ice-cream colours.

Our School!

Photocopy an outline of a cute fish. Print each child's name with black felt pen, and then have the students colour them as brightly as possible.

Bulletin Boards

Most primary teachers cover bulletin boards with the coloured butcher paper and a fancy purchased edging. This is attractive and easy, of course - but there are other things you can use to cover those ugly spaces!

Fabric is great. Stretch it out and staple it. It doesn't fade or show staple holes like paper, and can be taken down and washed to use next year. Use a pastel or single colour or a simple not-too-busy pattern if you want people to focus on the bulletin board material. There are lots of fabrics that are great for themes, seasons or holidays. You can also find fabrics with texture - velvets, burlap, felt, etc. Check the remnant bins for bargains, too!

Sheets, table cloths or curtains bought at discount stores are good.....

You can buy shower curtains at dollar stores - these can be written on - see page 17 for ideas to use these.

Gift wrap, newspaper, comic book pages, magazine pages are interesting.

Look through wallpaper bins for discontinued lots. These can be interesting and fun. Wallpaper borders are also great for decorating. Just staple these!

If you are in an older school, paint your bulletin boards! Give them several coats - then you can add stencils to make it more interesting if you wish.

Welcome!

Put up a 'Welcome' bulletin board for your new class! Here are some ideas.....

One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish.

Here are Ms. Peter's new fish!

Cut out large coloured fish and put the kid's names on them. Add pictures after the first day! Maybe you could draw ones like the ones in the book.

http://www.robinsonschools.com/wes/teachers/1/corn/august_september.htm

Here is an alphabet bulletin board with the kids' pictures. Neat!

For Grade 2 or 3 - make a cross word of all the names so everyone connects. The students can do it for a first day project. Give out a page with squares to print in.

Make green frogs in a pond.....*I'm so hoppy you are here!*

On the first day take a picture of each student wearing sunglasses. Enlarge just the heads on the computer and print out - cut around the heads and put up on a board - head it 'We're Cool!'

Have little ducklings and a mother duck (you!). The board could be titled, 'Waddle We Do This Year?' 'Waddle into a Cool Class', etc.

A simple bulletin board can have stars - "Ms. _____'s All-Stars!" or 'We're off to the stars' or 'Reach for the stars!'.

Grade Threes will like a bulletin board with jeans for each one and the label, "Grade Three Jean-iuses".

"On the first day read the book *Chrysanthemum*. We talk about the students' names and the number of letters in each. We graph our names by the number of letters. Who has the longest name? Who has the shortest? Then we do flowers. They trace a circle for the centre and print their name in it. Then I have pre-cut petals - some wide and some thin, and they glue the number of petals behind the circle as they have letters in their names. We talk about the petal size and the best choices."



Bulletin Boards

Take pictures on the first day of all the students with big smiles, or have them draw their smiling faces. Talk about smiles being catching. Can you catch my smile?

“I do a bulletin board with fish. The slogan is ‘One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish. Welcome Mrs. Capra’s new fish!’”

For an ocean theme: “Making a big splash in Grade ____!”

“Make a frog bulletin board... ‘I’m so HOPPY to be in (Grade One, Three, etc.) or ‘Welcome to Our Pad’ - little frogs on lily pads, or ‘A Toadally Awesome Class!’

“I used a red and white picnic table tablecloth, and cut out ants and the food bowls were math, spelling, reading, writing, etc....e.g. Grade Three will Be a Picnic....”

“Make stars with the children’s names and a place to put a picture on them after you take them the first day of school...and the heading... ‘Twinkle Twinkle Little Stars’.”

“I am getting a combination Grade 2/3 class this coming year. I want to do a BB with combination locks. We will talk about how to use the real combination locks - and then I can tie in math combinations, word combinations in compound words, etc. We could brainstorm a list of different places you might use a combination lock.”

“I’m thinking of doing an Autumn themed bulletin board to welcome the students. I could title it, ‘I’m Falling for You!’ with the word ‘falling’ printed down as if the letters are falling. The children’s pictures and names are on big leaves, also falling.”

Trace and cut-out hands, with photos or self-portraits of the students make a cute bulletin board, with the title, ‘Meet our HANDsome Class!’ or ‘Meet the Handy-Dandy Class’.

“I made each student’s name in big bubble letters. In Word, go to ‘Format’ then to ‘Font’ and then check off ‘outline’. I used Comic Sans for the font. I made them as big as I could on legal paper and printed them. Then they decorated the letters with crayon, or the fancy pens that I don’t use other times - glitter pens, etc. I cut out around the names and put them up on a bulletin board the first day. They had great fun with this and the board looked nice!”

“I like using the *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* tree, with the letters of their first names and their photos. I teach the book in the first week.”

“I drew a large coconut tree. I made the board to look like the cover of the book. I used the first letter of each child’s name and had it going up the tree with a picture of the student attached to the letter. I had the rest of the alphabet in a pile beneath the tree. I did have some letters more than once because, of course some children’s names begin with the same letter. It was very colourful!”

And..... ‘Blast Off for a Great Year’ - rockets

‘Mrs. ___’s Bunch’ - balloons (you could have a clown holding them – the teacher!)

‘Mrs. _____’s New Crop’ - apples on a tree or another harvest fruit or vegetable

‘Stepping into Grade One’ - shoes

Apples on a tree with ‘We are a great bunch!’

**You cannot give a smile away,
No matter what you do.
Every time you smile at me
I give it back to you.**



More About Bulletin Boards

“I like to put up several layers of paper on the bulletin boards before school begins. I put a spring colour on first, with a border, then cover it with blue for winter (or red for Christmas and Valentines Day) with its border, covered with an Autumn colour - orange for fall leaves and Halloween. Then all I have to do is pull down the top one and the second one is fresh behind it. I have more time in the summer to do this, and it is such a treat to be able to change boards quickly the rest of the year!”

“When I teach Grade Two or Three, I have a special bulletin board where I put up posters to help the students who need clues to different parts of the curriculum - how to subtract with re-grouping, the meanings of the words synonyms, antonyms, etc. These are there for the kids to refer to when needed.”

“I have a small bulletin board, too. It has an up-to-date seating plan, a weekly schedule with times, a calendar with things to remember - meetings, holidays, birthdays, etc.”

Use a variety of backgrounds for your boards - fabric, wrapping paper, newspaper, aluminum foil, wallpaper, etc.

Make sure your bulletin boards are up-to-date and relevant. Tidy, too! If you have problems putting things up in straight lines, make them deliberately angled.

Every student should be able to read all the print around your classroom - this may take some time in Kindergarten and Grade One, but words are useless if they cannot be read. Go over the print every day until the children are all perfectly familiar with the words. Then they can 'read the room' and these words become part of their reading vocabulary.

Don't decorate every inch of your classroom. It can become too busy and may bother some students' concentration. Think of your classroom as your home, and decorate it with attractiveness and simplistic charm. As in your home, everything should be beautiful, meaningful or useful.

Make single bubble letters on your computer - see the previous page - and print them on bright coloured paper. Parents and volunteers could cut them out for you. These are great to name bulletin boards.

Try making three-dimensional bulletin boards! Objects such as feathers, dried flowers, old ties, masks, hats, and costume jewelry can all be added to your bulletin boards. Strive to use multiple textures to make the bulletin boards more attractive. Use corn or leaves on your autumn BB, costumes or masks or other costume accessories for your Halloween board. Old ties pointed outward make great turkey tail feathers for a Thanksgiving BB.

A local teacher has several strings of the tiny white 'Christmas' lights that she has up all year. They go around a special bulletin board. She also has a white painted bare tree held by a bucket of sand, with the lights strung on it - and then seasonal decorations are added - fall leaves, bats and owls for Halloween, hearts for Valentines, eggs for Easter, etc. The students especially remember Halloween Day, when she dresses as a witch, pulls the blinds shut and turns out all lights except on the little tree and reads spooky stories.

Put up Velcro dots on your boards, and then things can be moved about and taken down or moved around to make the board interactive. Post a daily question with a graph and the students can move their names by matching the Velcro dot to the one on the back of their names.



Bulletin Boards

Something to Ponder

“I have a very different approach to ‘walls’. I feel it is the kids’ and my room so I only put up what is necessary to begin the year - letters for the word wall (not the words - we build that together), and the calendar. I tell the kids that we will work together to make it our room and the very first day of school we do a small and simple craft that I immediately put up. They are very excited and proud of our room. It feels odd as everyone puts up things - but I feel the kids are young and don't really look at the stuff on the walls until it is their theirs and their friends’, not mine. It’s like the idea of ‘breaking bread’ together - cementing a relationship...”

Janice McCarter



“I have spent many days in the summers giving up my much needed free-time to decorate the classroom. I used to hang up lots of charts and create all kinds of clever boards. The kids hardly ever used my charts or read the poems. Now I start each year by hanging colourful paper or fabric on my boards and I put up colourful borders. I decorate my door and put nametags on the cubbies. I later fill the bulletin boards with the children’s work or with things I have taught.”

That being said, if you do create an amazing classroom in any primary grade before school begins, it will be useless to the children unless you spend a great amount of time referring to the charts or poems that you have put up. In Kindergarten and Grade One the charts should be memorized so the children can use them when they ‘read the room’ and refer to the charts in work times.

Smile! “My door will say, ‘Smile, you're in Ms. ____’s class!’. I will put the names on smiley faces.”

The Olympics These are great for Grade Two or Grade Three classes: Going for the Gold
An Olympic Year Carrying the Torch for Learning A Winning Class Do
Your Best! Award-winning Students

Chicka Chicka

Decorate your classroom from the book ‘Chicka Chicka Boom Boom’. Try these sites to see how other teachers made a large palm tree.

<http://www.kinderfriends.com/palmtree.html>

<http://www.mrspohlmeyerskinderpage.com/chickachickatree.htm>

Sunflowers Put the children’s faces (a photo or a drawing) in the center of sunflowers and label with the names. Title it ‘Welcome to Our Kinder - Garden’, or ‘Watch Us Grow’, ‘A Place To Grow’, etc.

Empty Boards:

Put up a very nice title that says ‘Invisible Art’ and watch people stop and look!
Make a sign that says ‘Under Construction’.

And more

Using pencils: ‘Pencil us in for a great year!’ or ‘Welcoming a sharp bunch of students’

Do a ‘We're Hoppy you're here’ door with frogs..’

Using feet or shoes: ‘We're starting off on the right foot’ or ‘Step into Grade Two’.

**C3
B4
ME**

The following page may be photocopied and sent home for your parents to complete. Put the completed sheets in the students’ files.

