Really Good Bulletin Boards

Volume 2

Making Your Classroom Walls Work For You

By Brandi Jordan
Managing Editor Of The Teachers’ Lounge,
A Really Good Stuff® Blog
Creating fun, engaging, and educational bulletin boards for your classroom can feel like a full-time job. The cutting, the laminating, and the gathering of ideas can take longer than planning your lessons for the week. Never fear, we have heard your pleas for more bulletin board inspiration and have answered the call.

Fifty new bulletin board ideas await you inside this book, but first, let us review the basics. If you have already read our first bulletin board book, Making Your Classroom Walls Work for You, you know the ins and outs of time-saving bulletin board creation. For those of you who are new to bulletin boards, or who simply want a refresher, the first few sections are just for you. The new bulletin board ideas can be found starting on page 5.

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Bulletin Board Basics

Whether you have been teaching for decades or are entering the classroom for the first time, there is no denying that a useful bulletin board space can make your life easier. Knowing what to put up, and where to put it, can be the challenge. Use the tips and tricks in this book to help you navigate the world of bulletin boards.

Location, Location, Location

Where you put your bulletin board is just as important as what you put on it. Although many teachers think that a wall is the only place a bulletin board can be displayed, there are actually many different locations that are ideal. The next time you are planning a board, consider some of the location ideas below.

Suggested Locations
- Classroom door
- Side of a tall file cabinet
- Closet door
- Traveling board (use a tri-fold presentation board to create a bulletin board that can be moved)
- Front of the teacher’s desk
- Below the white board
- On the wall

Always make sure that your students can easily see and reach the display if it is an interactive or informational style bulletin board. Location can make or break a bulletin board’s effectiveness. Choose wisely.

Choosing A Subject

In today’s classrooms, space is limited. Class sizes are growing and storage and learning space is shrinking. Whether you teach in a self-contained classroom, or one where students rotate throughout the day, making use of wall space is a great way to enhance learning possibilities. Choosing the subject of what to put up (and where!) can be the most difficult decision of all.

There are a couple of things to think about when selecting a subject for a bulletin board. First, take into consideration any state or district mandates. If the school district requires a fire safety bulletin board in October, for example, the subject is clearly narrowed down. Also consider any current units and themes that are being studied when choosing a theme. Coordinating a bulletin board with an active thematic unit can help carry over lesson and main ideas.

Some teachers prefer to have consistent boards throughout the year and change the content, but not the subject. For instance, keeping a math bulletin board or a writing prompt board up year-round can provide consistency even though the activities themselves will change. This is especially important for students who need a predictable space in order to focus on the tasks at hand.

Whatever theme or subject you choose, embrace it fully. A carefully chosen bulletin board theme is well and good, but if there is little enthusiasm and creativity behind its execution, it will fall flat. More important than the theme of the bulletin board itself is the planning and enthusiasm that is put into creating it.

Basic Bulletin Board Toolkit

No one ever said that making a bulletin board was easy, but when you have a toolkit that contains the things you use most often to create it, you will be one step ahead. For the bulletin board ideas that are included later in this book, you will need some, if not all, of the items listed below. Consider keeping them together in a handled bucket, bag, or box, so that you do not have to hunt for them every time a board is changed.
Where to Get Started

The options for creating a great bulletin board typically fall in the build it yourself or buy it outright categories. We’ll briefly explore both.

Handy Tool Kit Supplies

- Stapler that can open flat
- Staples
- Staple remover
- Masking tape, clear tape, and/or packaging tape
- Permanent markers
- Sticky tack
- Pushpins
- Thumbtacks
- Scissors
- Glue

Creating your own bulletin board can help save on costs, but will require significantly more time and energy as you search for supplies. Thankfully, many teachers are resourceful people. Some of the best materials and supplies for your boards can be found for almost nothing, if you know where to look.

One of the greatest resources for unusual supplies and materials is craigslist.com. This site allows you to post requests for materials and browse what others are giving away. If you have a specific item in mind, you might want to start requesting it a month or two before you start planning your bulletin board.

Another source that you should never overlook is friends, family, and students’ parents. There is nothing wrong with asking if someone has a yard of green material they are not using, or artificial flowers that they no longer want. Oftentimes, people are more than willing to hand over things they no longer want, especially if it will benefit your classroom.

Whoever invented yard sales must have been a teacher, because yard sales and flea markets can be a treasure trove of inexpensive classroom supplies. Everything from toys and manipulatives to books and art supplies galore can be found for pennies on the dollar. If scouting out yard sales is not your thing, but you know someone who goes every week, make a list of the things you are looking for and ask if they will keep an eye out for the items for you.

Lastly, the dollar store and clearance sections of craft stores (both online and brick and mortar) are also great spots to check for inexpensive supplies. Many large dollar store chains now carry a wide array of poster board and themed paper that you can use on your bulletin boards.

Really Good Time Saver

Sure it may sound like a great idea to make everything from scratch, but unless you have extra hours in your day, there is just not enough time! The Really Good Time Saver ideas are perfect for getting the professional bulletin board you want, but without it taking a long time to make. As a busy teacher, you do not have time to reinvent the wheel (or the bulletin board pieces!), so take advantage of Really Good Stuff® products that can be used to help you. You will find that using ready-made products from Really Good Stuff® not only saves you time, but will also save you money overall.
Three Types Of Bulletin Boards

There are three main types of bulletin boards that you can set-up in your classroom — display, information, or interactive. All of them have the potential to be wall-mounted, as well as, traveling boards or those created on a tri-fold display board. The type of board you put up will determine how engaged your students will be in it after it is completed.

1. Display Boards

Display bulletin boards do exactly what their name implies — they display student work. Often, display boards are used in the hallways outside of the classrooms to showcase student work on a new unit or subject. Display boards are great for back-to-school night and parent-teacher conferences. They usually do not require a lot of planning or extra material, because the content is student generated. It is important to change the displayed work often or the bulletin board quickly becomes visually stale.

2. Informational Boards

Want to reinforce a skill with a visual reminder? An informational board is a great way to do that. It presents new information in a visual format that will help your students who remember and comprehend the subject. Informational boards can be created about any subject. They are ideal for traveling bulletin boards, as well as, wallboards. A trick for helping students focus on the material that is most important, is to limit the visual clutter and highlight the text or pictures that are most important by placing a bright, bold piece of paper behind those items. This will help to draw the students’ eyes to the places where you want them.

3. Interactive Boards

An interactive bulletin board is one where students have an opportunity to interact with manipulatives themselves. While it may seem like an easy thing to create, there are definite considerations that should be taken into account. The board should be at eye level, include color, be durable, and have clear directions about how to interact with it.

Accessibility

An interactive bulletin board does students no good if they cannot reach it. When planning such a board, make sure that it is at their eye level and easily accessible for young hands. Since most bulletin board frames are at an adult’s eye level, you may need to paper the area below the normal bulletin board section to make it work.

Colorful

Visual interest is the key to keeping children engaged in interactive bulletin boards. Plain, boring boards with little color or visual appeal will not hold students’ interest. Even if the topic being covered is interesting, students will quickly become bored and uninterested. Take the time to add coordinated colors and visual appeal to your bulletin board presentation.

Durability

If students will be manipulating items on the bulletin board itself (i.e. matching pictures of their classmates to hobbies they enjoy), make sure that the material you use is sturdy enough to withstand a lot of handling. Laminate materials that students will be touching and use the strongest Velcro or adhesive that you have available. By creating the bulletin board with sturdy materials at the beginning, you will save yourself time having to repair it over the course of its’ display life.

Instructions

Interactive bulletin boards should have clear, concise directions that are easy for your students to read and understand. If some of your students need extra help with reading, consider recording the directions and allowing students to play them back as needed. Ideally, an interactive bulletin board will be an independent workstation for students, so take their ability levels into consideration when planning activities and interaction requirements.
January Ideas

Wacky Holidays

Items Needed:
- Fabric or paper background
- Boarder
- Bulletin board labeling letters
- Cupcake cutouts

January has no shortage of wacky and unusual holidays. In fact, holidays like Fruitcake Toss Day (January 3rd) and Houseplant Appreciation Day (January 10th) are just two of the many celebrations that take place. Turn one of your bulletin boards into a Wacky Holiday Creator Station. Cover the board with plain paper or fabric, trim it in a holiday theme border, and label it “Wacky Holidays”. Post examples of crazy holidays on cupcake-shaped paper on the board. Encourage students to write a proposal to make their wacky holiday idea an actual holiday. Display the proposals on the board for all to see.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion

Use the Poppin’ Patterns™ Cupcakes Border Trim (Item 701565) and the Poppin’ Patterns™ Cupcake 6” Designer Accents (Item 701684) for the trim and cutouts!

R.T.L. (Ready to Learn)

Items Needed:
- Fabric or paper background
- Bulletin board letters
- Sticky notes

Invariably, going over the rules and procedures of the classroom are an important part of January lessons. Create a bulletin board that focuses on the basics and gets students ready to learn. Cover a bulletin board with plain fabric or paper and label it “R.T.L.” which stands for Ready to Learn. Ask students to write on colorful sticky notes the procedures and rules for the classroom. “Raise your hand” or “No talking in the hallways” are just a couple that they may come up with. It is a good way to get them refocused on the classroom community and provides you with a quick, colorful bulletin board that serves as a continuous reminder of the rules all month long.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion

The Management Mini Posters Set (Item 159961) can help focus students on the three key classroom management rules when used in conjunction with the bulletin board.

Counting the Cocoa

Items Needed:
- Fabric or paper background
- Cutouts of mugs
- Hot chocolate recipe

What goes best after a fun time playing in the snow? A cup of hot chocolate, of course! Warm your students up to math with this cocoa-inspired interactive bulletin board. Cover the board in a plain, light colored paper or fabric. Light blue is a great choice and can carry through to a February bulletin board. In the center of the board, hang the recipe for one cup of hot cocoa. Around the main recipe, hang cutouts of cups that are numbered one through 10. In each cup, place a word problem centered...
around the cocoa recipe. An example of a word problem might be the following: Joe invites two friends to visit for a cup of cocoa. Each person drinks two cups of cocoa. How much cocoa powder will Joe use to make all of the cups of cocoa? Have a blank answer sheet for students to complete based on the word problems in each cup. It is a great way to practice multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction.

**Super Stars**

**Items Needed:**
- Star print fabric or wrapping paper
- Star cutouts
- Bulletin board letters

Celebrate your students at the start of the second half of the year by creating a “Super Star” bulletin board. Cover the board in star print fabric and label it “Shining Super Stars.” On star cutouts, write each child’s name. Hang an example of each child’s “super star” work on the board to celebrate his/her accomplishments. This positive reinforcement bulletin board can also be used at any other time of the year.

**Really Good Time Saver Suggestion**

*The World Map Bulletin Board Set (Item 159926)* offers the perfect size map to fit your bulletin board.

**Snowflakes for Sale!**

**Items Needed:**
- Fabric or paper background
- Snowflake bulletin board trim
- Student work

Advertising is a powerful influence of student behavior both in the classroom and beyond. While discussing the different types of advertising techniques, have students create an ad to sell snowflakes. Cover a bulletin board with plain blue fabric or paper and trim it with a snowflake border. Hang the students’ completed ads on the bulletin board for display.

**Really Good Time Saver Suggestion**

*Give your snowflake board a twist with the Peanuts™ Snowflake Bulletin Board Set (Item 701591).*
February Ideas

It's What's Inside That Matters

Items Needed:
- Solid blue paper of fabric for background
- Student decorated turtle cutouts
- Bulletin board letters

February is a great time to talk about the similarities between students and how, in many ways, we are all the same. Have students cut out turtles from plain manila folders. Line the top edge of the shell up along the fold of the folder so that when the turtle is cut out, you can open it like a card. Have students write down words to describe themselves on the inside of the turtle. They can write about their family, favorite vacation spots, hobbies, etc. When they are finished, have them color and decorate the front of the turtle card. Hang the turtles on a blue bulletin board background with the sign “It’s What’s Inside That Matters” at the top. Stress that while each turtle is unique and beautiful, on the inside they all have a lot in common. Encourage students to get to know “what’s inside” their classmates.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion

Save time on the bulletin board title with the colorful Patterned Pop Out 4” Letters (Item 156503) that will coordinate with your students’ turtles.

Hopping to 100 Books

Items Needed:
- Blue paper or fabric for background
- Bulletin board letters
- Lily pad cutouts

Even if the 100th Day of School has passed, you can still reinforce math and reading skills with a board that focuses on both. Cover a board with plain blue paper and at the top label it with “We’re Hopping Our Way to 100 Books.” Cut out small lily pads and place them in an envelope or basket below the board. Track how many books have been read by students during the month by having them fill out a lily pad with the title and author of each book they read. After they fill out a lily pad they can hang it on the bulletin board. Number the lily pads as they are hung to keep track of how many have been read so far and how many you have left to go. Create a daily math problem to coordinate the bulletin board to help reinforce math skills.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion

Use the Frogs Border And Accent Set (Item 701619) to decorate the edge of the board and represent students with their own personalized frog.

Jazz Hands

Items Needed:
- Plain fabric or paper
- Black scalloped border
- Student work

Music classes all across the country are being cut out of the school day thanks to budget cuts. Bring some music into your classroom by exploring Jazz in February. Begin each day by playing some Jazz music and creating a mini-unit that lets students explore different Jazz musicians. Have students trace one of their hands on a sheet of construction paper. In the palm, write the name of the Jazz artist they chose to study. On each of the fingers, write a different fact about the artist. Hang the completed "Jazz
Month-By-Month Ideas
Really Good Bulletin Boards: Making Your Classroom Walls Work For You

Hands” on a bulletin board that has been covered in fabric featuring music notes and trimmed in a black scalloped border. It is an easy way to combine biography reading with social studies and writing while also decorating your classroom!

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion
Spice up your border and save time with the Zebra Scalloped Border Trim (Item 701655).

Who’s Who in Black History Month

Items Needed:
• Paper or fabric for the background
• Student work
• Bulletin board lettering

Have students create trading cards of some of the most influential and famous African Americans in U.S. history for Black History Month. Cover the bulletin board in a solid color fabric or paper and hang students’ biographies of the person they researched on the board. It is an easy way to display student work and create a great Black History Month resource.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion
Use either the Famous African Americans Bulletin Board Set (Item 701416) or the Notable African Americans Bulletin Board Set (Item 701420) and create an informational board for your students. They can select one of the individuals mentioned and write mock interviews with them as a creative writing assignment.

A Friend Is...

Items Needed:
• Pink or red paper or fabric
• Valentine’s Day theme bulletin board set
• Student work

With Valentine’s Day nestled mid-month, February is the perfect time to remind students about what friendship means. Cover your bulletin board with pink or red paper and use a Valentine’s Day theme bulletin board set to save time and energy. Make it a language arts lesson by having students write notes or poems about what it means to be a friend and then completing their good copies on cutout hearts or note cards.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion
With either the Happy Hearts Designer Classroom Pack (Item 701627) or the Fancy Hearts Bulletin Board Display And Sticker Set (Item 701616), your bulletin board will be ready in no time!

Gumdrops Galore

Items Needed:
• Polka dot or solid fabric or paper
• Gumdrop cutouts
• Toothpicks or plastic coffee stirrers
• Gumdrops
• Digital camera
• Gumdrop shape challenge cards

Math is always a lot more fun when food is involved and, lucky for your students, National Gumdrop Day is
February 15th: While no record of a congressional decree seems to exist for this sweet holiday, it is proudly embraced by the National Confectioners Association, as well as other quirky holiday enthusiasts. For your classroom, this means a February bulletin board based on the retro treat that is easy for little fingers to manipulate. Cover the board with solid color or polka dot fabric. Around the border, hang cutouts shaped like gumdrops. Have a bag for each student with gumdrops and toothpicks* in a basket below the board. On the bulletin board have challenge cards that encourage students to create different shapes and sculptures with their gumdrops. Start with basic shapes and then encourage creativity. Have students snap a picture of each of their shapes with a digital camera and print them out to decorate the board after everyone has completed the center. For a language arts theme, have students create as many words as they can using the letters in the word “gumdrop.”

* Tip: This activity is best done with older students. Another alternative to toothpicks is plastic coffee stirrers.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion
The Playful Patterns Border Trim (Item 701559) coordinates nicely with the gumdrop theme and can save you from having to cut out gumdrops for the border.

“Pledge to Do Our Best”
Items Needed:
• Paper or fabric in the school’s colors
• Paw print accents and border
• Bulletin board lettering

No one likes standardized testing time, especially students, but you can create an atmosphere of team spirit as your students pledge to do their best on the upcoming tests. Cover one bulletin board or wall with one of your school’s colors. Then use a paw print trim that coordinates with the color to outline the board. At the top of the board write (or use cutout letters) “I Pledge to Do My Best on the Test.” Each student then gets a color-coordinated paw print to write their name on and hang on the board. Consider inviting all of the students in your grade level (or even the entire school) to put their “paws” on the pledge.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion
Check out all of the paw print colors and patterns from Really Good Stuff® including the Colorful Paws Deco Trim And Accents (Item 701642).

Math Fact Round-Up
Items Needed:
• Paper or fabric for the background
• Minute math drills kept in hanging folders
• “Wanted” posters
• Western bulletin board trim

Give your math bulletin board a Western feel by encouraging a math fact round-up. Create “Minute Math” drills and place them in hanging folders that are placed on a table below the bulletin board. When students complete
the review activities, they can place their “Wanted” poster on the board. Use a Western trim to complete the look.

**Really Good Time Saver Suggestion**
*The Western Wanted Posters Accents (Item 701678) and the Western Roundup Bulletin Board Set (Item 701682) will make the board come alive while saving you a lot of time!*

**Wild About Words**

**Items Needed:**
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Animal print bulletin board trim
- Sandwich bags (4)
- Vocabulary words printed on paw prints or craft sticks

Vocabulary plays a large part in standardized tests. Without a strong vocabulary background, students can falter when it comes to reading. Use one of March’s bulletin boards to go wild about words. Use a plain background and trim it with a wild animal print border. “We’re Wild About Words” can be the title of the board. Hang four small sandwich bags from the board labeled with: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Write the vocabulary words that you want students to practice on wild animal print craft sticks or color-coordinated paw prints and have them place the word in the correct bag. You can also display a word of the day and keep the board up year round.

**Really Good Time Saver Suggestion**
*The Black Paw Prints Mini Accents (Item 701672) are the perfect size for the vocabulary words and the Animal Prints Border Trim Value Pack (Item 701653) is ideal for trimming the board.*

**Marvelous, Magnificent March**

**Items Needed:**
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Bulletin board lettering

Invigorate students’ writing with a bulletin board focused on descriptive words. In the center of the plain paper or fabric bulletin board background, hang a sentence strip that says, “March is...” Have students write their descriptive responses on shamrocks for St. Patrick’s Day or on any template that fits the theme of your classroom. The focus is on enriching students’ vocabulary to prepare them for more descriptive writing and state mandated testing.

**Really Good Time Saver Suggestion**
*Use the Assorted Baseball Paper Cut-Outs (Item 701775) or the Snoopy’s® Strawberry Patch Trimmer And Accents (Item 701726) to match the theme of your classroom.*

**Making Healthy Food Choices**

**Items Needed:**
- Green paper or fabric for the background
- Food riddles
- Bulletin board lettering
- Bulletin board trim

When you think of March, what color comes to mind? For many, it is the color green to coincide with St. Patrick’s Day, spring flowers, and the color seeping back into the grass. Use green to your advantage and...
create a bulletin board that focuses on making healthy food choices. Create a “Going Green” campaign with your students and discuss why fruits and vegetables are so important for healthy bodies. On your bulletin board, create “Guess What I Am?” panels about healthy foods where students read the riddle on the outside and lift the flap to find the answer. If you think your students will peek, do not include the answers until after all of the guesses have been recorded and turned in. It is a great way to encourage them to form healthy habits and start eating better — especially before testing time.

**Really Good Time Saver Suggestion**

*The Fern Leaves Trimmer* (Item 701441) is ideal for trimming your green-theme bulletin board.

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**March Our Way to the Final Day**

**Items Needed:**

- Paper or fabric for the background
- Sneaker or shoe cutouts

It is never too late to re-evaluate goals and March is the perfect time to focus on fresh, new ideas. Have students create a list of 3-5 goals that they would like to achieve before the end of the school year. They might include a reading goal, a skill they would like to master, or a behavior that they have been struggling with (i.e., turning in homework, staying at the desk, etc.). Using sneaker cutouts, have students write their goals for the last few months of school on the decorated shoes and hang them on the plain background bulletin board. Seeing their goals every day will remind them, and you, of how much can be achieved in the final few months of the school year.

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**April Ideas**

Bulletin boards are great, but sometimes you need to create a space where students can work and manipulate letter tiles for word building practice. Instead of trying to turn a large wall bulletin board into a workspace, use the side of your tall filing cabinet instead. In the past you may have had to tape a border up to make the area look like the workspace you had in mind. Instead of taping a border, use a magnetic border that will give you the same designated workspace area but without the hassle. Magnetic letter tiles can then be hung within the space on the filing cabinet for easy word practice. Write or print the week’s spelling words on index cards and hang them on a colorful ring next to the practice area. During center time or when students finish their work early, they can have an extra area to practice their words.

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**Really Good Time Saver Suggestion**

*The Stripes MagnaBorders™* (Item 701647) and *Pencils MagnaBorders™* (Item 701645) are ideal for outlining the space on your filing cabinet while the *EZread™ Magnetic Foam Lowercase Letter Tiles* (Item 302938) are perfect for spelling word practice.
Round ‘em Up, Cowboy!

Items Needed:
- Brown paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Western-themed cut-outs

Bring the Wild West to your classroom with a “Roundup of Reading!” Cover the bulletin board with plain brown paper and decorate it with Western-themed bulletin board decor. Have students write their favorite book and author on a covered wagon cutout and create a mini-display of recommended books. When students are reading one of the books suggested, they can hang their Sheriff’s badge cutouts on the covered wagon. Encourage them to keep a reading journal that chronicles their journey through the books. Make sure to have the books in as many different formats as possible and in a variety of reading levels to accommodate all of the students in class.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion
The Western Roundup Bulletin Board Set (Item 701682) has all of the accent pieces needed to create a fun, reading-focused bulletin board with Western flair.

Word Scramble Center Bulletin Board

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- 16 squares, 6" each
- Paper basket
- Timer
- Answer sheets

Word scrambles are fun! On a plain background with an alphabet bulletin board border, adhere 16 squares labeled with different letters in a 4 by 4 square. Have a classroom timer and a basket with “answer sheets” on a desk in front of the bulletin board. Students then set the timer to five minutes and see how many words they can find or unscramble using adjoining letters during that time. They record their answers on the provided sheet and turn them in for grading. Switch the letters around or add more after everyone has completed the board. It is a great way to encourage students to think creatively and see connections between words and letters.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion
The Dr. Seuss ABC Deco Trim (Item 701296) adds kid-friendly fun to this bulletin board.

Let’s Learn Spanish

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Spanish food word cards

Students love learning new languages and while you might have a hard enough time trying to fit all of the English lessons in, learning a few new words in Spanish is a great way to excite students about language. Studies have shown that early exposure to foreign languages increases a child’s ability to learn them. Create a food-theme bulletin board during the month of April and hang food-shaped cards with Spanish and English labels. Review the words during small group time or morning circle. At the end of the month, have a Spanish Buffet Day where the foods...
represented on the board are brought in to sample. Students will have fun naming them in Spanish and English as they eat. The review and the hands-on practice while munching on the goodies will help students retain the information longer.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion

The **English/Spanish Cognates: Food** (Item 304769) provides colorful visuals of common foods while providing the English and Spanish words for the items. The poster is also a great anchor for the bulletin board itself.

**Monkeying Around**

Items Needed:
- Light green paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim with a monkey theme
- Monkey and banana cutouts

Curbing spring wiggles is never easy, but instead of fighting against it, channel it into an opportunity to accentuate the positive. On your bulletin board’s light green backdrop hang a monkey border and monkey and banana cutouts. Encourage your students to channel their energy into doing things for others. Label the monkeys with things such as “Shared the Most Smiles,” “Helped a Friend in Need,” “Stood Up for What Was Right,” etc. At the end of the week, hang a student’s name next to each act of kindness. Be sure to have an equal number of positive behaviors and students, so that everyone can be rewarded for doing well. The next week you may find it becomes a competition among students to see who can be more kind.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion

Put some monkey fun in your bulletin board with the **Monkey Business Bulletin Board Display Set** (Item 701625).

**We’re Saving the Earth**

Items Needed:
- Blue paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Bulletin board lettering
- Sandwich bags (3)
- Pencil shavings, crayon stubs, scrap pieces of paper

Earth Day is in late-April, but an eco-friendly bulletin board is perfect for any time of year. Dedicate a bulletin board to reducing, reusing, and recycling common classroom items. In the center of the blue paper or fabric-covered board, hang three clear zippered baggies with pencil shavings from the pencil sharpener, scrap paper from old assignments or work, and crayons that have been worn down from use. Challenge students to write a creative poem, paragraph, or instructions for using the items in the bag in a new way.

Really Good Time Saver Suggestion

The **Help The Earth Banner** (Item 701432) can quickly focus the bulletin board on the subject of recycling.

**May Ideas**

**We’re Shining Stars**

Items Needed:
- Yellow paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Star cutouts
- Photos of your students’ faces

Reminding students how special they are is one of the best parts of being a teacher. Not only do you get to make a huge impact in a child’s life, but for many, your words of encouragement may be the only ones they hear during the day. Emphasize how special they are by creating a bulletin board titled, “We’re Shining Stars!” Use a star bulletin board trim atop a bright yellow paper or fabric background. Cut out large stars from construction paper and turn them into “star people” by creating accordion-folded arms and legs. For the star’s “face,” have children glue on a snapshot of themselves that you have taken of them in class. The star can then be decorated with “clothes” or simply labeled with the child’s name. It is a great way to
decorate the bulletin board outside of the classroom and fits in perfectly with your end-of-the-year space unit in science.

Really Good Time Saver
Use the Poppin’ Pattern Stars™ Border Trim (Item 701563) to jazz up your bulletin board instantly.

Whoo Has Learned A Lot This Year?

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Owl cutouts
- Cutout tree

Sometimes, especially by the end of the school year, the less prep work you have to do for a bulletin board, the better! For the “Whoo Has Learned A Lot This Year?” bulletin board, the Owl Bulletin Board Set includes almost everything you need to create a great bulletin board. Start with a neutral fabric or cloth background and hang the large tree in the center of the board. Write students’ names on the small owls* and have them hang them on the board with a small conversation bubble cut from lined paper telling about something they have learned during the school year. You can focus their responses by limiting them to a certain subject, or allow them to write down anything that comes to mind. Use bulletin board lettering to create a title for the board that can stay up until the end of the year.

* Tip: If you plan to re-use the bulletin board set next year, laminate the pieces and use a dry erase marker to write students’ names on the small owls.

Really Good Time Saver

The Owl Bulletin Board Set (Item 701540) comes complete with most of the items that you will need to create this fun and colorful board.

We're Racing Toward the Finish Line!

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Race car cutouts
- Bulletin board lettering

Let’s face it, by mid-April you and your students probably start counting down to the last day of school. By May 1st, you are more than ready for the school year to be over, so why not embrace the final days by creating a race-theme bulletin board. Use it as a way to track completion of your final learning stations, the remaining days of the school year, or as a behavior modification tool for the month of May. Cover the board with solid fabric and line it with a checkered border. In the center place a racetrack and assign each student a racecar to move along as they reach goals or perform tasks. When all tasks have been completed or the final day of school has arrived, have students move their cars to the “Winner’s Circle” in the center of the board.

Really Good Time Saver

Don’t have time to create such an elaborate bulletin board? Try the Racing Bulletin Board Set (Item 701543) that includes everything you need.
June & July Ideas

Focus on a Good Book

Items Needed:
- Black paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Magnifying glass cutouts

Getting students motivated to read (especially during the summer) can be challenging! Instead of pushing a list of your favorite books on students for summer recommended reading, have each student recommend his or her favorite book. Cover the bulletin board with black fabric or paper and cut out large magnifying glass shapes. Students can then write a brief description of their favorite book and copy it onto a piece of paper that will fit into the magnifying glass lens. Before hanging their mini-reports up, students must tell the class a little bit about the book and why it was chosen. Create a list of all student recommended books and pass it out for summer reading or post it to your class blog.

Perfect Fraction Pizza

Items Needed:
- Black paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Large cutout of a pizza
- Pushpins and yarn

It is rare to find a child who does not like pizza, so put your students’ love for food front and center on your main math bulletin board. Cut out a giant pizza crust from a piece of butcher paper. Place pushpins around the crust, so that you can periodically change how many slices are in the pie by connecting yarn to the corresponding pushpins. You may want to start with the pizza cut in half, in which case the pins at the top and bottom of the crust would have a piece of yarn tied to them to “divide” the pizza into two pieces. Slice the pizza into as many pieces as you would like to give your students practice visualizing fractions. Use the board as a review during those extra minutes of the day when you need a filler activity or turn it into a center with journal questions or activities.

Oh, The Places We’ve Been!

Items Needed:
- Pastel-striped wrapping paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Bulletin board lettering

Take a cue from Dr. Seuss’s famous book, Oh, the Places You’ll Go!, and have students help create a bulletin board that re-caps the school year. Cover the bulletin board with a pastel-striped fabric that resembles the illustrations in Dr. Seuss’s book. Have students create signposts that tell about a skill or fact that they have learned during the school year. Hang the signposts on the board along with a title that says, “Oh, the Places We’ve Been!”

Really Good Time Saver

Really Good Time Saver

Make Fractions Visually Appealing With Photo-Image Pizzas

These flexible, magnetic pizza slices make it fun to demonstrate fractions. Six pizzas with different toppings separate to show one whole, halves, thirds, quarters, sixths, and eighths.
- Six pizzas, 8” diameter each; 24 slices

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August & September Ideas

Believe In Yourself

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Inspirational posters

There are some messages that you want your students to hear everyday during the school year and one of them is to believe in themselves. Make one small back-to-school bulletin board a simple reminder and positive reinforcer for the entire year. Cover the board with fabric or paper of your choice and accent it with a colorful border. In the center, hang a positive message or motivational poster. Keep it simple. Make the focus of the board the words in the message and do not distract from it with a lot of cutouts and accessories. Remember, the purpose of the board is to provide daily, positive reinforcement of your students’ worth and abilities. Change the poster or message daily or weekly throughout the school year.

Really Good Time Saver

The Thoughts Of The Week Mini-Posters (Item 159570) give you 32 energizing and inspirational messages to share with your students all year long.

Team Spirit

Items Needed:
- Sports-theme wrapping paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Cutout t-shirts with students’ names
- Cutout conversation bubbles for inspirational messages

When you are looking for something different for your classroom, it is easy to get caught up in the cute factor that dominates a lot of common classroom themes. The problem is that many of your male students probably are not going to be as into polka dots and flowers as the girls. This year, pick a back-to-school theme that will resonate with all of your students and encourage a sense of team spirit.

Really Good Time Saver

Use the Everyone Wins On Our Team! Kit (Item 159250) to provide the key pieces of the board.

Pumpkin Patch Match

Items Needed:
- Brown paper or fabric for the background
- Pumpkin bulletin board trim
- Pumpkin cutouts
- 3 small baskets

Pumpkins are such a fun fall symbol for children and there is no better way to engage them in learning than with a pumpkin match. Cover a bulletin board with plain brown paper fabric and trim it with a pumpkin border. Cut out pumpkin-shaped pieces. Place three small baskets below the board, each labeled with a common word family ending. On each small pumpkin, write a word that corresponds with one of the word families. Continue writing words until all of the pumpkin cutouts have been used. Hang the pumpkins on the board and task the students with sorting the words into the correct family. Have them record their word family rhyming words on a pumpkin-themed paper for additional writing and reading practice.

Using a soccer ball or baseball print fabric, cover the bulletin board completely. Create a sports related banner or use the Everyone Wins On Our Team! Kit. Use cutouts of team t-shirts as the common theme throughout the room. On the board, hang the class rules and expectations. A positive, encouraging message is also a must. Not only does the sports team-theme appeal to the majority of students in your room, it is a great way to start off the year discussing classroom community, kindness, and support. When families arrive for Open House Night, simply flip the banner and encourage parents to write positive messages (i.e., “You can do it!” “Keep trying,” etc.) on conversation bubbles that can line the edges of the bulletin board. It is a great reminder to parents that their praise and support will help their children succeed during the school year.
We're Super!

Items Needed:
• Light blue paper or fabric for the background
• Bulletin board trim
• Welcome Sign

Encouraging students to reach their potential begins from the moment they step into your classroom. Create a super hero theme bulletin board that not only welcomes them, but that can honor their achievements throughout the school year. If you are looking for a positive reinforcement bulletin board, this is it. Start by covering the board in light blue fabric. Create a welcome sign or use the Welcome Super Class Kit from Really Good Stuff® to decorate the board. The Super Student mats can hang as a display and will be especially poignant for Back-to-School or Open House Night*. Throughout the year, honor students for their reading achievements, artistic endeavors, math know-how, and classroom kindness by posting their names and/or pictures on the board.

Perfect Poetry: Apples and Pumpkins

Items Needed:
• Paper or fabric for the background
• Bulletin board trim
• Apple or pumpkin theme poems
• Cutout pumpkins and apples
• Recording system

This idea lets you choose which theme you would like to use. While the board itself is used mostly for display, the center activity gives students a place to complete the task and display their work. Cover the board with plain orange or red fabric or paper and trim with a fall-theme border. Download and print out a variety of apple or pumpkin poems and glue them into cutout apples or pumpkins. Laminate them for future use. Have a recording system set up on a table below the board where students can record one of the poems featured. Encourage fluency and expression while reading the poem. After recording a poem of their choice, have students create drawings to illustrate their poem. Display the drawings on the board or hang in another location.

*Tip: Use the Welcome Super Class Kit (Item 160083) and on Back-to-School Night, simply flip over the Welcome banner as the opposite side says, “Welcome Families To Our Super Class.”
Cross Country

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Map of the United States
- Ribbon/yarn
- Pushpins

Students know what fall is like where they live, but what is it like in another part of the country? Create an interactive bulletin board that encourages students to imagine what it is like to live in other areas of the United States, while also getting in some of those geography lessons! Cover the board in plain fabric or paper and place a map of the United States in the center. Use ribbon or yarn tied around a pushpin to connect a specific state or region to an activity off of the map. For example, in the Northeast, there could be a choice of three activities: write about how it feels to play in a pile of leaves, create a flow chart explaining how to rake leaves, write an acrostic poem using fall in the Northeast as inspiration. Each region of the country could have a similar set of activities that are specific to what fall is like in that area.

Bucket Fillers

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Small buckets
- Small pieces of paper

Give each student a small plastic or metal bucket to decorate and hang them from a hook on a prominent bulletin board that has been covered with plain paper or fabric background. After reading Have You Filled a Bucket Today? by Carol McCloud (2006), discuss ways to “fill” others’ buckets. Leave the board up all year and encourage students to record ways that others have filled their buckets by writing notes to the other person and placing them in their bucket. Encourage proper spelling, complete sentences, and the use of descriptive words when they describe how the act of kindness made them feel.

Apple Attack

Items Needed:
- Red paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Bulletin board lettering

Creative writing has never been so much fun as it is with this bulletin board idea. Hang apple red paper or fabric on the board and trim it with an apple-themed border. Hang examples of students’ creative essays that are centered around the theme of an “Apple Attack.” The essays could be about everything from being attacked by apples to attacking apples to how animals eat apples.

For a more interactive learning center option, hang three large cutout apples labeled “Characters,” “Events,” and “Emotions” in the center of the board. Laminate them for future use. Have students use dry-erase markers to write descriptive words that come to mind for each category when they think “Apple Attack.” (You might also want to leave the board blank except for the background paper and have students write directly on it using pen or marker.) The descriptive words can then be molded into an individual, small group, or class story.

Really Good Bulletin Boards: Making Your Classroom Walls Work For You

October Ideas

Really Good Time Saver

The United States Of America Bulletin Board Set (Item 701636) gives you the map and labels needed to create this bulletin board in record time.

Bucket Fillers

Really Good Time Saver

The Dots On Black Designer Letters (Item 701240) coordinate well with the red background and offer a fun, kid-friendly touch to the base design of the board.
Adjective Tree
Items Needed:
• Paper or fabric for the background
• Bulletin board trim
• Large cutout tree
• Cutout leaves

Are your students stuck on the same adjectives? Create a bulletin board with a large cutout tree in the center and hang leaves on the tree with adjectives. When students are stuck for new words to use in their writing, they can visit the Adjective Tree to pick new words. Students can also add new adjectives to the tree when they find them in their reading passages. It is an easy way to increase vocabulary, enhance descriptive writing, and encourage students to focus in on parts of speech.

Really Good Time Saver
Adapt The Word Tree Poster And Magnet Set (Item 304972) to take the place of the cutout tree and leaves. Its magnetic capabilities make it perfect for small bulletin board spaces.

Who Is Who?
Items Needed:
• Paper or fabric for the background
• Bulletin board trim
• People cutouts

Finding fun ways to make characters come alive and stick in a child’s mind can be tricky. This year, have students imagine what their favorite character would dress up as for Halloween. Use a Halloween border around the white paper-covered bulletin board and have students decorate people cutouts to represent their favorite character in costume. Have a small box of scrap fabrics, lace trim, googly eyes, and more on the table below the bulletin board and turn it into a station. Not only do they have to tell what their character is decorated as, but they also have to give a good, story-based reason as to why they think the character would dress like that for Halloween. Students will have fun with the board, and it will be a great way to sneak in some of the art that many teachers are now tasked with teaching in the regular classroom.

Really Good Time Saver
For miniature characters that can double as stick puppets, the Pick A Student Sticks Refill Kit (Item 157931) offers instant character bases.

What’s So Funny?
Items Needed:
• Comics from the Sunday paper
• Bulletin board trim
• Kid-friendly jokes

Kid-friendly jokes are a great way to introduce humor, perspective, and concise writing to your students. Start by covering your bulletin board with the comics from the Sunday paper (if you can find them) and edging it in a solid-color border. Using some kid-friendly jokes, encourage students to discuss point of view (who is telling the joke?), different types of humor (does everyone find the same thing funny?), and why it is important to choose words carefully to make the biggest impact. Brainstorm some possible topics for jokes and have students present their top three for display on the bulletin board. It is a great way to build your own kid-friendly joke collection and get your students smiling and laughing.

Really Good Time Saver
One of the most well known comic strips is Peanuts and the Peanuts Gang Deco Trim (Item 701373) is a fun way to enhance the bulletin board.
Month-By-Month Ideas
Really Good Bulletin Boards: Making Your Classroom Walls Work For You

Fall for Reading

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Bulletin board lettering
- Leaf cutouts

Setting goals is essential for achieving success. If you want your students to become good readers this year, have them set goals for how many books they will read during the school year. Decorate the bulletin board with the words, “We Are Falling for Reading!” Around the title, hang leaf cutouts that students have labeled with their names and their reading goals. This is a perfect bulletin board to have on display during parent/teacher conferences!

Really Good Time Saver
Use the Leaf Shape Sponges (Item 160364) as templates for students to trace their leaves for the bulletin board or the Spring And Autumn Leaves (Item 160419) for instant leaves.

November Ideas

I Will Stand Up to Bullying

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Bulletin board lettering
- Bullying prevention information sheet

October is Bullying Awareness Month, but there is no better time to talk about bullying and cyber-bullying than during the season where giving thanks is stressed. In November, turn your bulletin board into a talking point and research station for bullying awareness. Cover the board with plain white paper and in the center put a sign that says, "I Will Stand Up to Bullying." Have resource material available under the board or attached to it that list the signs of bullying, what to look for when others are being bullied, and how to stand up to bullying. In a lesson, or during center time, have students write short essays about what they have learned and how they can stand up to bullying when they see it. The final drafts can be written on face-shaped paper and, when they are all finished, can be hung on the bulletin board itself.

Really Good Time Saver
Use the Stand Up, Speak Out Strategies 8-In-1 Poster Set (Item 157406) to start a discussion with students about what bullying is, what it looks like, and what they can do to prevent it.
Thanksgiving Dinner

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Local grocery store ads in a folder
- Master menu list for Thanksgiving dinner
- Turkey-shaped cutouts

Planning Thanksgiving takes a lot of coordinating of schedules and budgets. Turn one bulletin board into a Thanksgiving Dinner meal planning station that makes students use their knowledge of math to make sure that everything gets done on time. Cover the board with a Thanksgiving theme print or plain brown paper (paper bags also work well). Hang a file folder with a variety of local grocery store ads. In the center of the board hang a Thanksgiving Day menu and decorate the rest of the board with holiday images. Students are then tasked to look through the ads and find the lowest prices for each item on the menu. They have to compare and contrast the ads, analyze quantity vs. price, and add the cost of the items to determine the amount of money it will take to host Thanksgiving dinner. When they are finished they can write their total cost on a turkey shaped cutout.

Care Package Math

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Grocery and drug store circulars
- Page protectors

Cover the bulletin board with plain paper and hang page protectors filled with store and grocery ads from hooks or tacks on the board. Give students the task of creating “Care Packages” for a local homeless shelter, servicemen...

December Ideas

Snowflake Fun

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Cutout snowflakes

Create a bulletin board designed around snowflakes and language arts for December fun. Have students cut out their own snowflakes after discussing how no two snowflakes are alike, but that each is unique and special on its own. On their snowflake cutouts, ask students to write something that brings them happiness to coordinate with the bulletin board set’s saying. What they write should be tailored to their grade level and ability. Hang their snowflakes on the board or from fishing line from the ceiling.

I Feel...

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Smiley face cutouts

Identifying words that authors use to express feelings is an important skill to learn when reading. For those first grade students who are turning their attention to feeling words, a collaborative bulletin board is just the thing they need to build their vocabulary and word recognition skills. Use a piece of solid-colored fabric as the background and trim the board with smiley faces. As students are reading, either individually or in pairs (a perfect idea for the Daily 5 concept), have them jot down the words that express feelings. At the end of the lesson or center time, they can hang their circles on the bulletin board. Not only does it encourage them to actively search for feeling words, but it also gets them writing and reading other words that their peers have discovered in their own texts.
and women overseas, or victims of a natural disaster. Allow them to include whatever they would like in the packages, but the value of all of the items should not go above a certain limit (you can adjust it to $10, $15, $25, etc., depending on what makes sense for your students’ abilities). They must then create a “Care Package Proposal” that includes a list of what to include in the care package, the price, and the justification for items. For example, is a frozen turkey appropriate to ship to someone overseas or would it make more sense to send powdered drinks or energy bars? If you have multiple copies of the ads, let students cut out their care package items and attach them to their “Care Package Proposals.”

Pay It Forward

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- Sticky notes
- Pen
- Basket

There is so much focus on “getting” during the holiday season that sometimes “giving” takes a back seat. Use the holiday season to re-focus your students’ attention on how good it feels to give back and pay it forward. Cover a bulletin board with plain paper and have a stack of sticky notes and a pen in a basket beneath the board. Label the board “Pay It Forward” and encourage students to do just that during the holiday season. If you are using the bucket filler theme in your school, this is a perfect tie-in as it focuses on doing for others while asking nothing in return. As students “pay it forward” during the season, ask them to record their actions on sticky notes and hang them on the board. Make it a class goal to cover the board in sticky notes before the end of the month.

Christmas Around the World

Items Needed:
- Paper or fabric for the background
- Bulletin board trim
- World map

Start by covering the bulletin board in plain paper or fabric. Light blue is always a good choice and can be left up when you transition your board for January. In the center place a large map poster. You can then assign students different countries to research or you can put up blurbs about each country’s celebrations. Expand the unit by having students create a file folder or lap book that details their country. The lap books or folders can then be stored in a basket on a table below the board. Use a template to have students read through and learn about the different countries.

Really Good Time Saver

The World Map Bulletin Board Set (Item 159926) has everything needed for the base image of this bulletin board.
Conclusion

While bulletin boards can take awhile, they are great tools for your students. Try something different this year and make your bulletin boards work for you! Check out all of the Really Good Stuff Free e-Books online. You will find help with everything from Using Social Media in the Classroom to Back-to-School Night.

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