

Bulletin Boards

Loose Parts & Natural Materials

Collecting, Sorting, & Exploring Materials



Our class has been thoroughly enjoying the outdoors, in which we observe children exploring various natural materials. To expand on their interest and learning, we decided to collect some natural materials to bring back to our classroom to keep the investigation going!



The Hundred Languages of Self Expression



Understanding that all children have their own unique approaches to learning, we've offered our collection of loose parts and natural materials along with other artistic mediums, including, clay, paint, & glue, and craft items.





The Importance of Bulletin Boards & Panels

Bulletin boards (or documentation boards/panels) play a significant role in and around the classroom, serving as powerful tools for communication, learning, and community building. They are more than just decorative elements; they have clear objectives and require thoughtful planning to maximize their impact. Main objectives include:

- **Display Learning Processes:** Bulletin boards should highlight the journey of learning, showcasing the steps children take in their projects and experiences. This emphasizes the importance of the learning process over the final product.
- **Reflect Individuality:** They should represent the unique contributions and perspectives of each child, making every student feel valued and seen.
- **Encourage Interaction:** Bulletin boards can be interactive, inviting children to contribute their thoughts, questions, and work, fostering a sense of ownership and engagement.
- **Enhance Communication:** They provide a visual communication platform for teachers, children, and parents, sharing what's happening in the classroom and creating a bridge between home and school.
- **Support Learning Objectives:** They reinforce key concepts and investigations being explored in the classroom, making learning visible and accessible.
- **Provide Information:** Bulletin boards can offer informative content by displaying imagery and vocabulary related to the current unit of investigation. This not only supports the children's learning but also helps to immerse them in the subject matter.

Different Types of Bulletin Boards

There are various types of bulletin boards and documentation panels, including:

- Long-Term Investigation / Learning Journey Boards
- Documentation Panels
- Art Galleries
- Investigation Stations
- Community Connection Boards

These boards can serve as valuable tools for showcasing children's learning experiences and fostering a rich learning environment. These displays not only showcase children's learning but also provide opportunities for reflection, inquiry, and collaboration among students, teachers, and families.

Long-Term Investigation / Learning Journey Boards: These boards cumulatively summarize the ongoing investigation and learning journey of the class over an extended period of time. They showcase photographs, artwork, writing samples, and other artifacts, illustrating the collective progress and interests of the group across weeks or months. Serving as a visual narrative, these boards depict the continuity and progression of collaborative learning, encouraging reflection on past experiences and setting goals for future exploration.



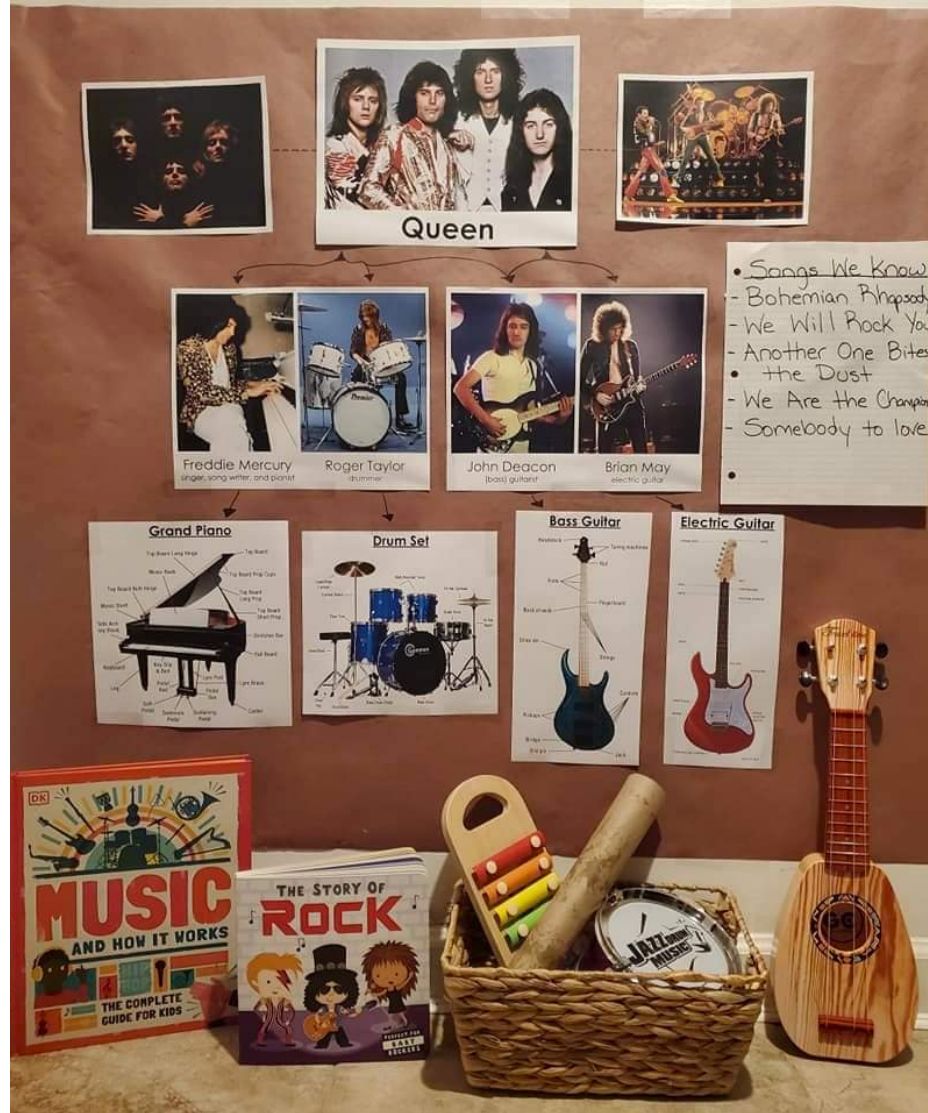
Documentation Panels: Positioned strategically throughout the classroom, documentation panels serve as dynamic displays that make learning visible in each center while allowing children to review their experiences reflected back to them. These panels offer snapshots of children's inquiries, explorations, and experiences, featuring photographs, anecdotes, quotes, and samples of their work.

Whether located in the art center, science corner, blocks area, or dramatic play space, documentation panels provide insights into children's learning across various domains and contexts. As children revisit these panels, they gain opportunities to see their experiences and contributions recognized, empowering them to take ownership of their learning journey and build upon their previous explorations.

Art Galleries: These galleries can showcase a variety of artwork (paint or sculptures), capturing the diverse and individual ways children express themselves creatively. Alongside tangible artwork, you may find snapshots or descriptions of the children engrossed in their experiences. Through these displays we honor the child's exploration, experimentation, self-expression, discoveries, creativity, and individuality.



Investigation Stations: These informative boards serve as focal points within early childhood classrooms, offering a curated space dedicated to a particular area of interest or ongoing investigation. These stations are carefully designed to provide children with an immersive learning experience, offering a wealth of resources, artifacts, and interactive materials related to the chosen topic. From books and specimens to hands-on activities and multimedia resources, each investigation station is thoughtfully curated to engage children's curiosity and promote deeper exploration. These boards not only provide a rich learning environment but also serve as a reference point for children to revisit and further investigate their interests.



Community Connection Boards: These boards serve as bridges between the classroom and the wider community, offering glimpses into the children's experiences and learning journeys. Located in the hallway, these boards showcase a curated selection of artwork, photographs, and documentation panels that reflect the children's interests and contributions within the classroom. Through these displays, families, visitors, and passersby are invited to celebrate and engage with the children's learning experiences, fostering a sense of connection and belonging within the broader community. As these boards evolve over time, they continue to serve as a dynamic reflection of the children's growth, development, and unique perspectives, enriching the community's understanding and appreciation of early childhood.



Bulletin Board Alternatives

Instead of This...	Try This...
Bright, store-bought borders	Neutral, natural materials like wood or cork frames or even no frame
Pre-made cutouts and decorations	Children's artwork and natural objects they've collected (leaves, flowers)
Generic, mass-produced posters	Customized, child-created work on documentation panels
Simple labels	Detailed captions with children's quotes and reflections
Cluttered, overcrowded boards	Clean, organized layouts with clear sections
Seasonal or holiday themes unrelated to curriculum	Themes and content directly related to current learning topics
Teacher-created displays	Child-led contributions and representation
Mass-produced crafts where all children create the same thing	Individual art projects that allow for personal expression and creativity
Static content such as birthdays that don't change and don't offer much	Rotating, relevant content that reflects current learning experiences

Why Neutral Colors? Let's Compare!



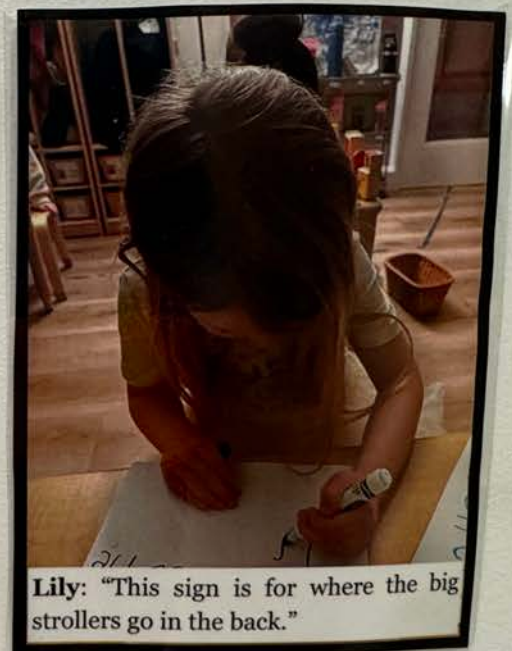
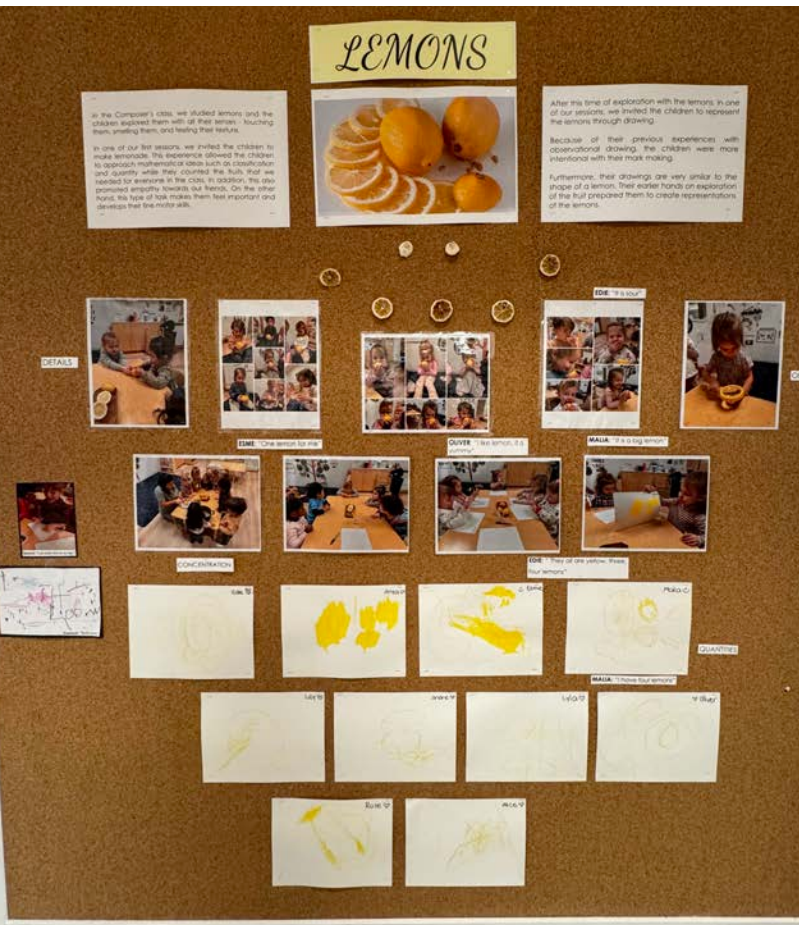
Starry Night,
by Vincent Van Gogh



Starry Night,
by Vincent Van Gogh

Neutral colors highlight the work without distraction, similar to how museums use neutral walls to make artwork stand out. This approach emphasizes the importance of the actual creations and experiences, making them the focal point, enhancing focus & appreciation.

Inspiration Gallery





MADE FOR CHILDREN. DESIGNED FOR YOU.

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