Ensuring a "Print-Rich" Environment

Here are some ideas for ensuring a print-rich environment:

*Use print to label things that children use and where their things belong:*
  - Names and symbols/photos on cubbies or personal item bins or near coat hooks.
  - Labels on shelves or containers used to hold materials.
  - Labels that name things (e.g., “pet food”).
  - Labels that say what items are stored on supply shelves or in closets.

*Use print to remind children what to do:*
  - Signs near the sink that show proper hand washing procedure.
  - A list of a few simple rules.
  - Instructions for pet care.
  - Signs made by children to protect their work (e.g., “Please do not touch my building”).

*Use print to provide information:*
  - Bulletin boards (post notices to parents, interesting pictures, stories, project work).
  - Recipe cards or charts.
  - Children's names on artwork (written by children or dictated to you).
  - Descriptions of children's artwork (dictated to you).
  - Sentence strips that quote the children's observations.
  - Alphabet charts hung at children's eye level.
Use print that asks children to respond or contribute:

☞ Sign-up sheets (e.g., for children to check out books to take home).

☞ Surveys in which children can answer a question by writing their names in the appropriate place (e.g., “What kind of fruit do you want for a snack-apples or bananas?”).

☞ Attendance charts (e.g., children can put name cards in a slot on the chart, write their names on a large piece of paper, or put checks next to their names on a list).

☞ Helper charts so children can sign up for jobs.

☞ Message boards to let children and adults send and receive messages.

☞ Language experience charts where you can write children’s stories, memories of a shared experience, poems, interesting words, comments, and ideas.

Special Tips

🌟 Use English and home languages of the children in your care.

🌟 Post at children’s eye level. Male print large enough to be seen from across the room.

🌟 Let children see you making signs so they will know why and how print is used.

1 Taken from Koralek, D.G., and Colker, L.J. Using Print in the Environment.