



Ensuring a "Print-Rich" Environment¹

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. Make 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.