



Welcome To My Classroom Management Menagerie

Calendar Bear: Proudly wears the sweater of the month.

Chico: Is the head monkey that welcomes my students to school and introduces *Chicka Chicka Boom Welcome To Our Classroom*.

Chips: Is another monkey, that's a realistic puppet and is Chico's best bud. He's bananas over bananas and loves to make the ooo-ooo noise.

Chloe Creative Chloe, She loves school! She loves to color and create things! And she especially LOVES books and reading.

Color Bear & Baby Colores: They hold the color crayon of the day and the color word.

Color Sock Puppets:, Amarillo, Anaranjado, Azul, Blanco, Café, Morado Negro, Rojo, Verde are my Spanish sock puppets friends. They introduce the color of the week.

Fergie: Is a frog back pack that hangs next to the story time theatre. He sometimes has treats in his pouch for the children. Sometimes these treats are invisible. Mrs. Henderson will hold one up and describe it to the children, they'll guess what it is and she'll do a magic trick to produce 21 of those treats in her magical pot or change bag. Sometimes the things are simply in Fergie's backpack. Sometimes he has the afternoon's lesson inside.

Ferdinand and friends: Shows how to appropriately sit and show self-control. He is leaping into learning just like they are. Any one of Ferdinand's friends go along to funerals and to the hospital when those types of sort-of scary places have to be visited by one of our classmates. They are accompanied by a letter. It's just a little frog that they can hold to remind them that their classmates are thinking of them and that they have friends and a teacher that love them and wish them well during this stressful time. When they return to class they bring our classroom friend back too.

Leo: Guards the *Laundry Line of Learning*. He's also the resident shenanigan expert. His paw-thumbs are "up" when he hasn't pulled a fast one, and his paw-thumbs are "down" when he's messed with the laundry line and mixed up all of the numbers. It's my students' job to tell me what's wrong with the laundry line and put the numbers back in the correct order. It's a great exercise in spatial directions too. They'll often say the 9 is wrong put it by the 10, so I'll put it in front of the 10, and they'll say "No! no! BEHIND or AFTER or at the END of the 10! We have lots of fun with Leo. He sits in the chalk sill below his Laundry Line.

Letter Ladies: Laticia, Lily, & Lorna They Live outside the Letter box. Inside my black mailbox are chunky plastic Letters. A Lucky Lad or Lassie gets to put their hand inside, feel around and see if they can pick the letter of the day. If it's wrong... better Luck next time, and the children tell them what the correct letter is and teacher finds it and has another child place it on our growing alphabet Line. It's just another fun way to review the Letter of the Day and get my students involved in a hands-on activity. ☺

Marvin: Is my super-duper shutter-upper sniffle-stopper monkey. He holds a blanket in his mouth that unrolls. If a child comes in they can hold Marvin. If they are tired, cranky or don't feel well, they can unroll the blanket and go lie on a bean bag in the corner.

Merlin: Is my resident Magical Magician Bear. is in charge of when we do or don't do a magic trick. If my students have not been on their best behavior they lose their trick for the day, or so decides Merlin. One day, after a particularly hectic morning, the children had lost their magic trick for the afternoon. 3 boys were actually over by Merlin's perch negotiating with him! When I asked them what they were doing, (Merlin is in a No-Touch Zone) they told me that Merlin said they could have an extra chance! It's amazing what a little imagination can do! Of course they earned the magic trick back and everyone was exceptionally good! ☺

Miss Frizzle: Is my real Miss Frizzle stuffed doll from the ***Magic School Bus*** series. These are earned videos that the children get to watch on Fridays. She introduces them along with her pal Liz the lizard. She's also in charge of all the other stuffed animals in the video section of the room that match the

storybooks and videos like Clifford, Scooby, Dora, Franklin, Lil Bear, Bearenstain Bears, Alvin etc.

Pokey: A bean bag turtle that's guardian of the pennies and other money jars. I toss her to someone and they get to review a coin with me. They toss her to a friend and they get to review the next coin and so on. Catching and tossing is one of our standards, so this is a quick and quiet way to get that in everyday.

Slider: Is my toucan slide whistle that helps my students get the wiggles out. I blow on it fast or slow and the children sit or stand fast or slow which gets quite hilarious. Of course we end with a very s-l-o-w slide to a sitting position with our hands folded in our laps, followed by a deep refreshing breath.

Squirty: Is a baby monkey that's in charge of the squirt bottle filled with swamp water that I spritz on my students when they come in all hot and sweaty from after lunch recess. It's story time and anyone who wants to be sprayed by squirty and his swamp water closes their eyes.

Tattle: Is a stuffed turtle. Little ones are always tattling. To help them learn the difference I tell them that what they need to say is important, but that Mrs. Henderson doesn't have to hear everything. If someone is not ill, or hurt, breaking a rule or in danger Mrs. Henderson is not the one to tell! Those other kinds of things Tattle would love to hear about it. When a child begins "Johnny said..." and all the other tattling tales... I interrupt and say: "Go tell it to the turtle." Children need someone to spout off to and Tattle The Turtle helps them get little tiffs off their chest. It's also something they can hold on to that gives a little comfort to help relieve the crankies.

Oops! I almost forgot...

Clyde: The “I Can, Toucan” He’s one of my favorite puppets. A waitress actually was wearing him in a restaurant to entertain children. Of course I had to have one. She told me where she bought him and I ran right down and picked out a neon green squawker and named him Clyde. He has a variety of jobs including ringing the chimes to announce story time is about to begin. Or squawking to announce that the timer is about to go off and then leading the Clean Up song. He squawks when someone isn’t lined up correctly, he sits on a non quiet persons shoulder as a reminder that they might not be making a wise choice, he gives kisses to a sad person...Unlike most of my classroom menagerie, my students get to play with Clyde. He also has a brother that is a black crow.

Ribbit: The “What’s Up?” Frog Is a magnet frog. He has magnets on his feet so when I throw him at our white board he sticks! I have our schedule of the day on the board to let my students know what specials and other things will be going on in their day and to generate excitement. The children ask Ribbit if they are going to have library. I toss him in such a way so that if they are having library he will stick to the board and they all clap “Yay!” and if they are not, I toss him so the magnets don’t stick and he falls on the floor, and I say, “Oh it must not be Wednesday (library day). Does anyone know what day it is?” The children thing and give me an answer... “Yes!” It’s Friday. That means we have computers. Let’s ask Ribbet if we have computer class today. It’s just a fun little bit of nonsense that holds my students’ attention to explain the board so that it’s not boring instead of the same old “Today we have gym etc..”

Sooo Welcome to my

ZOO! Where a variety of puppets also live.

I have over 100! What can I say...I'm addicted. I have a puppet for just about everything. They are perfect to introduce stories, math & science concepts. I make a lot of them from stuffed animals that I buy for a quarter and .50¢ at garage sales. Just slit the bottom open and pull the stuffing out of everything except the head and wahla! instant puppet. The bottom usually curls inside on its own, so no need to hem if you don't have time. If you're fussy but don't want to sew, use stitch witchery and an iron or hot glue to finish the raw edges.

Well that's it. I hope you got some ideas for your classroom. **If you have a classroom management mascot or tip, won't you please take a moment to care and share!**