



## Quick Tips When Decorating Your Room

- ❖ Add some hanging plants. One or two by or in between windows add such pizzazz and hominess! Great for a science extension too. Put one of those Glass watering balls in and save the hassle of always having to climb up there to water. You can add a few silk floral sprigs when the seasons change. Mums for fall, Poinsettias in December, Daisies in May etc.
- ❖ Bright Happy Rainbow Colors or Soft & Warm Pastel Colors
- ❖ Solid Colors, avoid plaids, paisleys and patterns
- ❖ Mood lighting. Add lava, glitter glob & bubble lamps, an aquarium, tall torchier lamps whose lights go straight up. Cute bases that add color and interest. I have a school house, school bus and ABC block table lamps.
- ❖ A solid-color valance across the windows makes things warm. Buy a rod that extends and springs into place. Sew a double hem on an 18 inch long piece of fabric by whatever width you need (allow some nice ruffles) and you're set!) (Get an extra spring-rod and use it to make a puppet curtain for your door. Instant puppet theatre for your little ones that they can't knock over!)
- ❖ Make sure all your tubs are the same type or color or size. It's a bit expensive at 1<sup>st</sup> but so worth it because of the non-cluttered and neat look it creates.
- ❖ Instead of having shelving units facing the doorway, angle them, make them face the side walls, face them with their plain backs to the doorway. I used the metal ones to display a poster, let the children put up magnetic manipulatives,

and even spray-painted one with black chalkboard paint so they could write on it with chalk.

- ❖ When you 1<sup>st</sup> walk in, things look spacious and neat because you are not looking at rows of shelves cluttered with stuff. If your shelving units are built in and you don't have tubs that are all the same size and color and things on the shelves look quite busy and cluttered, cover them up using those same extension rods. Measure from top to bottom the area you need to cover and make a curtain out of cute fabric or solid colored fabric. Children can easily pick it up to see what's underneath. Or because they are so easy to put back in, simply take them off when your children are using those items and put them back on when they are done. Only cover the shelving that needs to be covered. The shelves with the nice tubs that have tubs that are all the same size and colored look very attractive.
- ❖ I buy those Sauder™ ½½ size shelving units that you can easily put together. They often go on sale and have 2 to 3 shelves on them. I make an area with them that's sort of like a box. The shelves are all facing the wall. I put posters on the back. I also use my book rack as part of that building area, and a square wooden box. Children can use bean bags behind it as a kind of quiet place to "read" or rest.
- ❖ Crates are great to stack and perfect as "dumps" for books, toys, and puppets.
- ❖ Heavy-Duty storage units that have pull out drawers with handles are perfect as "dumps" for toys. I have two in my room. I label them with a picture of what's inside. Children can simply pull out a drawer and carry it to the carpet and play with what's inside. They can also dump the entire thing out if they want to. Clean up is easy because they just toss it all back into the drawer and carry it back to the empty slot.
- ❖ The children can only take ONE thing out at a time. If they want something else to play with they merely pick up that tub and put it away and get out another. A timer rings for

- clean up and another one for when they should be done. Whatever is not cleaned up they are not allowed to take out the next day. This “tough love” approach really works. They are speedier the next day, and the students learn to pitch in and help their friends as well.
- ❖ I also like the new fold-up fabric boxes. They come in a variety of colors and sizes. They too are perfect “dumps” for toys. I have puppets and books and plush in mine. In the hallway I keep our Take Home Folders and Library books in them. I also like to use laundry baskets for books as well as our lunch boxes.
  - ❖ Solid-colored plastic table cloths add a dash of color to your room, hide stuff that you want to store underneath the table without your room looking cluttered & messy and double as a protective cover for your tables when your students do messy art projects. I buy mine at the Dollar Store so they are inexpensive as well and can be cut to fit any table.
  - ❖ Big Toy Box-Size Tubs are perfect for Dress up clothes and waffle blocks. I shove these under my large tables so they are out of the way.
  - ❖ Instead of shoving your kitchen furniture up against a wall, use it as the wall to make a little kitchen area for your students to play in. I bought a big toy box to throw all the dishes and plastic food in for easy clean up and so that the cupboard doors and sink are not filled to overflowing and can't be closed. An apron, pot holder, little area rug and table cloth all go in there as well.
  - ❖ Make all your b. board coverings neutral so you can use them all year. It's also less busy looking because what you put up there is busy enough.
  - ❖ I don't put borders around my b. boards, it's more money and adds to the busy-ness. I cut them in half and use them for covers for little books, for bookmarks, for inexpensive birthday crowns, and out in the hallway to make a bulletin board out of a plain wall.

- ❖ I don't hang things from the ceiling in my room. It adds to the busy-ness and makes things look crazy and cluttered. I think when things look chaotic children, especially those with ADHD are more hyper and noisier. I decorate our hallway to the hilt. It builds the children's self-esteem to see all of their work, and the entire school passing by, as well as visiting adults get to see what we're doing/studying.
- ❖ The one thing I like to hang from the ceiling here and there are a few mobiles, plus 3 spheres: 1 small, 1 medium and 1 large so that I can teach those math concepts.
- ❖ I set 3 big tables up in a u-shape. I can glide in and out and visit easily. The room does not look boxed in and remains open and airy and bigger looking.
- ❖ Every teacher should have an area that's "theirs". I "made" my desk out of a big long table and flanked it with two 2-drawer filing cabinets. I keep calendar "stuff" in one and birthday "stuff" in another. I keep student "files" in several crates under my desk so that I can easily tote them around.
- ❖ I no longer file "everything". Parents whose children are "passing" everything don't need proof so I simply put all the papers of the children who passed the assessment in one folder. It's always chronological with the most current in the front with each month paper clipped. Any student who didn't pass is in another folder. Those "might" be the ones I need "proof" on. I also have a "Re-Assess" paper with their name on it. So when it comes time to do assessments again I simply pull that folder and I don't have to wonder who I do and don't have to test. It's all there. I also don't have to spend hours filing each child's papers.
- ❖ I also have only ONE folder labeled Parental Communication. Any notes that I've sent home to a parent about behavior problems etc. goes into one folder instead of a child's individual folder. Again a great time-saver and I've only had to refer to these 2 files twice in the 10 years I've been teaching. To think of all the hours I wasted individually filing stuff in the past before I wised up!!!!

- ❖ I have a built-in counter that I also use as a “desk extension”. I bought three plastic 3 drawer dealies on wheels to store “teacher stuff” in.
- ❖ Remember to add a few cork boards to the walls and collage family pictures and favorite quotes so your students can see that you are “real” and have a life outside of teaching. Mine were surprised that: I had a mom! And that I was a grama! 😊 They thought it was “way cool” that I had a twin sister and that my husband has a beard.
- ❖ I have a wooden shelving unit on this counter and of course it is up against the wall facing a wall and not facing frontwards for a non cluttered look.
- ❖ I used a CD stand for a sort of knick knack shelf to build things “up” so everything wasn’t all on the “bottom” of my “desk decorating” and put it behind my computer screen.
- ❖ You can see pictures of my room on the video as well as IN my CLASSROOM section of the website.
- ❖ I have a little refrigerator and a micro wave that come in very handy for snacks.
- ❖ My Circle of Friends carpet is bright blue and goes with my bright rainbow color theme.
- ❖ My accent color is white and I use a white rocking chair for my reading corner because I think it makes my room look like a home.
- ❖ My white board is where all the Table Top lessons appear and my black board contains all kinds of calendar extensions.
- ❖ Well there you have it. I hope this helped you get some ideas for your room.
- ❖ A pix is worth a t 1000 words so do check out the videos and photos. Happy Decorating! 😊 And if you have some great ideas or want to send in some photos of your classroom we’d love to hear from you!

