

Classroom News Pocket Chart

Designed to meet these objectives:

Language

- Students will identify and write the letters of the alphabet.
- Students will identify and write high frequency words.
- Students will develop vocabulary.
- Students will build complete sentences.
- Students will develop concepts about print.

This easy-to-use pocket chart is a great way to introduce shared writing experiences to your whole class—as you highlight the day's activities. We've included everything you need to review vocabulary, explore new words, model correct language usage, and more. Just hang the chart in a prominent place in your classroom, and students will have a constant visual reminder of the day's focused lesson.

What's Included

- Nylon pocket chart (28" x 36") with ruled write & wipe surface
- 51 "Star Word" sight-word cards
- 21 "Big Word" cards
- 26 letter cards
- 10 "News Flash" cards
- 4 write & wipe markers (red, blue, green, and black)
- Star pointer

Before You Begin

Hang the chart somewhere in your classroom where students can easily see it. Unwrap the cards and place them in the correct storage pockets along the bottom of the chart. (The "News Flash" and "Big Word" cards should be stored together.) Hang the star pointer from the small loop on the right side. Finally, place the markers in the pocket on the upper right side.

Getting Started

Use the write & wipe board to write a brief daily message for students that will encourage them to practice positive reading and writing strategies. You can write this in the form of a letter addressed to students. A typical message might look something like this:

Dear Class,

Today is Monday. We are going to
the zoo. What will we see?

Sincerely,

Miss Johnson

To encourage emerging readers to participate, you can include simple illustrations that help students understand new words. As a challenge to other students, you can try leaving out beginning or ending letters, and then asking students what is missing. This can help reinforce letter-sound correspondence and spelling skills. Have the students use the colored markers to fill in missing letters or to circle the star words they can find!

The bottom portion of the chart can be used to highlight important topics the class is learning about or events happening in your classroom. You can highlight events and concepts by using the following cards:

- **Letter Cards** Each of these cards shows an upper- and lowercase letter of the alphabet. The cards are color-coded, with consonants printed in blue and vowels in red, to make them easy to identify.
- **"Star Word" Cards** These cards feature the first 50 words from Fry's list of essential sight-words. We've also included a blank card with a reusable wet-erase surface, so you can create your own "Star Word" card. The words included are:

the	he	at	but	there
of	was	be	not	use
and	for	this	what	an
a	on	have	all	each
to	are	from	were	which
in	as	or	we	she
is	with	one	when	do
you	his	had	your	how
that	they	by	can	their
it	I	word	said	if

- **“Big Word” Cards** These cards feature a selection of multisyllabic words that are commonly used in early childhood classrooms. There is also a blank wet-erase card. Here, you can write any vocabulary word that you would like to highlight during your lesson. The words included are:

experiment	imagination	illustration
author	friendship	responsibility
citizenship	neighborhood	community
tradition	brilliant	humongous
gigantic	stupendous	wonderful
beautiful	fantastic	delightful
terrific	tremendous	

- **“News Flash” Cards** Each of these cards features a sentence that describes a common event in an early childhood classroom. We have also included a blank card with a wet-erase surface. This card can be used to write about an upcoming event that is unique to your classroom. The cards included are:

It is _____ birthday.	We have P.E.
We have a field trip.	It is a holiday.
We have art.	We have an assembly.
We have a special visitor.	We have music.
We have library time.	

Suggested Activities

- **Fill In the Blank** One of the goals of the daily message is to reinforce students’ phonics skills, particularly their understanding of letter-sound correspondence. When writing your daily message, leave out certain letters in words, such as the first or last letter. You might choose a specific letter you are studying in class, or the letter you have highlighted in the “What are we learning?” section of the chart. Ask students to come to the front of the class and fill in the missing letter(s). As students become better readers, you can leave out complete words (such as the sight-word you’ve highlighted for the day), and then have students fill in the word.
- **Word Sleuth** Ask a volunteer to come to the chart and use the star pointer or a marker to point, circle, or underline certain letters or words in the message. Students can use one of the different-colored markers to make the letter or word really stand out.

- **Find the Mistake** Students love to catch their teacher making a mistake! When writing your daily message, intentionally leave out punctuation, use upper- or lowercase letters incorrectly, or write your message with incorrect spacing. Reward students for catching your mistakes, encouraging them to look closely at the messages you put on the chart.
- **Clap It Out** As you read the daily message aloud with your class, clap out each syllable together. This activity is a great way to develop your students' phonemic awareness.
- **Ask Questions** Use the daily message to ask students a question that has a variety of answers, such as, "What is your favorite pet?" Then, create a space to record their answers on the board, either with numbers or tally marks. Count the number of students who gave each response, integrating simple math concepts into your daily message.
- **Writing Helper** Each day, choose a student to be your Writing Helper. Let her fill in the missing parts of the daily message. She can also use the star pointer to highlight skills or words that you are discussing with the class.
- **Big Word Bonanza** Reinforce the big word that you are highlighting for the day—and get students excited about using it themselves—by using it in your daily message. After discussing the word, ask a volunteer to use it in a sentence.
You can also play a simple game. Tell students that you are going to use the word at some point during the day. If they "catch" you using it, they should raise their hands. This is a fun way to help students practice their listening skills throughout the day.
- **Rhyme Time** Use rhyming words in your daily message. Highlight words that rhyme by writing them in contrasting colors, using the different-colored markers included with the chart.

Caring for Write & Wipe Surfaces

Be sure to use only dry-erase markers on the write & wipe board. Use only wet-erase markers on the blank "Big Word," "Star Word," and "News Flash" cards. Erase markings with a damp cloth. Do not leave markings on the board or cards overnight.