

Greeting Time and Message Board: A Summary

Greeting time is a transition from home to school in which teachers welcome children and families into the preschool setting. Included during greeting time is message board, which is a time for sharing information with children about their day.

What Is Greeting Time

- A separation from home and an introduction to school.
- A time for sharing stories and experiences.
- An opportunity for interactions with adults and peers.
- A time for reading books.

What Is Message Board

- An interactive way to share information about the upcoming day.
- A social time for adults and children to gather as a community.
- A shared time together to discover what is going to happen in the classroom.
- A whiteboard, chalkboard, or chart paper.
- A time for adults to engage children in uncovering messages, interpreting, reading, writing, and correcting messages.
- A time to introduce children to the functions of pictures, symbols, words, and numbers.

Why Are Greeting Time and Message Board Important

- Build a sense of community in the classroom.
- Supports children's understanding of the daily routine.
- Helps children with feelings of separation.
- Helps children prepare for any changes to the daily routine or classroom environment.
- Gives children a sense of control.
- Supports children's language, literacy, and math learning.
- Models purposeful writing.
- Gives children an opportunity to practice reading drawings, symbols, and words with a teacher's guidance.
- Acts as a springboard for classroom discussions or problem solving.

What Children Do at Greeting Time and Message Board

- Share different emotions (e.g., feelings of separation, excitement about something new to them, looking forward to the new day, seeing their friends).
- Put their belongings away.
- Sign their name on the sign-in sheet.
- Read stories, write on dry erase boards, put together puzzles.
- Interact with adults and peers.
- Participate in reading child-relevant messages about their day.
- Correct mistakes made on the message board.
- Transition to the next part of the day.

Basics of Greeting Time and Message Board

- Occurs daily for 10–15 minutes.
- Children and parents are greeted by name.
- Adults help children with feelings of separation by acknowledging their feelings and offering comfort.
- Happens in a consistent location where there is enough room for the whole group.
- Adults provide materials such as books and/or dry erase boards with markers.
- Books and materials are cleaned up prior to reading message board.
- Message board is prepared ahead of time with messages covered.
- Child-relevant messages are written on the message board (the *who*, *what*, *where*, and *when* of their time at school).
- All children and adults participate in reading and correcting child-relevant messages.

Greeting Time and Message Board Checklist

Establish a consistent greeting time and message board within the daily routine.

Greeting Time

- 10–15-minutes with Message Board included
- Adults greet children and parents by name
- Children enter at the beginning of the day at their own pace
- Children put away their personal belongings
- Children may wash hands and get ready for breakfast
- Adults provide consistent transitional activities for children (e.g., sign in sheet, books to read, dry erase boards and markers, puzzles, etc.) each day until time for message board, if applicable
- Adults help children separate from their parents/guardians
 - Acknowledge children’s feelings
 - Offer personal comfort item/picture
 - Provide affection as needed
 - Provide a ritual of saying goodbye
 - Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay until child is ready for them to leave
 - Parents/guardians are encouraged to have a consistent morning ritual for saying goodbye

Message Board

- 5-10 minutes
- Prepare message board ahead of time
- Write messages on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or large piece of paper
- Keep drawings and written messages simple and brief to support all developmental levels of learning. Use the following to create your messages:
 - Drawings
 - Pictures/photos
 - Real objects
 - Symbols
 - Words and numbers
- Identify each message with a numeral.
- Keep each message covered until it is ready to be revealed.
- Position the message board at children’s level.
- Reveal one message at a time in sequence as you read them with children.
- Keep a marker/eraser near the board for any corrections, changes, and/or additions.
- Use common messages which include:
 - Who’s not here?
 - New materials
 - Changes in the daily routine
 - Classroom visitors
 - Classroom dilemmas

- Use common classroom symbols
 - Personal symbols
 - Symbols of the school building and common spaces
 - Classroom area symbols
 - Symbols for parts of the daily routine

Strategies for Reading Messages with Children

- Model reading a message left to right and top to bottom (e.g., you might say, *When I read a message, I look for pictures, symbols, and words I know.*)
- Identify each message by number. Point to the first message labeled “1.” You might say, *Here is message number one. This is where we start.*
- Identify pictures, symbols, letters, words, and numbers.
- Think aloud as you read a message (e.g., *I see the picture for outside time; it might tell us something about outside time today.*)
- Point out individual elements of a message (e.g., *I see a picture of a paintbrush, our symbol for the art area. Here are the words that say art area.*)
- Talk about letters in familiar words (e.g., *Here’s the letter ‘t’ in the word toy. Tommy’s name also starts with the letter ‘t’.*)

Strategies for Conversing with Children at Message Board

- Ask open-ended questions to engage conversation:
 - Ask, *What do you see?*
 - Ask, *What symbol(s), letters, or words can you read in this message?*
 - Ask, *What part of this message tells us it’s about...?*
 - Ask, *How do you know?*
- Accept and acknowledge all answers given by children
- Set up a concrete way of keeping track of how all children are getting turns with the message board (e.g., pull names by letter link or children’s names on popsicle sticks and call on children by name instead of saying Who wants to..., which lessens conflicts).
- Be aware of engaging all children at their developmental levels in reading messages (younger children can remove the covers, accept all children’s writing and help other children understand ways of writing letters/numbers).

Interactive Read-Aloud Times: A Summary

Interactive read-aloud time is a distinct component of the HighScope daily routine when teachers gather with their small group at the same time each day for an interactive reading experience. Teachers carefully plan these experiences, selecting high-quality children's books in a variety of genres and using interactive reading strategies that support children's active engagement.

What Is Interactive Read-Aloud Time

- A cozy reading time.
- A time to share of idea and experiences.
- An opportunity for conversations between adults and peers.
- An opportunity for exposure to a variety of high-quality children's books in a variety of genres.

Why Is Interactive Read-Aloud Time Important

- Reading aloud with child is the single most important activity for children's later reading success.
- Supports the development of skills needed for formal schooling, including vocabulary, alphabetic and phonemic knowledge, print concepts, and comprehension strategies.
- Provides opportunities for discussions about a range of topics, expanding children's background knowledge.
- Builds children's comprehension and understanding of the world around them.
- Engages children in analytical thinking and conversation.
- Fosters social interactions, a love of literature, and a lifelong passion for reading.

What Children Do at Interactive Read-Aloud Time

- Converse with adult and peers.
- Listen and observe.
- Sit in their own way (e.g., on adult's lap, next to a peer, lay on a pillow).
- Share ideas and experience of their own lives.
- Participate in the book reading (e.g., point to, repeat words, talk about pictures).

Basics of Interactive Read-Aloud Time

- A daily component of the routine.
- 10–15 minutes in length.
- Full-day programs may choose to include several read-aloud times throughout the day.
- Children are divided into a consistent small group with the same adult.
- Takes place in a consistent location for each small group of children so children know where to meet each day.
- Reading locations are cozy spaces where all children in the small group are able to see the book and interact with the adult who is reading aloud.
- Children participate in conversations and actively engage with the book reading according to their own developmental levels of learning.

Interactive Read-Alouds Checklist

- 10–15 minutes
- Daily (e.g., one or two times each day)
- Adults choose a high-quality children’s book.
- Adults prepare for the book reading ahead of time.
 - Study the story first to understand the book (e.g., characters, setting, plot, background knowledge, children’s previous experiences).
 - Identify vocabulary words to introduce.
 - Identify a literacy focus (comprehension, vocabulary, craft and structure, phonological awareness, etc.).
 - Choose stopping points in the text to ask open-ended questions, prompt children to make predictions, or make connections between children’s lived experiences and the storyline.

Before Reading Aloud to Children

- Build anticipation by inviting children to predict what the book might be about by looking at the front and back covers or several illustrations inside the book.
- Introduce the title, author, and illustrator.
- Talk about why the book was chosen to model for children that they can be thoughtful about choosing books for different reasons or purposes. Provide context by:
 - Building upon children’s background knowledge by making connections between what you know about their lived experiences and the story.
 - Providing additional information about unfamiliar settings or concepts that will be introduced in the book.
 - Focusing children’s attention on a story or literacy idea.
- Be selective in choosing literacy ideas that are not overwhelming to children.

While Reading Aloud to Children

- Use the predetermined stopping points to model comprehension strategies, including:
 - Thinking aloud about your own thoughts and questions related to the text.
 - Making predictions, stating what you think might happen next based on your current understanding of the text.
 - Recalling facts or actions in the story that are relevant to a current event.
 - Making inferences and drawing conclusions from information implied by contextual clues rather than explicitly stated in the story (e.g., talk about emotions depicted in the illustrations and relate them to your own experiences).
- Support vocabulary development.
- Pause at times to have children retell parts of the story.
- Acknowledge phonological characteristics of the text, such as rhymes and alliteration.

- Run your finger under words to illustrate concepts of print, such as directionality, and to identify starting points in a line of text.
- Plan opportunities for children's active engagement.
- Pay close attention to children's developmental levels of learning.

After Reading Aloud to Children

- Encourage children to reflect upon and discuss the book.
- Retell actions or events from the story and recall facts.
- Summarize events to uncover themes or messages presented in the book.
- Make connections between the story and personal experiences.
- Make connections between this story and other stories heard previously.
- Review literacy concepts introduced during the reading.
- Plan a transition to the next part of the day.