

Using a Daily Message Board in a Preschool Classroom

What and How

Syllabus

Using a Daily Message Board in a Preschool Classroom



HighScope Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Professional Learning Statement

Advancing racial equity has been at the core of HighScope's vision since its beginnings with the landmark Perry Preschool Study. Building on our history and ongoing work in the field of early childhood education, HighScope has made racial equity, diversity, and inclusion central to all professional development programs. In all aspects of our work, we advocate for equity through awareness and personal reflection as we encourage educators to celebrate, respect, and incorporate diversity in their programs. We intentionally seek to eradicate racism and other inequities that oppress the potential of children, families, and adults from marginalized and underrepresented groups. Through consultation, training, mentoring, and coaching, HighScope's professional learning courses are designed to respond to participants' individual strengths and focus on practical application and implementation in real-world settings.

Participants are expected to reflect on how they can mitigate biases and inequitable practices, as well as

engage with other participants and HighScope trainer(s) on what they are learning and how the content of the course can be used to support the work they do with children and families in their respective early childhood programs and communities. HighScope has established a protocol to ensure that (1) all training content supports participants' knowledge base and practical application and implementation efforts; (2) all training is implemented at the highest level and as intended; and (3) all training and resource materials incorporate REDI practices and address issues of privilege and cultural sensitivity, as well as the importance of humility in our relationships with families and young children.

As we grow more aware of REDI concepts in our lives and practices, we must understand that equity and inclusion require a continual process of growth. It is important to remember that everyone has their own learning curve, and so as we strive for a more equitable and inclusive world for our children, there will be a need for both hope and grace.

Welcome to Using a Daily Message Board in the Preschool Classroom Online Course

Technical Specifications

For this course, you will need a computer with internet access and the ability to listen to audio either through internal or external computer speakers. We recommend using Google Chrome when navigating the HighScope Learning Hub.

Course Materials

All reading assignments can be downloaded directly from the course page (located under your instructor's picture) or within each week's lessons.



Welcome to Using a Daily Message Board in the Preschool Classroom Online Course (continued)

Course Length and Due Dates

This course is four weeks long, including the registration week, which is the first week of the course. Each week runs from Monday to the following Monday. To get the most out of the course, all assignments and activities have been ordered. You will not be able to advance to the next assignment without completing each assignment in order. You must complete all the assignments on time to receive credit for the course. We recommend you log in early in the week to get your assignments so you can plan for your work. For your discussion post assignments, **all initial posts are due by Thursday**, and your **replies are due by midnight the following Monday (EST)**. Please refer to each individual assignment in each week for further due dates.

This course uses a variety of weekly online activities and is estimated to take 4 hours of time per week including “Try It Out” classroom activities:

- **Learning Unit** — This is the content for the week. We recommend that you print the learning unit so you can easily refer to the content as needed. This will take approximately 30 minutes per week.
- **Reading Assignments** — These are the reading assignments for the week. The primary resources for this online course are *Using a Message Board* and *From Message to Meaning* by Suzanne Gainsley. Additional reading assignments may also be included based on a particular topic covered in a given week. We recommend that you print these out as well so you can refer to them even when the course is over. This will take approximately 30 minutes per week.

Welcome to Using a Daily Message Board in the Preschool Classroom Online Course (continued)

*****Note:* There are videos used in this course that support the information from the Learning Unit and Reading Assignments. In some of these videos, you will notice that there are extra adults: these are parents of the children. In the HighScope Demonstration Classroom, message board takes place first thing in the morning and parents are encouraged to stay and participate with their children. However, the teacher-child ratio for the classroom is 16 children with two teachers.

- **Check My Understanding** — This interactive assessment asks you to choose the best answer in a variety of scenarios and questions. This will take approximately 30 minutes per week.
- **Discussions** — These are assignments in which you will practice and apply information covering the learning unit and readings. You will be asked to answer questions, review videos, and/or reflect on things you have learned. You will respond to discussion posts and get feedback from your peers. These discussions will help you gain new insights, see things from another person's perspective, and build a deeper understanding of the topic. This will take approximately 45–60 minutes per week.

Welcome to Using a Daily Message Board in the Preschool Classroom Online Course (continued)

- **Try It Out** — These are assignments in which you will try out strategies or ideas in the classroom. You will be asked to share what happened in your classroom through discussion posts, acknowledgement of feedback from your peers, and/or individual assignments that will be uploaded into Dropbox. These assignments will help you gain new insights, see things from another's perspective, and construct a deeper understanding of the topic. This will take approximately 1–1.5 hours per week.

Remember, all coursework for each week is **due by midnight on the following Monday (EST)**.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to message your facilitator within the HighScope Learning Hub (HSLH).



Registration Week

Objectives

- Introductions of facilitator(s) and participants.
- Become familiar with the course site and features.

Update Your Profile

- Update your HighScope Learning Hub profile (e.g., update information and settings; add a profile picture).
- Explore the course features so you are familiar with where to find information and your facilitator contact information.

Reading Assignments

- Review the syllabus

Discussion

Introduce yourself to the group.

Your first assignment is to introduce yourself to the other participants in this course. You might say something about where you work, the children you work with, and what you hope to get out of this class. Please also feel free to share a little bit about yourself personally!

Read your peers' introductions. Reply to each other to "connect." This is how we get to know each other!

This is not a graded assignment.

Total points possible for Registration Week = 0.

Week 1: What is message board time and how is it different from typical morning circle times?

Objectives

- Define message board
- Describe the purpose of a HighScope message board
- Identify the characteristics of successful message board times
- Recognize the importance of child-relevant messages
- Evaluate relevant messages for preschool children



Week 1: What is message board time and how is it different from typical morning circle times? (continued)

Learning Unit Topics

- What is a HighScope daily message board?
- Purpose of a daily message board
- Characteristics of message board time
- Importance of child-relevant messages
- Identifying child-relevant messages
- Calendar time vs. preschoolers' concept of time
- What is message board and what is not?



Week 1: What is message board time and how is it different from typical morning circle times? (continued)

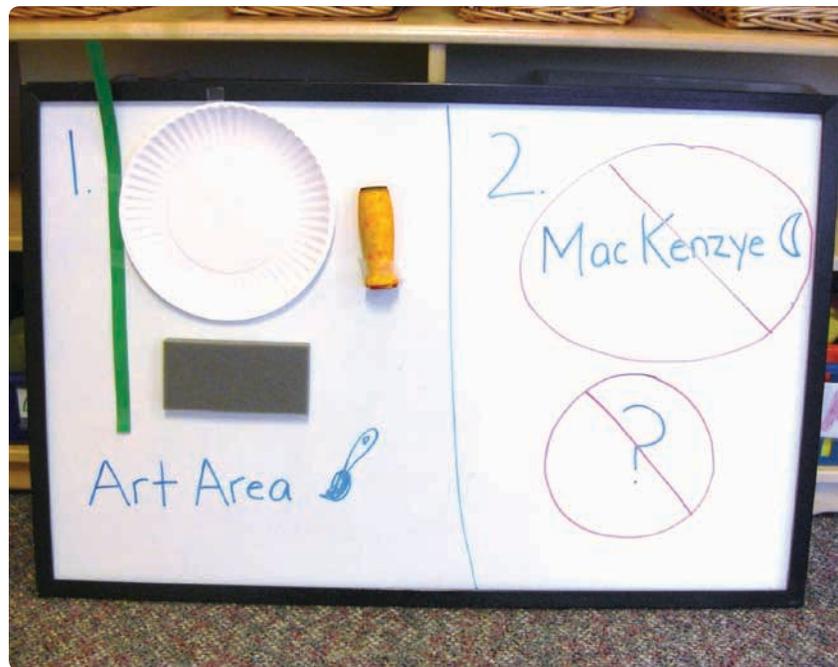
Reading Assignments

- *From Message to Meaning* — Chapter 1

Check My Understanding

Relevant Messages for Children or Not?

Read each message board scenario and determine if the message is relevant and meaningful to children or not. You can refer back to this week's learning unit for this assignment. This assignment is **worth 10 points** (1 point per question). This is due **by the following Monday at midnight (EST)**.



Week 1: What is message board time and how is it different from typical morning circle times? (continued)

Discussion

Thoughts about Using a Daily Message Board with My Preschoolers

Reflect on the reading and learning unit assignments, then answer the following two questions in separate posts.

1. What concerns do you have about sharing these kinds of messages with the children in your classroom? How do you think your children will respond and how do you think it will support them through their routine?
2. Share one strategy that you saw in the videos that you are most excited to try out yourself.

Your response to each question should be a separate post. Initial posts are **worth 10 points each and are due on Thursday at midnight (EST)**.

3. Respond to at least one peer posting of each question. Replies can include sharing your thoughts, connecting a post to your experience, or asking a follow-up question. Replies like “I agree,” “good idea,” or “me too” do not add meaningful insight to the discussion and will not count as replies.

Your replies are **worth 5 points each and are due by the following Monday at midnight (EST)**. The **total possible number of points for this assignment is 30** (20 for initial posts and 10 for your replies).

Week 1: What is message board time and how is it different from typical morning circle times? (continued)

Try It Out

Identifying the Characteristics of Message Board Time

1. Watch the two examples of Message Board Time
 - a. *New Things for the Art Area*
 - b. *Keyboard and Dog Leashes*
2. Look for the characteristics of message board time and how messages are relevant for children, including their understanding of the concept of time. Refer back to the learning unit for the characteristics and description of how young children understand the concept of time.
3. In your initial post, discuss and give examples of how the messages were relevant to the children and how they support young children's understanding of time.

Initial post is **worth 10 points. This is due by Thursday at midnight (EST).**

4. Respond to at least two of your peers by stating whether you agree with them or not and give reasons why. Reasons can include information you learned from the reading and learning unit.

Each reply is **worth 5 points and is due by the following Monday at midnight (EST). Total possible number of points for this assignment is 20** (10 for initial post and 10 for your replies).

Total points possible for Week 1 = 60

Week 2: Creating and Reading the Message Board With Children

Objectives

- Define the process for creating child-relevant messages
- Identify the types of common messages used in the classroom
- Create common symbols to use in the classroom.
- Identify strategies for reading messages and conversing with children



Week 2: Creating and Reading the Message Board With Children (continued)

Learning Unit Topics

- Creating child-relevant messages
- Types of common messages
- Creating a common classroom language
- Reading messages with children
- Conversing with children about messages



Week 2: Creating and Reading the Message Board With Children (continued)

Watching Message Board Time in Action

As a follow-up to this week's learning unit, you will watch several short videos of message board with preschoolers. Using the learning unit, look for each of the examples listed below in the video clips, how teachers represent them on the message board, and how they read and converse with children about each message.

- Types of Common Messages
 - Who's not here?
 - New materials
 - Changes in the daily routine
 - Classroom visitors
 - Classroom dilemmas

- Common Classroom Symbols
 - Personal
 - School building/common spaces
 - Classroom areas
 - Daily routine

Videos:

- *How Many People Does That Make?*
- *Work in Progress Sign*
- *New Things in the Art Area*
- *Christine and Harper*

Week 2: Creating and Reading the Message Board With Children (continued)

Reading Assignments

- *From Message to Meaning* Chapters 2–4
- *Using a Message Board* — Activities pp. 9–16, 23, 33–35, 39–41

Check My Understanding

Which Type of Common Message?

There are five general types of common messages described in the readings and listed below. You can refer back to this week’s learning unit for this assignment. For each scenario, decide which type of common message was used. You might recognize

some of these scenarios from the week one Check My Understanding. It is beneficial to revisit familiar situations and view them through a new lens!

- “Who’s not here”
- New materials
- Changes in the daily routine
- Classroom visitors
- Classroom dilemmas

This assignment is **worth 10 points** (1 point per question). This is **due by the following Monday at midnight (EST)**.

Week 2: Creating and Reading the Message Board With Children (continued)

Discussion

Reflecting on Strategies

1. This week's discussion will involve reflecting on the readings and video examples that you viewed. Share something that stood out to you or that you may still have questions about from each of the following topics covered this week. You may also include any thoughts about incorporating a REDI lens into message board time.

- Types of common messages
- Creating a common classroom language
- Reading and conversing with children about messages

Initial post is **worth 10 points and is due on Thursday at Midnight (EST).**

2. Respond to at least one of your peers' posts. Replies can include sharing your thoughts, connecting a post to your experience, or asking a follow-up question. Replies like "I agree," "good idea," or "me too" do not add meaningful insight to the discussion and will not count as replies.

Your reply is **worth 5 points and is due by the following Monday at midnight (EST).** The **total possible number of points for this assignment is 15** (10 for the initial post and 5 for your reply).

Week 2: Creating and Reading the Message Board With Children (continued)

Try It Out

Using a Message Board Activity

For this assignment you will be creating and trying out a message board with your children using the information you learned from the readings and learning unit. Keeping in mind the developmental levels of your children and how much experience they have had with the message board, choose one message board activity from the noted pages in this week's reading assignment, *Using a Message Board*. Keep a REDI lens in mind as you prepare the message board.

1. Choose your message board activity from this week's reading assignment, *Using a Message Board* — Activities pp. 9–16, 23, 33–35, 39–41.
2. Create your message board.

3. Take a photo of your completed message board.
4. Upload your photo to your initial discussion post (See discussion instructions below).
5. Implement this message board activity with your children using the strategies for reading and conversing at message board.

This assignment is **worth a total of 25 points** (20 points for planning and implementing the activity and 5 points once you upload your photo to your discussion post as outlined below). This is **due by Thursday at midnight (EST)**.

Week 2: Creating and Reading the Message Board With Children (continued)

Discussion

1. Before doing this assignment, complete the Try It Out assignment.
2. In your initial post, share what message board activity (name and page number) you chose, which strategies you used to read and converse with children, and how the children responded. Did you make any modifications based on your group of children? Conclude with what you learned from this experience.
3. Upload your photo to your initial discussion post. After you post your discussion, click the button “Choose file,” select your photo from your computer, then click the save button.

Initial post **is worth 10 points. This is due by Friday at midnight (EST).**

4. Reply to at least two of your peers. Ask each other questions, share ideas, and/or explain how your children responded. Replies like “I agree,” “good idea,” or “me too” do not add meaningful insight to the discussion and will not count as replies.

Each reply is **worth 5 points** (Total possible points = 10). These are **due by the following Monday at midnight (EST)**. The **total possible number of points for this assignment is 20** (10 for your initial post and 10 for your replies).

Total points possible for Week 2 = 70.

Week 3: Strategies for Supporting Curriculum Content at Message Board

Objectives

- Identify strategies for supporting curriculum content (literacy, math, social studies, and social and emotional development) at message board
- Create message boards that challenge children's thinking and problem-solving abilities
- Review guidelines for creating social stories with children



Week 3: Strategies for Supporting Curriculum Content at Message Board (continued)

Learning Unit Topics

- Strategies for Supporting Literacy at Message Board
- Strategies for Supporting Mathematics at Message Board
- Strategies for Supporting Social Studies at Message Board
- Challenge Children by Making Mistakes
- Strategies for Supporting Social and Emotional Development at Message Board
- Guidelines for Creating Social Stories

Reading Assignments

- *From Message to Meaning* — Chapter 5
- *Using a Message Board* — Activities pp 17–21, 25–31, 37
- HighScope Preschool Curriculum Content (KDIs)
- Social Story — Me, You, Us

Week 3: Strategies for Supporting Curriculum Content at Message Board (continued)

Watching Message Board Time in Action

As a follow-up to this week's learning unit, you will watch several short videos of message board with preschoolers. Using the learning unit, look for each of the examples listed below in the video clips, how teachers represent them on the message board, and how they read and converse with children about each message.

- Strategies for Supporting Literacy, Mathematics, and Social Studies at Message Board
- Strategies for Challenging Children by Making Mistakes

Videos:

- *Counting on the Message Board*
- *What to Do With Play Dough?*
- *Correcting the Message Board Mistakes*
- *Literacy and Math at Message Board*

Week 3: Strategies for Supporting Curriculum Content at Message Board (continued)

Check My Understanding

Matching Pictures of Messages to Curriculum Content

For each message board that is pictured, you will determine the corresponding key developmental indicator(s) that children will likely experience while reading the message board together. To see a larger picture of the message board, right click on the picture and select to open it in a new tab. This assignment is **worth 10 points** (2 points for each question). This is **due by the following Monday at midnight (EST)**.



Week 3: Strategies for Supporting Curriculum Content at Message Board (continued)

Discussion

Revisiting Issues and Concerns

Review the issue(s) or concern(s) that you shared in the week one discussion about using the message board with your children.

1. Share your initial issue(s) or concern(s)
2. Share one thing you learned in this course that has helped with this issue or concern.

Your initial post is **worth 10 points** and is **due by Thursday at midnight (EST)**.

3. Respond to at least two of your peers' posts. Ask each other questions and share ideas with one another about what you have learned in the course. Replies like "I agree," "good idea," or "me too" do not add meaningful insights to the discussion and will not count as replies.

Each reply is **worth 5 points and is due by Monday at midnight (EST)**. The **total possible number of points for this assignment is 20** (10 for initial post and 10 for your replies).

Week 3: Strategies for Supporting Curriculum Content at Message Board (continued)

Try It Out

Create Your Own Message Board

For this assignment, you will need to use all that you have learned from each week of this course to create a message for your children. Keep in mind strategies for creating child-relevant messages that include different types of common messages. Remember that your message board should be three or a max of four messages. Keep your children's developmental levels as well as a REDI lens in mind while developing messages that are relevant to your children and their day.

1. Create message(s) that are relevant to your children and their day.
2. Create one message that has a KDI focus (Literacy, Math, or Social Studies) that is relevant to the interests and developmental levels of your children.
3. Take a photo of your completed message board.
4. Upload your photo to your initial discussion post (See discussion instructions below).
5. Implement this message board activity with your children using the reading and conversing strategies at message board time.

This assignment is **worth 25 points** (20 points for planning and implementing the message board and 5 points once you upload your photo to your discussion post as outlined below). This is **due by Thursday at midnight (EST)**.

Week 3: Strategies for Supporting Curriculum Content at Message Board (continued)

Discussion

1. Before doing this assignment, complete the Try It Out assignment.
2. In your initial post, share what messages you included to implement with your children, strategies you used to read and converse with children, and how the children responded. Conclude with what you learned from this experience.
3. Upload your photo to your initial discussion post. After you post your discussion, click the button “Choose file,” select your photo from your computer, then click the save button.

Your initial post is **worth 10 points**. This is **due by Friday at midnight (EST)**.

4. Reply to at least two of your peers. Ask each other questions, share other ideas, and/or explain how your children responded. Replies like “I agree,” “good idea,” or “me too” do not add meaningful insight to the discussion and will not count as replies.

Each reply is **worth 5 points** (Total possible points = 10). These are **due by the following Monday at midnight (EST)**. The **total possible number of points for this assignment is 20** (10 for your initial post and 10 for your replies).

Total points possible for Week 3 = 75.

Evaluation

Course Survey

Please share feedback about your experiences with this course.

Print Your Certificate

Once you have completed all the assignments and passed the course with a minimum of 80%, you will be able to print your certificate. Congratulations!

Click on the “Grades” tab along the top of the HighScope Learning Hub dashboard and then click on “My Certificates” in the left-hand sidebar.

Please print as many copies of your certificate as you need (e.g., one for your records, one for your employer).



Please note: HighScope will not be mailing you a certificate. Your certificate will be housed in the HighScope Learning Hub should you need to access it later.