

I received this email and accompanying pictures on 6.12.06 from Julie Bennett. The pics were taken at the end of the school year, so a lot of things had been taken down, but we get the idea! I love how organized her room is. She has struck what is in my opinion the perfect balance between having a clutter-free room that is not overstimulating, while still creating an inviting, warm atmosphere that makes kids want to learn. I hope you enjoy viewing her pictures as much as I have, and PLEASE send your own photos to be added to the site! :-)

Ms. Powell,

My name is Julie Bennett. I am a 2nd year teacher in Russell, KY. I taught 1st grade last year and will teach it again this year. I love 1st grade. The kids are always so excited to learn new things. I have been searching all over the web for teaching ideas and ideas for a class website. I love your site. I love to find other people who share my addiction for organization. I loved how organized your room was. I got several great ideas from it. I have sent you some pictures of my classroom. These were taken about 1 year ago at the beginning of my first year. I have changed things around since then. I love to move things around! Enjoy!

Julie Bennett



"One thing I am very proud of in my classroom is my word wall. It is bright and cannot be missed. The kids always knew right where to look when they needed to find a word. It is also convenient for me. Many word walls I saw were way up high and teachers had to keep getting up and down on a ladder to put new words up. At the beginning of the year, I had to stand on a chair to get the words on the top row, but as the year went on, I could reach most all of the letters without getting on a chair. "



"When I moved into my room, I realized that I only had 1 bulletin board, when I should have had 2 like every other teacher in my building. As I moved things in, I found this to be a hidden blessing. I could not have put up that big of a word wall anywhere else. I also got to use my marker board as a calendar. In this picture, there is bulletin board paper up, but as the year went on and I rearranged and changed things up I took the paper down. Then, I was able to use the white board as well. The kids could then practice writing the date in different ways, work out daily practice problems, and on and on. I am going to move the calendar over to my one bulletin board this coming year and add a small bulletin board beside it and make it a phonics bulletin board. We review math concepts daily during calendar time, but don't review phonics concepts as much. I think that this should help out all kids. It will really help the struggling readers."



"I kept all of my non AR books on this long blue shelf. I drove myself crazy and the kids crazy trying to keep these books nice and neat on the shelf. I guess they weren't as OCD about it as I was! I finally solved the problem by investing in some cheap dollar store baskets. They fit perfectly in each compartment and they knew to put the books back in standing up. They didn't always put them back in with the covers facing out or right side up, but they did stay a lot more organized this way. I guess you can blame my OCD behavior over the books on my past experience as a library assistant where I had to make sure all the shelves were dusted and the books were all pushed to the front of the shelf!"



"I used the back of the long blue book shelf as a bulletin board. Once the kids arrived, I took their picture on my digital camera and printed them off. I had each kid sign their name on an index card and then I glued their picture on it and laminated the cards. I glued on die cut letters in the middle of the board that spelled out "Miss Bennett's Super Kids." Then, I glued their pictures on all over the board. The kids and parents loved to look at their pictures when they came in the room. It was fun to hand the pictures back out at the end of the year and see how much each of them had grown up over the course of the year."



"These are the student's cubbies where they hung their bookbag and coat. Each pair of students shared a cubby. I kept their lap marker boards and dry erase markers in the shelf above the long area with the hooks in them. Above that shelf was a long shelf where I stored seasonal books and other manipulatives that I didn't use often. I bought a plastic table skirt at a craft store and cut it down to fit the area. This made it decorative and covered up what was underneath it. I am a bear fanatic (if you can't tell by the picture!) and I had all these bears that I had no where to put at my house so I decorated the shelf with the bears."