distance learning background

STUDENT PROJECT
Implementation Notes & Tips

The distance learning background project engages students in a creative and fun activity to help them create a specific place at home to focus on their work and a backdrop to engage in classes from afar. It can be a fun, creative way to start the year and help make virtual learning spaces feel welcoming. Please feel free to join the project and create one of your own.

Step 1: Gather Resources
- Gather necessary supplies – The linked resources are the supplies used for the sample board. You may have the ability to purchase in bulk. Consider creating a DonorsChoose project or add to your Amazon Wishlist to reduce project costs. Click HERE for the post containing links to the suggested materials.

Step 2: Board Painting
- Put a drop cloth, paper towels, or another resource to protect the table or floor from paint. Please note: the paint suggested is non-toxic and is easily removable.
- Paint the board with the chalkboard paint.
- Let board dry.

Step 3: Board “Striking”
- This step prevents the chalk becoming permanent upon first use.
- Using the long side of white or yellow-white chalk, rub the chalk into the chalkboard paint.
- Use a paper towel to rub the chalk into the board again.
- Optional: “Strike” the board again.

Step 4: Board Sketch & Measurement
- Use a measuring stick or tape measure to visualize the board sections. (See diagram on page 8)
- Sketch a rough draft of your board, incorporating your style and reflecting your personality.
- See board labels section below to see what to include.

Board Labels
- Quote Corner – Have students find a weekly quote to inspire and motivate them and others.
- Zen Zone – Use the space to create art and take a mindful moment.
- Goals – Have students set daily, weekly, and/or monthly goals.
- Proud Pin – Post work they are proud of and want to showcase to others.
- Nametag – Under students’ name, use the space for a daily check-in. Have students use symbols to communicate how they are feeling that day. Students can also use the space below to wear “accessories” – a fun hat, crown, or other appropriate, creative items.
- Optional – Create a board section unique to your classroom context.

Step 5: Board Art Creation
- Use chalk markers (optional) and drawing chalk to create board labels (see above).
- Add additional artwork and flourishes!
- Set the expectation students use the board as a backdrop during distance learning. It can become their special space and a familiar setting for everyone.
TIPS

• Use chalkboard paint that can be used on paper.

• Drawing chalk (not sidewalk chalk) would be the best for the board. It is small and allows for finer writing and drawing.

• While a sponge brush works, a regular paintbrush is much faster.

• Plain, white copy paper can be substituted for the dry erase sheets.

SUGGESTED SUPPLIES

• Tri-Fold Board 3’x4’ (not pictured)
• Chalkboard Paint
• Brushes or Sponge Brushes
• Chalk
• Chalk Markers
• Dry Erase Sheets (8.5x11”) or Plain Copy Paper
• Expo Markers
• Push Pins
• Optional: Decorative Masking/Washi Tape
• Optional: Hanging Hooks
TIPS

• Lay the tri-fold board flat. Place a protective barrier around the board to make sure paint does not get on the floor.

• Paint! Cover your board in chalkboard paint. As it dries, cover up any missed areas.

• One coat is sufficient.
TIPS

• Allow the board to completely dry.

• Drying does not take long at all! Some spots may also look a little wet, so lightly touch to make sure it is dry.

• While the board dries, make a rough sketch of your background on a separate sheet of paper.
TIPS

• When the board is dry, take a white or light-yellow piece of chalk and “strike” the board.

• Take the chalk on its side and cover your board in chalk.

• Then, take a paper towel or cloth and rub the chalk into your board.
**TIPS**

- Optional: After you rub the chalk into the board, you can “strike” the board again.

- “Striking” prevents the first chalk lines from becoming permanent.
TIPS

• Measure your box spaces.

• Lightly mark the corners to keep labels, art, and dry erase sheets/paper in their designated area.

• Lightly sketch your labels with chalk. Then, if using chalkboard markers, finalize the labels.
TIPS

• Suggestion: Consider any labels or art done in chalkboard markers as permanent. Chalkboard markers require a wet cloth or wipe to remove.

• Add decorative details!

• Make your board reflective of YOU!
TIPS

- Use the Quote Corner to highlight a motivational or thoughtful quote you like.

- Set daily, weekly, and/or monthly goals!

- Take a mindful moment and create art in your Zen Zone.

- Pin work you are proud of and showcase it to your class.
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