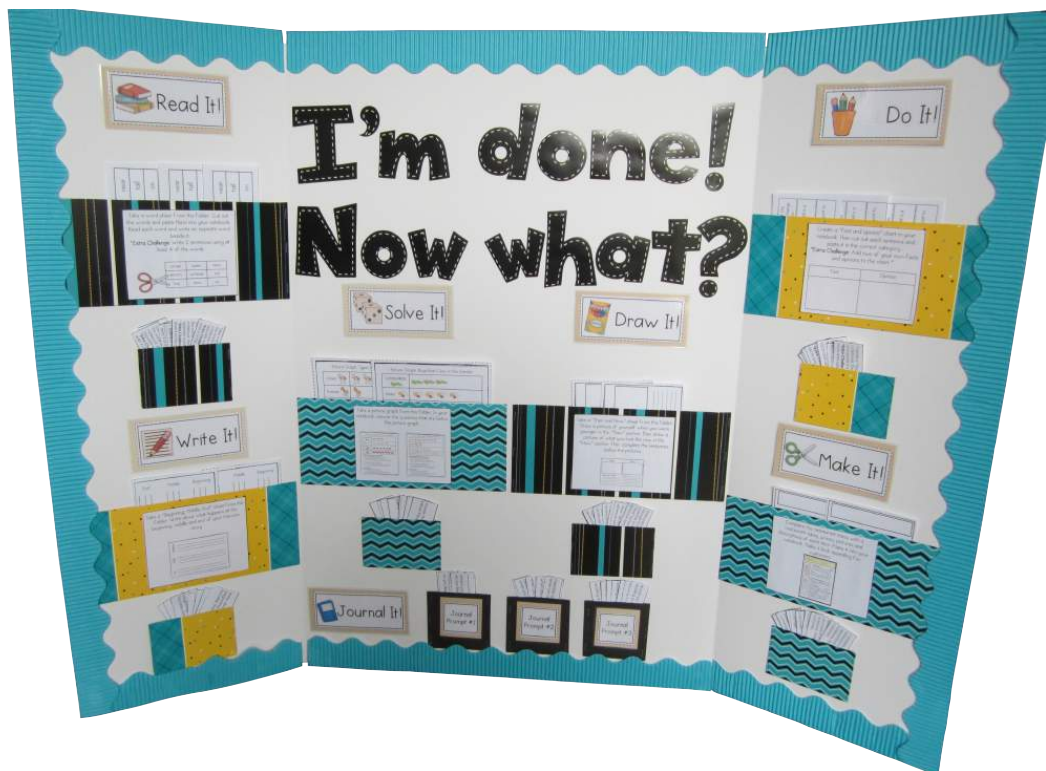


The EARLY FINISHER BOARD

{Getting Started Guide}



Created by Shelley Gray

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**TEACHING IN THE
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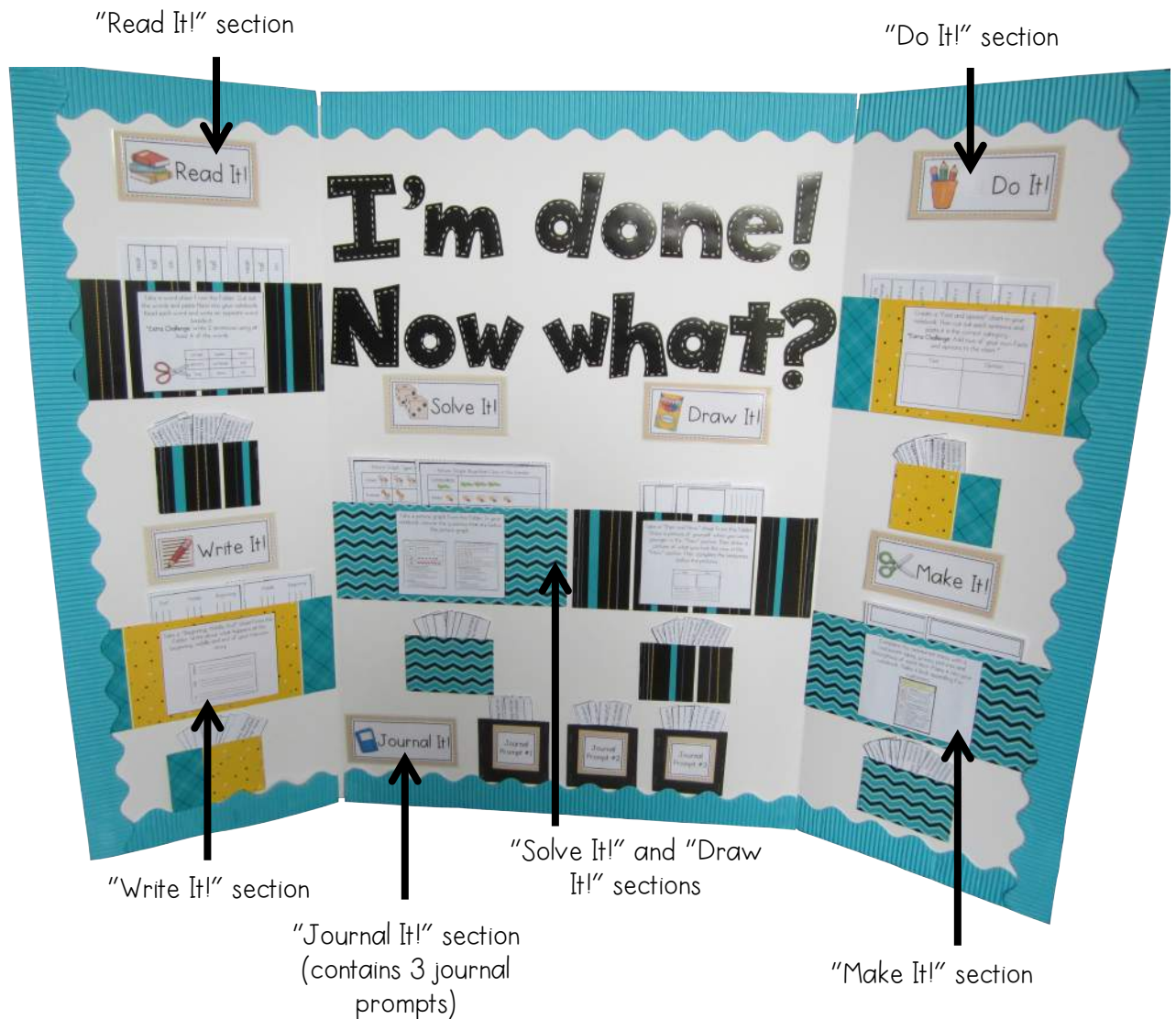
by Shelley Gray

The Early Finisher Board: Overview

Altogether, there are 7 sections on the Early Finisher Board:

Read It, Write It, Make It, Solve It, Draw It, Do It, and Journal It.

Every section except for the Journal It section consists of a folder and a pocket. You will be placing the **task materials** in the folders. In the pockets, you will place the **notebook strips**. These are small strips that students will glue into their notebooks. The strip gives a brief explanation of the task.



The Early Finisher Board: Overview

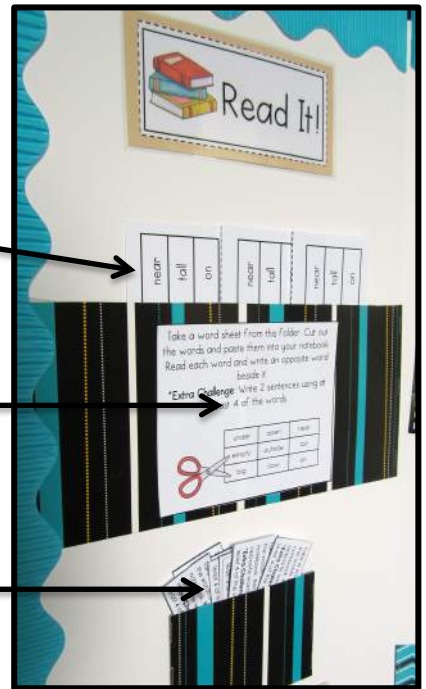


All sections except for "Journal It!" include a section title, folder, and pocket.

The task is placed in the folder.

A folder label is fastened to the outside of the folder to show the task.

Notebook strips are placed in the pockets. Students glue the notebook strips into their notebooks to stay organized.



The "Journal It!" section includes a section title and three pockets for journal prompts.



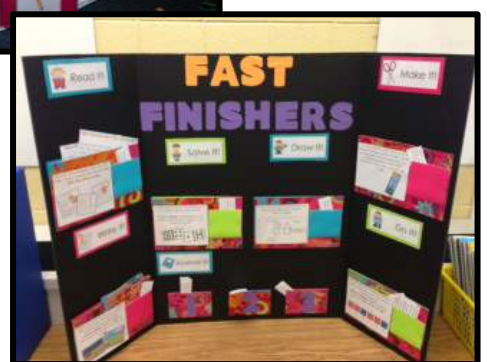
You will be setting up the board so that the titles (Read It, Write It, Make It, etc.) remain the same all year long. However, the tasks for each section will change bi-weekly.

Materials List

To set up your Early Finisher Board, you will require the following supplies:

- a tri-fold board (the type used for Science Fair projects).
Alternatively, if you have extra bulletin board space, you may choose to set this up on a bulletin board inside your classroom.
- Letter-sized file folders (colored folders work best)
- stencil letters for the title of the board
- double-sided tape
- velcro dots
- a notebook for each student

It is important to note that the Early Finisher Board is so versatile that you can set it up however you wish. Many teachers use bulletin boards, sides of cabinets, binders, or even a folder system to set up their Early Finisher Board. Make it work for you! Here are some amazing examples submitted by real teachers like you!



Section Titles

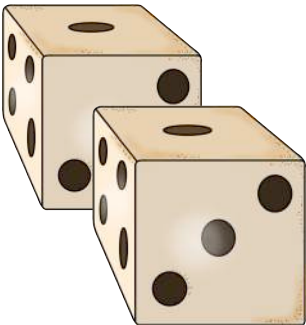
Print, laminate and cut out these labels. These labels will remain on your board all year long. The tasks for each category will be changed bi-weekly.



Read It!



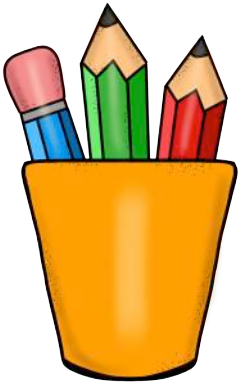
Write It!



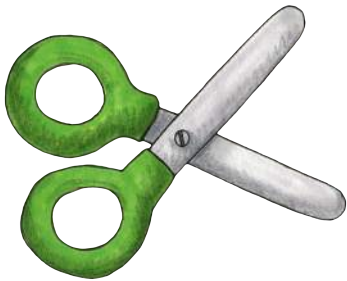
Solve It!



Draw It!



Do It!



Make It!



Journal It!

Journal
Prompt #1

Journal
Prompt #2

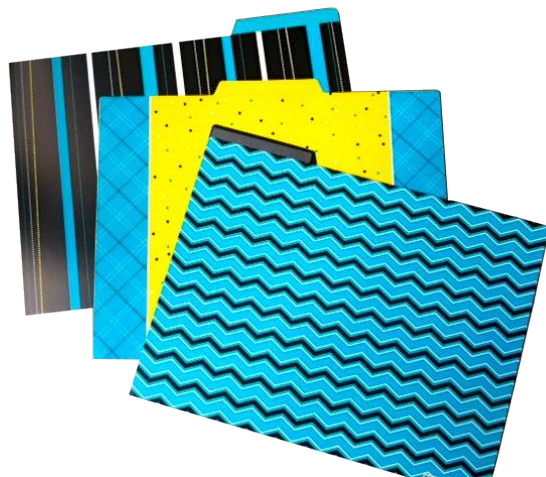
Journal
Prompt #3

Folders and Pockets

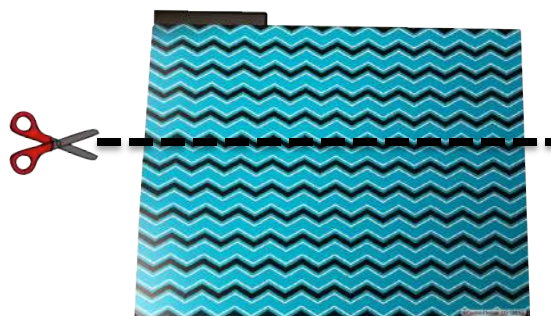
Each section of the board (Write It, Read It, Make It, etc.) will require a folder and a pocket (see page 4 for more information). Later on, you will be placing task supplies inside the folders, and notebook strips inside the pockets.

Folder Preparation:

Step 1: To prepare the folders, use six letter-sized file folders. Colored folders work best.



Step 2: Trim each folder so that it is approximately 5.5 inches tall. Depending on the size of your board, you may also need to trim a small amount off of the width. Staple along the sides of the folder so that the only opening is on the top.



Pocket Preparation:

Step 1: Use letter-sized file folders. The colors should match the ones that you used to create the task folders.

Step 2: Cut a section from the bottom portion of each folder that measures about 4.5 inches wide by about 3 inches tall.



Step 3: Staple the edges to form a pocket.

Ensure that the 6 pockets are the same colors as the folders that you used. For example, with a blue folder, there should be a blue pocket. With a yellow folder, there should be a yellow pocket.



Step 4:

You will also need 3 pockets for the “**Journal It**” section. The pockets in this picture were created using black cardstock paper that was simply laminated, folded and stapled to create a pocket. Fasten the “Journal Prompt #1, #2 and #3” labels to the front of the pockets.



Putting It All Together

Now that you have prepared the folders, pockets and labels, follow the instructions below to assemble your Early Finisher Board.

The instructions below are for those people using a free-standing tri-fold board. These instructions may need to be modified if you are using a bulletin board, cabinet or folders instead.

Step 1:

Laminate the labels. Before laminating, you may wish to attach the labels to colored cardstock as shown in the photograph.



Step 2:

Place everything on the board first without attaching. Once you have everything fitting nicely, continue with the instructions below.

Step 3:

Fasten the labels, folders and pockets to the board using double-sided tape.



Step 4:

Label the journal pockets with the "Journal Prompt #1," "Journal Prompt #2," and "Journal Prompt #3" labels.



Step 5: Attach Velcro dots to the outside of each of the pockets. This will allow you to switch the tasks every two weeks. In order to attach the dots, you will want to have the folder labels from one of the Early Finisher Weekly files prepared. Below is one effective method of attaching the dots.

- Stick the "rough" side of the Velcro dot onto each folder as shown in the adjacent photo.
- Place the fuzzy side of the Velcro on top, so that the sticky side is up.
- Place the folder label on top of the Velcro. The "fuzzy" pieces will stick to the folder label and will match perfectly to the "rough" side of the Velcro. Remove the folder label, and you will now have Velcro dots on both the folder and the folder label.
- Repeat this process for each of the 6 colored folders on the board.

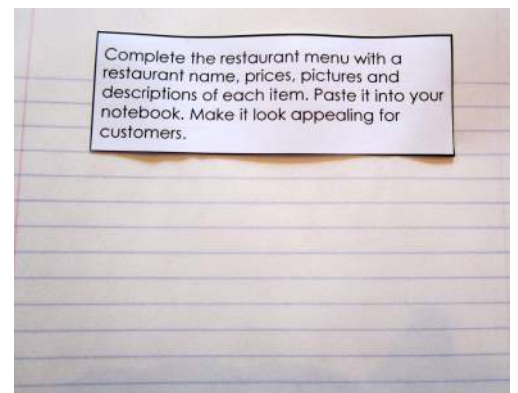


Step 6: Use bulletin board letters to create the title for your board. Add a border if you wish.

Step 7:

Prepare a notebook with each student's name. Decide whether students will keep these in their desks or whether you will store them in a central location such as a basket beside the board.

The notebook is where students will glue the notebook strips and complete each task.



Congratulations!

You are finished assembling the Early Finishers Board!

Now to begin using it...

- Begin with [Early Finisher Board Weeks 1-2](#) for the first 2 weeks. (or any other set). The sets do not build on each other, so you can begin with whichever one you would like.
- Prepare the tasks, photocopy the notebook strips, and you are ready to go!
- After two weeks, switch the tasks to [Early Finisher Board Weeks 3-4](#) and students will have brand new tasks to complete!

Remember to store all of your laminated pieces in some sort of container or re-sealable bag. Label it with the Week # so that it is ready to go for next year!

Consider asking a parent volunteer to take care of preparing and switching the tasks every two weeks. Even a responsible student or two might be a big help. Remember that the first year will take the most time. If you laminate your materials and keep them in good shape, year #2 and beyond will be a breeze!

Enjoy!