

Classroom Mapping Kit from Debbie Diller Designs

Congratulations on your purchase of the **Classroom Mapping Kit**. This kit provides tools to help you design your classroom spaces thoughtfully before you ever move any furniture.

This Really Good Stuff® product includes:

- 1 Classroom Mapping Mat
- Classroom Mapping Icons that represent the spaces you'll want to have in your classroom
- Self-adhesive bag for storing the pieces
- This Really Good Stuff® Activity Guide

This **Classroom Mapping Kit** was designed by Debbie Diller to help you decide where to put everything in your classroom before you start to move things around for instruction. Many teachers rearrange furniture frequently in their classrooms, trying to find that ideal setup that will make teaching easier and help students learn more readily. Over the years, Debbie developed a system to simplify this process and save you time.

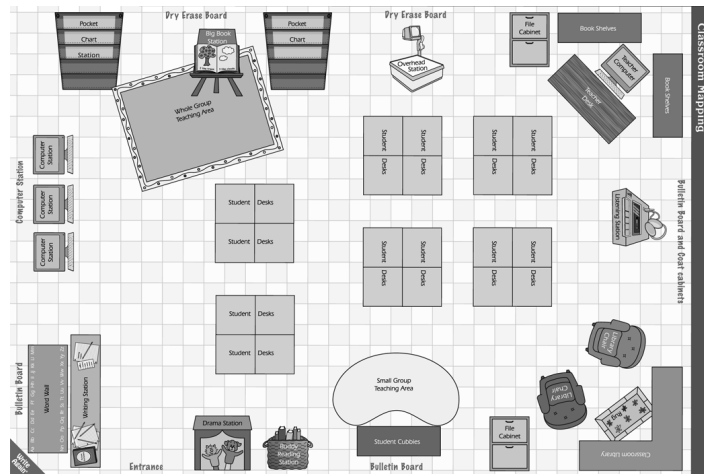
How to Use Your Classroom Mapping Kit

1. Sit in your classroom with the Classroom Mapping Mat and look around at your space. Use a dry erase pen to label the permanent fixtures that can't be changed in your classroom. Here are some of the things you might want to note on the Mat:
 - windows
 - doors
 - built-in cabinets or shelves
 - built-in heating units that can't be blocked by furniture
 - electric outlets
 - computer drops
 - chalkboards or dry-erase boards
 - bulletin boards
 - mounted interactive whiteboards
 - sinks/ bathrooms/ water fountains, etc.
2. Then start to think about where you want to do most of your teaching. In the beginning of the year, most of your instruction will probably take place in the *whole group teaching area*, so start there. You will probably want to have kids up close to increase their attention. Look for a space with a chalkboard or dry erase board nearby. Put the icons that represent that space on the Mat. If you have a Big Book easel, this is where to place it. You might want a pocket chart or writing chart in this area. In addition, many teachers put a large rug here to define the space where kids will sit. Don't worry if you decide to change the location of this space (or any other space) later. The pieces are removable and can be manipulated. (Note that we aren't putting desks on the map yet. We will make room for them later.)
3. Next, think about where to place your *small group teaching area*. Find a place near a wall or cabinet door, if possible. There you can hang charts you might want to refer to during teaching. You will probably want a shelf unit here, as well as a table for small group teaching. Find the icons that match this furniture, and move these onto the board. As you plan for this space, be sure you'll be able to see every space in the classroom from this table so you can see all students while you work in your small group.
4. Then decide where to put your *classroom library*. If you have a corner, this is often an ideal location. Or you might create a comfortable nook by placing two bookshelves together. Use the icons to show where your library will be located. You might put a small rug and two comfy chairs there to make the space inviting.
5. Now think about your *word wall*. If you teach pre-K through grade one, you'll want it low and interactive so kids can easily access it. At grades two and above, you'll still want it easy to reach, so you can readily change words on the wall as needed. Ideally, place it near your whole group teaching area, if possible. You might also plan for a *word study work station* and a *writing station* nearby. You'll find icons for these, too.
6. If you plan to use *literacy work stations* for independent practice, place these icons around the perimeter of your room. These include things like computers, listening, buddy reading, and drama with retelling props or readers' theater scripts.
7. Also, plan for where you'll put your *math manipulatives*. You'll want to have these handy, so you can use them for your teaching of math.
8. The last thing to set up is the *desks*. Set up your teacher desk area in a space that's out of the way. You should not be sitting there while teaching. Some teachers decide to get rid of their *teacher desk* (with permission from their administrators) and use a computer table instead. Or they use their small group teaching area for double duty as a desk also.
9. When you arrange *student desks* on the Classroom Mapping Mat, you'll probably want to place them in groups of four to six in the remaining space. They always fit, even if you save them until the end! If they don't fit, you may have to get rid of some of your other furniture.

Really Good Stuff® Activity Guide

Classroom Mapping Kit from Debbie Diller Designs

10. After you've mapped out your space, then move your furniture. It will save you hours of time! You may have to tweak your plan slightly, so be open. Enjoy your new space!



Frequently Asked Questions about Classroom Space

• *I've been in this same room for years. I can't think of any other ways to set it up. What can I do?*

Ask a colleague to help you. Often, another person can help you see possibilities you've never thought of before. Work together in teams to set up your spaces.

• *What do I do with all my stuff?*

First, store only the materials you'll use for teaching this year. If you try to keep everything you've ever used in your teaching career, you may run out of space.

• *How can I get more space?*

There's a quote from Peter Walsh you might consider: "The amount of space you have cannot be changed—the amount of stuff you have can." I've found that getting rid of some of our "stuff" can net us more classroom space. Get rid of what you can live without.

• *Where can I put all these work stations? Can I put everything in tubs?*

Use a combination of some stationary stations (things you teach with every day, like a Big Book easel or pocket chart) and some portable stations (ABC materials in a basket or a buddy reading basket). If you try to put everything in a tub, you might be missing out on things you have right in front of your nose. Many of the work stations are set up around the perimeter of the classroom, such as an overhead station, Big Book station, word wall/word study station, writing station,

etc. Some portable stations can be used at student desks or on the floor, etc.

• *Do you recommend desks or tables?*

Many classrooms have individual student desks. Some use tables instead. This is your choice. Both will work. It is important to have a special space for each child in your classroom.

• *What if I have another teacher or assistant in my classroom during the day? Do I need to have a second desk for this person?*

To save space, try to have furniture do double-duty. Have a small table that the assistant might use during your small group that also functions as a work space at other times of day. Or use a bank of student desks (that kids use when it's not small group time).

Related Products Available through Really Good Stuff®

- *Spaces & Places: Designing Classrooms for Literacy* by Debbie Diller (#303200)
- *Literacy Work Stations: Making Centers Work* by Debbie Diller (#301381)
- See the **Really Good Stuff® Reading** catalog to order pocket charts, storage baskets, Big Book easels, etc.

More Information on Setting Up Your Classroom Space

- View the DVD series, *Launching Literacy Stations*, especially the clips called *First Grade Work Stations Tour* and *Second Grade Work Stations Tour* from Stenhouse Publishers. These show you how two different teachers set up small classrooms to accommodate all the spaces included in this **Classroom Mapping Kit**.
- View the DVD series, *Stepping Up with Literacy Stations*, also available from www.stenhouse.com. Watch the Stations Tours for third grade and fifth grade.
- Contact Debbie Diller at www.debbiediller.com for training and staff development opportunities.