

Super Secret Agents

A Teaching and Learning Bulletin Board

565369



The Life of a Secret Agent

Ask students to pretend to be one of the characters displayed on the bulletin board. Have them think about the following: *What would your secret agent name be? What would your mission be? What experiences would you have as a secret agent? What special tools or abilities would you employ to complete the mission?* Ask students to write about their imaginary secret-agent experiences and add pictures to enhance their story. Afterward, invite them to share their story with the class. If desired, students can use their ID card from the display to dramatize their story for a small-group audience.

Alternately, prepare multiple speech-bubble paper cutouts and label with statements as if from each character's perspective, such as "My mission is to jetpack over parks and playgrounds to monitor volunteers cleaning up our public spaces." Display each cutout with its character. Then ask students to choose a character and, using the speech bubble as inspiration, write a story about that agent's mission and adventures.

Terrific Tools

Point out the tools and devices being used by the secret agents on the display. Invite students to give realistic or imaginary names to the items, describe how each might work, and share ideas about why an agent might use each one. Then point out the briefcase on the display. Ask students to think about tools or devices they would pack if they were secret agents. Have them make a personalized secret-agent briefcase by folding a large sheet of gray construction paper in half and adding paper-strip handles to the edges opposite the fold. On the inside of their briefcase, have students draw, label, and describe a few items they might need for a secret mission. Later, students can share information about their tools with other "secret agents" in the class.

Lesson Control!

Use your display to help students organize, share, and summarize their investigations, observations, and research findings when studying specific topics. You can label the large control-room screen with a topic title (such as "United States Congress," "Good Grammar Is Great," or "Bountiful Bugs!"). Label the smaller screens with subtitles ("Senate" and "House

Displaying and Using Your Bulletin Board Set

Arrange the bulletin board pieces on your display. To assemble the decoder wheel, attach the small wheel to the large wheel with a paper fastener. If desired, use a wipe-off pen to write a title for your display on the large control-room screen. Also, label each ID card with a student's name and add his or her picture. To erase, use a paper towel or damp cloth.

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of Representatives”; “Capitalization” and “Punctuation”; and “Insects” and “Arachnids,” respectively). Post speech bubbles labeled with students’ discoveries about the topic near the characters on the display. List additional information on the electronic pad. To conclude your studies, review and discuss the information on the display.

For math topics, you might label the large control-room screen with a skill, such as “Formulas for Finding Area.” Then write the formula for finding the area of a different shape on each of the smaller screens, for instance, “Triangle: $A = \frac{1}{2}bh$ ” and “Parallelogram: $A = bh$.” You can provide examples and explanations of the types of area problems in the speech bubbles and list problems for students to solve on the electronic pad.

Secret Codes

Create secret messages for students to decode! To encrypt a message using the decoder wheel, align a number on the inner wheel with a letter on the outer wheel. Then replace each letter in your message with the number that aligns with that letter on the decoder wheel. Display the coded message and have students use the decoder wheel to decipher it. Be sure to give students at least one letter-number clue from your code, such as 4 = T, to use as a reference point when decoding the message.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Message Center

Your display provides an ideal way to communicate special messages, such as a thought for the day, special assignments, upcoming events, the daily or weekly schedule, or even coded messages for students to solve. Simply write the desired message(s) on the control-room screens and/or the electronic pad. Write additional messages on speech bubble cutouts and attach near the bulletin board characters so they appear to be speaking. Remind students to check daily for any new messages.

Track Attendance

Use the display to take attendance. Write the date (e.g., February 17) on the large screen, the year (2014) on the top small screen, and the day of the week (Monday) on the bottom screen. Then have students attach their ID card to the display daily when they come in. Before leaving, they remove their card and file it in a plastic box for safekeeping until the next school day.

Group Students

Decide on the number of groups to be formed and assemble students into their groups. Assign each group a set of color-coded ID cards. Use the display as a quick reference whenever you need to know which group a student belongs to. You might also post assignments, duties, and reminders near each group’s ID cards.

Using the Reproducibles

Use the reproducible patterns on pages 3 and 4 with these activities to help extend students’ learning:

- ◆ Students can use the graphic organizer (page 3) to organize their ideas and information when researching a topic or preparing a writing assignment. To use, students write the purpose of their assignment on the small electronic pad at the top left (Define My Mission). As they gather information and make discoveries, they write their findings on the large pad (Describe My Discoveries). Finally, students write a summary of their findings, results, or inferences on the small pad at the bottom right (Disclose My Determinations).
- ◆ Distribute copies of the decoder wheel patterns (page 4) and a paper fastener to each student. Have students cut out and assemble their wheels. Demonstrate how to line up the numbers on the small wheel with the letters on the large wheel. Explain that to write a secret message, students will replace each letter of their message with the number that aligns with it on their wheel. Then challenge students to write coded messages for partners to decode. As a clue for cracking the code, students can tell their partner which number represents the letter A.

Name: _____ Date: _____

My Secret-Agent Mission

Define My Mission
(Purpose of Assignment)

□ ○ ○ ○ ○ ◁ ○ ▷ □

Describe My Discoveries
(Facts and Findings)

□ ○ ○ ○ ○ ◁ ○ ▷ □

Disclose My Determinations
(Summary of Findings)

□ ○ ○ ○ ○ ◁ ○ ▷ □



