

## HOW TO MAKE A CHOICE BOARD

**Step 1:** Decide what you want to use it for (weekly classroom activities, extension activities, projects, homework assignments, extra credit, etc.)

**Step 2:** Pick a topic/skill/concept covered in class (fractions, vocabulary words, oceans, sentence structure, etc.)

**Step 3:** Decide which activities to include  
For example, if you chose vocabulary words, you could include these activities:









- Make a rap using as many vocab words as you can
- Create a poem using as many vocab words as possible
- With a partner, take turns each saying/writing one sentence per turn, with at least one vocab word in every sentence, to tell a story
- Write each vocab word, then draw a picture to depict each word

**Step 4:** Pick a format (tic-tac-toe, 5x5 board, dinner menu, etc.), then give directions at the top of the page

**Step 5:** Fill in the squares with activities

You can use any computer software program like Microsoft excel, word, or you can do it by hand and photo copy it.

The final product should look similar to the example below.

CHOICE BOARD FOR MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES		
<b>Verbal/Linguistic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write instructions</li> <li>Keep a personal journal</li> <li>Create a poem</li> <li>Create TV ads</li> <li>Read stories to others</li> <li>Retell in your own words</li> <li>Teach concept mapping</li> <li>Create crossword puzzle</li> </ul> 	<b>Logical/Mathematical</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a time line</li> <li>Compare/contrast ideas</li> <li>Create an outline for a story</li> <li>Design a map</li> <li>Decipher codes</li> <li>Create patterns</li> <li>Design a game to show...</li> </ul> 	<b>Visual/Spatial</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a poster</li> <li>Draw a map</li> <li>Create visual diagrams</li> <li>Draw from different perspectives</li> <li>Create a comic strip</li> <li>Graph results of a survey</li> </ul> 
<b>Interpersonal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell stories</li> <li>Teach a cooperative game</li> <li>Role play a situation</li> <li>Discuss and come to a conclusion</li> <li>Survey or interview others</li> </ul> 	<p><b>Free Choice</b></p>	<b>Body Kinesthetic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make up a cooperative game</li> <li>Practice physical exercise</li> <li>Conduct hands-on experiments</li> <li>Construct a model or representation</li> </ul> 
<b>Musical Rhythmic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create raps</li> <li>Play musical instruments</li> <li>Write to music</li> <li>Teach dance steps</li> <li>Make up sounds and sound effects</li> <li>Write a jingle</li> <li>Create rhymes that...</li> </ul> 	<b>Naturalist</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect and categorize data, materials, or ideas</li> <li>Discover or experiment</li> <li>Take a field trip</li> <li>Study means of survival</li> <li>Adopt materials to a new use</li> <li>Label and classify</li> </ul> 	<b>Intrapersonal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep a personal journal</li> <li>Write about personal experiences</li> <li>Think about and plan...</li> <li>Review or visualize</li> <li>How would it feel to...</li> <li>Imagine and write about the future</li> </ul> 

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/74872412528776153/>

## MAKE IT A GAME WITH INCENTIVES!

**Example 1 (Individual practice):** Students who complete a full row or column of activities gets a prize or bonus points.

**Example 2 (Individual practice):** Students who complete the entire board will be allowed to play with Legos during recess.

**Example 3 (As a class):** The teacher could also use this strategy as a class on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. The teacher would show the choice board to the entire class and have a few random students choose which activity they would like to do. Then the entire class would do the same activity. \*Don't forget to choose different students each time to allow every student a chance to pick an activity!\*

## USING A CHOICE BOARD IN YOUR CLASSROOM

- The teacher should have a choice board printed out for each student
- The teacher will instruct the students to complete at least \_\_\_ number of activities (minimum # of activities will vary depending on how much time is allotted)
- Explain that students may choose any activity in the boxes. When finished, students should color in the correct box for each activity completed
- Give the students a folder or binder to keep all of their activities together
- Give students the option of working with a partner

## REFERENCES

- Bray, W. S. (2009). *The Power of Choice. Teaching Children Mathematics, 16*(3), 178-183.
- Gardner, H. (2011). Promoting Learner Engagement Using Multiple Intelligences and Choice-Based Instruction. *Adult Basic Education And Literacy Journal, 5*(2), 97-101.
- Kipp-Newbold, R. (2010). That's Fierce! Collaboration in the English Classroom. *English Journal, 99*(5), 74-78.
- Luckner, J., Bowen, S., & Carter, K. (2001). Visual teaching strategies. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 33*(3), 38-44.



## STRATEGY 1

# CHOICE BOARDS/CHOICE MENU



## WHAT IS A CHOICE BOARD?

A **choice board**, also known as a **choice menu**, **learning board** or **activity menu**, is a tool teachers can use to offer more options. Students can choose *HOW* they will learn the topic/concept. A choice board will typically look like a Tic-Tac-Toe or Bingo board, but instead of x's and o's or numbers inside the box, there will be an assortment of activities in each box. There is no minimum or maximum number of boxes you can include, but keep in mind, too many activities can seem overwhelming.

\*Don't forget to have materials for ALL activities!\*

**Tip:** Prep as if the entire class were doing every activity to avoid running out of materials. Better to have extras than not enough!



"Introducing activity menus in class was an invitation for students to take the lead in their own learning, and it was important for me not to subvert that."

—Hilary Gardner

## BENEFITS OF CHOICE BOARDS

- Offers students more options/alternatives for assignments
- Allows students to work at their own pace
- Allows students to have an input in their education experience
- Promotes a positive outlook on learning
- Promotes independence and responsibility
- Increases participation and engagement in the activities
- Flexible for classroom needs

All students are learning and practicing the skills, just in different ways!

## WHY DOES IT WORK?

By offering students more options, students will be more interested in the assignment because *they get to choose it*. Choice boards give students a sense of control, freedom, and responsibility. Choice boards keep students engaged because students can move on to the next activity when they're ready; they don't have to wait for others to finish. Choice boards are effective because it gives students the opportunity to explore their learning styles, their interests, and what works best for them.

Example of a tic tac toe



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## WHO CAN USE THIS STRATEGY?

- Children, teens, adults
- Any academic level
- English learners
- All multiple intelligences

Choice boards are a great strategy for its flexibility. It can be used for **any student**, for **any lesson**, for **any classroom type**, because the teacher can adjust the activity options accordingly.

## BY USING CHOICE BOARDS, STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WILL BE ABLE TO...

- Learning disabilities - pick up on social rules, become more vocal (through partner work)
- Emotional Disturbance - lessen their anxiety by setting their own pace
- ADHD - follow instructions more easily, keep tasks organized, and finish tasks
- Autism - challenge the student to become more skilled in other areas, not only the areas they're already highly skilled in
- Communication Disorders - focus their attention, strengthen communication skills by communicating with partner, gives students a chance to be less shy
- Other Health Impairments - strengthen skills in following directions, focus, learn social rules
- Hearing Impairments - overcome the language barrier by applying their visual strengths to choice board activities (Luckner, 2001)