

While I'm Not Looking

4+

Materials none

- What to do**
1. Cover your eyes and say, "I'm going to cover my eyes and count to ten and see if the room is cleaned up when I open my eyes."
 2. If you do this once in a while, the children will run around cleaning in a hurry.
 3. Before you open your eyes, ask if they are done yet. If not, ask what you should count to. You may have to count a few times. (They won't notice if you're peeking at them between your fingers.)
 4. You can use this for other situations, too, when you need children to do something quickly. This game also can help relieve the tension in a power struggle with a child.

★ *Laura Durbrow, Lake Oswego, OR*

Cleaning Buddies

4+

Materials finger puppet for each child and teacher
toy dump truck

- What to do**
1. Store finger puppets ("cleaning buddies") in a toy truck in a convenient and easily accessible spot.
 2. At cleanup time, the children and teachers wear their finger puppets and use them to help in the cleaning process.
 3. The children love the thought that the puppets are helping them. After everything is clean, the children put their puppets back in the dump truck until the next cleanup time.

More to do **Math:** Make a chart with all of the centers on them. The children can record things such as which puppet cleaned the sand area, the dress-up area, and so on. They can also estimate whose puppet will clean the most for a whole week or day.

★ *Eileen Lucas, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada*

You're In Charge

4+

Materials pictures of different areas of your classroom, or a picture of something that represents each area (a block for the block area, plates for the kitchen area, and so on)
laminator
hole punch and string, or safety pins

What to do 1. Laminate the pictures and either punch a hole and string them to make a necklace, or pin safety pins to them. Make enough necklaces for each area and enough for each child.

Author's Note: In our classroom, we have four children clean up the playhouse, art, manipulatives, book, math/science, and games centers; three clean up the writing center; and six to ten clean up the block area. Therefore, we have four necklaces for each of the first centers, three for the writing center, and six to ten necklaces for the blocks.

2. Walk around the room five to ten minutes before cleanup and distribute the necklaces. Tell the children that cleanup time is soon, and give necklaces to children depending on where they spent most of their play time that day. Tell them they are responsible for the area, and give them a corresponding necklace.
3. After the children have cleaned up the area, they return the necklace to a teacher who "checks" and helps children clean the area properly.



Related books *The Berenstain Bears and the Messy Room* by Stan and Jan Berenstain
Tracy's Mess by Elise Petersen

★ Linda Ford, Sacramento, CA