

What it looks like in practice

Ten routines teachers described on X between 2024 and 17 September 2026. The live article already names the five moves and the subject kit. These rows add named classrooms: the whiteboard as the wall, the blank Monday board, the card a child takes, the lab coat, the Word Jail, and the US folder-sized sound wall. Each row is a claim. UK and US stay on the row. The evidence column is a fetched page, not the post.

ROUTINE	TEACHER MOVE	WHAT YOU WOULD NOTICE	WHAT THE EVIDENCE SAYS	REPORTED BY
Whiteboard as the wall ● reported practice	Use the class whiteboard as the working wall so the small step, the representation and a jotting go up during the lesson, not after it.	A dated board, half full. Marker on the ledge. Learning added in the moment in a Year 3 room.	EEF Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3, 2022 update, Recommendation 2 (page fetched): choose a manipulative or representation for the specific mathematics, and treat it as a temporary scaffold that comes off once independence is there. This post is one Year 3 whiteboard, not a trial of that recommendation.	“Year 3 love having a white board as a working wall as learning is added in the moment.” @parkroad_maths · 14 Oct 2025 · UK
Blank board, new writing week ● reported practice	Start the writing week with a nearly empty lined board. Fill it the next day with vocabulary and sentence starters the class actually met.	A blank working wall on Monday in Year 6. Discussion writing named. The wall has room left.	HFL Education, English working wall: steps to success (page fetched 17 Sep 2026): working walls should be interactive, and resources are most effective when created and added in the English lesson with the class. A board that arrives full has nothing left to add. Not a trial of this Year 6 room.	“A blank working wall means one thing in Y6... new writing week!” @ColeridgeSchool · 14 Sep 2026 · UK
Take the vocabulary card ● reported practice	Put vocabulary at child height so a Reception learner can take a card, copy the word, and put it back.	A card missing from a Velcro strip. A child at the wall during writing, then back at the table.	Godwin and Fisher (2026), Mind, Brain, and Education, DOI 10.1111/mbe.70040 (abstract fetched): US kindergarten children encoded wall displays more accurately the more time they spent off-task, and then scored worse on the lesson. Sending a learner to fetch a named card is a different move from hoping they look. This Reception post is not that experiment.	“In reception we have been using the working wall to support our writing. The children have been taking the vocabulary to support their spelling.” @MrsBarn74775129 · 15 Mar 2025 · UK
Scraps, not laminate ● practitioner claim	Treat laminated visuals as a display. Keep the working wall as scraps, post-its, photocopied whiteboards and flipchart that change.	Paper that will not last the term. A board that looks unfinished on purpose.	Fisher, Godwin and Seltman (2014), Psychological Science, DOI 10.1177/0956797614533801 (CMU news page fetched): US kindergarten children in a laboratory classroom spent more time off-task and learned less when walls were highly decorated with material unrelated to the lesson. That paper does not test handwritten scraps from today's lesson. The claim here is a definition, not a trial.	“A working wall changes daily, it's scraps of paper, it's post it notes, it's photocopied whiteboards, it's sheets of flip chart paper...” @Ria1984 · 18 Oct 2025 · UK
Word Jail for misspellings ● reported practice	Leave an empty hessian pocket. Pin common misspellings and overused words as they appear. Take a word out when the class has stopped using it.	A pocket that fills and empties. The wall is ready in September because it is empty.	Barrett, Davies, Zhang and Barrett (2015), Building and Environment, DOI 10.1016/j.buildenv.2015.02.013, via Barrett's Teacher Magazine interview (page fetched): keep displays turning over so the walls do not clutter, and give every learner a chance to have work up. A pocket that empties is that turnover. Not a trial of Word Jail.	“One of my favourite working walls ready for September. In it we put common misspellings of words or those overused in writing.” @CarlyJayne · 25 Jul 2025 · UK
Shared lab coat for science words ● reported practice	The whole school adds scientific terms to one coat on the working wall, instead of a printed word bank that never moves.	A coat that fills term by term. New words in different hands.	Barrett in Teacher Magazine (fetched): a class project that joins individual work into one display the class owns together can deepen impact. A lab coat is that shape. It is not a study of science vocabulary, and it is not a working wall trial.	“Our whole school is building science vocabulary with a shared lab coat on our working wall!” @LAParnwell · 17 Oct 2025 · UK

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KS1 mess that children ignore ● objection	A retired KS1 head's complaint: working walls in Key Stage 1 are usually a mess, and many children ignore them.	Sticky notes a five-year-old cannot read from a desk. No one sent to fetch.	The objection is the finding. Fisher, Godwin and Seltman (2014) measured unrelated decoration in a US kindergarten laboratory, not a UK KS1 working wall. Barrett (Teacher Magazine, fetched) says fully covered lively walls distract, and bare walls under-stimulate; covering up to 50 percent if the display is lively, or up to 80 percent if it is calm, sat in the middle. Neither paper tests this head's rooms.	"My pet hate is working walls particularly in KS1.....they're usually a mess which many children ignore" @ballater6 · 18 Oct 2025 · UK
Leave it empty until the class builds it ● practitioner claim	US. Do not buy August posters. Leave the wall empty so the charts the class builds in September occupy the space.	Blank wall in August. Charts in the class's handwriting by the end of September. This is an anchor chart, not a UK working wall.	Same mechanism as the Year 6 blank board, under a US name. Godwin and Fisher (2026) found off-task looking encoded the display, not the lesson. A chart the class built is more likely to be the lesson. Still not a trial of empty walls.	"Leave it empty. Anchor charts the kids build in September fill wall space better than anything bought in August, and it's the one setup cost that doesn't come out of your own pocket." @k12careers · 12 Aug 2026 · US
Mini sound wall in a folder ● reported practice	US, K to 2. When a Vowel Valley sound wall eats the bulletin board, give each learner a mini wall in a file folder or pocket sleeve.	The big board is no longer the only copy. Learners fetch a folder, not a phoneme card from a UK working wall.	US-only in this listen. UK teachers did not describe a sound wall. Ofsted's school inspection toolkit page (fetched 17 Sep 2026, for use from 10 November 2025) does not name working walls or sound walls as a standard. A folder is one teacher's shrink, not a policy.	"I have a mini one where each student could have their own on like a file folder or a pocket sleeve." @KatieB1749 · 13 Jul 2026 · US
Low-sensory walls, shop-front corridors ● reported practice	Split the building: classroom walls stay as low-sensory working walls; corridors take the showcase displays.	Calm rooms. About thirty corridor showcases. The working wall is not the school's shop front.	Barrett in Teacher Magazine (fetched) describes schools placing displays outside the classroom door so belonging starts at the entrance, and prioritising daylight over covering windows. A corridor showcase is that split. It is not evidence that Ofsted requires either wall. The 2025 toolkit page does not name them.	"The classroom walls are all low sensory working walls but corridor displays are all 'shop-front' showcase displays (and we have about 30 of these)!" @Southgloshead · 6 Nov 2025 · UK
Not found in this listen. No UK secondary, KS3, Year 7 to 9 or GCSE teacher describing a working wall. No post pairing the letters WAGOLL with a working wall. No UK teacher using the phrase nobody looks. No Ofsted post that named a working wall as a requirement. US classroom teachers did not call the practice a working wall; they said anchor chart, sound wall or focus wall.				

Ten rows, first three showing. Quotes are verbatim. No likes, reposts or views. Fisher (2014) and Godwin and Fisher (2026) are US kindergarten laboratory studies. Barrett (2015) is UK primary classroom design, correlational. None of them is a trial of a working wall.