

Maps and More



Learning aims:

- Understand map symbols and colours
- Learn how to spot and pinpoint locations of interest on a map
- Discover alternatives to map reading
- Practise using GPS
- Practise map drawing skills

Activity 1: What's on the Map?

Using an OS map from your local area, challenge the students to spot some symbols and colours on the map - ask them to write down what they think these mean. Afterwards, go through the correct answers and ask them to think about which symbols might be most important to them in everyday life (i.e. toilets, picnic benches, hospital, contour lines, water etc.)

You can also download a flashcard set from the OS website and even create a quiz <https://getoutside.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/guides/guide-to-os-map-symbols/>

Activity 2: Know Your City

Using the same local map, ask students to pinpoint where they think their school is. Once you have found the correct location, move on to find their houses and other local landmarks (i.e. shops, sports grounds, doctors surgeries/hospital). Finally, finish up by looking for their favourite local park.

Activity 3: What3Words

If you have access to tablets in the school, download the app "What3Words" (this also works on desktops on the website for an introduction, but isn't mobile enough for the main activity).

Explain the origins of this app - it was designed for use by the emergency services to give more accurate directions for locations of accidents/crime scenes etc.

The app has split the entire world into 3m x 3m squares and each square has three random words assigned to it.

Take the tablets to various locations in your school and find out the What3Word locations are for each of these. You could use places such as the student's favourite seat in the library, their classroom door, or their favourite landmark in the playground.

Activity 3: Extension Task

Before the session begins, find out the What3Words names for some locations in the school. Give students the tablet and a list of the words, then challenge them to find out where the location is.

Activity 4: Walking Maps (Using Your Local Areas)

Many students will be more accustomed to using GPS than a physical map, so this activity aims to provide practise in both map reading and GPS following techniques. This activity is best for using in your local area, or perhaps your local Parks Trust Park (please be aware that you will need to apply for a [free events license](#) to do this here, so that we can warn you about any potential clashes with your activity - more details on our website). You will also require a tablet to complete the GPS section of this activity.

Step 1: Provide students with maps of the area you are visiting. Ask them to pinpoint their starting location, and give them an end location (you can give different groups different locations to make them less likely to just “follow the leader”). Students must then use the maps to navigate to their end point.

You can also introduce the basic cardinal points on a compass and provide these, if you have them to use. We also have a guide on how to use compasses available on our Teaching Resources page to help you.

Step 2: Similarly to the previous step, using a tablet and a GPS system such as Google Maps, ask students to search for their end location and follow the GPS walking directions until they reach their destination.

Activity 5: Look into Natural Navigation Techniques

Introduce the students to basic ways that can help them with navigation, should they ever find themselves without a GPS device or map.

Some top tips include:

- The sun rises in the East and sets in the West
- You can put a stick in the ground and use its shadow to mark the cardinal points
- Moss prefers to grow on the North side of trees
- The North Star (Polaris) lies directly above the North pole. You can learn how to locate the North Star so that you can navigate at night time.

Activity 5: Take the Learning Even Further

The Ordnance Survey (OS) website has many amazing follow on activities, including how to use grid references, scale and measuring distances. Use the following link to take your learning even further:

<https://getoutside.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/guides/make-maps-fun/>

You can also put some of these skills to use in our “Maps and More” outdoor learning session. In this session (based at Campbell Park only) we offer an insight to how to use a compass, how to navigate using a map, how to use landmarks and an introduction to 6-figure grid references. This session is for KS2 students only. Enquire today by emailing outdoorlearning@theparkstrust.com