



EduTrend Contents

W4C · GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES · PRIMARY

Compass Quest

Navigate an orienteering trail with a compass

Ages 8–11

Level: Developing

60 minutes

Pairs · up to 30

Activity 02

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 pupil worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 02 · AT A GLANCE

Compass Quest

Pupils learn the eight compass points and how to set a map to north. In pairs they complete a short orienteering trail in the school grounds, using a map, compass directions and grid references to find numbered controls.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session pupils can:

- name and use the eight points of the compass;
- orient a map so it matches the ground;
- use four-figure grid references to locate places;
- follow and give directions accurately.

KEY WORDS

compass · north · east · south · west
· orient · grid reference · control · route

CURRICULUM LINKS

Geography: eight compass points and grid references, fieldwork.
Geography for Life (2012), standard 1. Maths: coordinates.
PE: orienteering.

1**ASK**

What is the question?

2**LOCATE**

Find it on a map

3**OBSERVE**

Look in the field

4**MEASURE**

Collect data

5**ANALYSE**

Spot patterns

6**EXPLAIN**

Why here?

Materials (per pair)

- Simple compass
- Map of the school grounds with a lettered and numbered grid
- Control card
- 10 control markers with code letters placed around the site
- Clipboard and pencil
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Draw a grid over a map of the grounds and label columns and rows.
- Place 10 control markers with a code letter and mark them on a master map.
- Prepare two courses so pairs start at different controls.
- Check compasses are not near metal or magnets when demonstrating.

SAFETY

Controls only in safe, visible areas within agreed boundaries. Walk, do not run, near buildings. Two adults outside.

ACTIVITY 02 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Practise orienting the map indoors first. Pupils who hold the map with north facing north make far fewer mistakes.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–10 min Compass points	Teach N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW with a “compass point” body game.	<i>“If you face north, what is on your right?”</i>
10–20 min Grid references	Practise reading four-figure grid references on the map.	<i>“Along the corridor and up the stairs.”</i>
20–45 min Quest	Pairs complete the course, recording codes on the control card.	<i>“Is your map turned to match the ground?”</i>
45–55 min Check	Pairs check codes and discuss where they went wrong.	<i>“Which control was hardest to find? Why?”</i>
55–60 min Design	Pairs write directions from one control to another for a friend.	<i>“Which directions are most precise?”</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Find all ten controls using the map, compass directions and grid references, and write accurate directions for another pair.

ACTIVITY 02 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The geography in brief

A compass needle points to magnetic north. Orienting a map means turning it so north on the map points north on the ground; then everything on the map lines up with what you see. Grid references give a quick, precise way to describe a location: along the corridor (columns) first, then up the stairs (rows).

Orienteering is a sport that uses these skills. Pupils quickly learn that careful map reading beats running. Metal objects and phones can pull a compass needle, so pupils should hold the compass flat and away from them.

Common ideas to listen for

- “North is the top of the page, wherever you stand.”
North is a real direction on the ground.
- “The compass points where I am going.” It points north; you use it to work out direction.
- “Grid references are read up then along.” Read along the bottom first, then up.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use a picture map with fewer controls placed close together, and practise four compass points only.

Stretch

Use a scale bar to measure distances between controls and design a timed course for another class.

WORKSHEET 1

Compass and grid practice

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Warm up before the quest.

Label the compass points

Draw a compass rose with eight points.

Grid references

Feature	Grid reference

WORKSHEET 2

Control card

Write the code letter at each control.

Controls

Control	Grid ref	Code	Direction from last control
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

WORKSHEET 3

Directions for a friend

Write directions from one control to another.

My directions

What makes directions easy to follow?

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight pupils; copy as needed.

Pupil	Uses eight compass points	Reads grid references	Navigates and gives directions

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Compass Quest is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents W4C Geography & Environmental Studies programme (primary, level: developing). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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