

ACTIVITY 01 · AT A GLANCE

Map Makers

Pupils look at the school grounds from above using a photo or plan, walk the site to check features and draw their own map with symbols and a key. They test each map by guiding a partner to a hidden object.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session pupils can:

- explain what a map is and why maps show places from above;
- use symbols and a key to show features;
- draw a simple map of a familiar place with features in the right positions;
- use their map to give and follow directions.

KEY WORDS

map · plan view · symbol · key · feature · direction · left · right · near · far

CURRICULUM LINKS

Geography: fieldwork and map skills, simple maps and symbols. Geography for Life: National Geography Standards (2012), standard 1. Maths: position and direction.

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 group)

- Aerial photo or plan of the school site (free online map services work well)
- Clipboards, paper and pencils
- Coloured pencils
- Small objects to hide (bean bags or cones)
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Print an aerial view of the school at a size where buildings and paths are clear.
- Walk the route you will use and note 8–10 clear features.
- Prepare a starter set of map symbols on a card.
- Decide boundaries for the outdoor part of the session.

SAFETY

Agree boundaries outdoors and keep groups in sight. Two adults outside. Avoid car parks and delivery areas.

ACTIVITY 01 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Start with the idea of looking down from above: a toy on the floor seen from a chair is a good demonstration.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–10 min Hook	Show a toy seen from the side and from above. Then show the aerial photo of school.	<i>"What can you recognise from above?"</i>
10–25 min Walk	Groups walk a short route and tick features on a checklist.	<i>"Is the bench nearer the gate or the building?"</i>
25–40 min Draw	Groups draw a map with symbols and a key.	<i>"Would a visitor understand your symbol?"</i>
40–55 min Test	One pupil hides an object and marks it on the map; a partner uses the map to find it.	<i>"What helped you find it?"</i>
55–60 min Review	Share one improvement each group would make to its map.	<i>"What should every map have?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Draw a map of part of the school grounds that a visitor could use to find a hidden object, with at least six features and a clear key.

ACTIVITY 01 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The geography in brief

A map shows a place as if seen from directly above, usually smaller than real life. Symbols stand for real features, and a key explains what each symbol means. Good maps keep features in the right positions relative to each other so people can find their way.

Children often draw features from the side, like pictures. Comparing an aerial photo with a side view helps them understand plan view. Testing a map with a real task shows quickly what is missing, which is how map makers improve their maps.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Maps are pictures.” They show things from above using symbols.
- “Everything must be drawn exactly.” Maps simplify and choose what to show.
- “North is always forward.” North is a fixed direction, not the way you are facing.

Adapting the activity

Support

Give a base map with the building outlines already drawn and a set of symbol stickers.

Stretch

Add a compass arrow and a simple scale, and write directions using north, south, east and west.

WORKSHEET 1

Feature checklist

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Tick each feature when you find it and draw a symbol for it.

Features

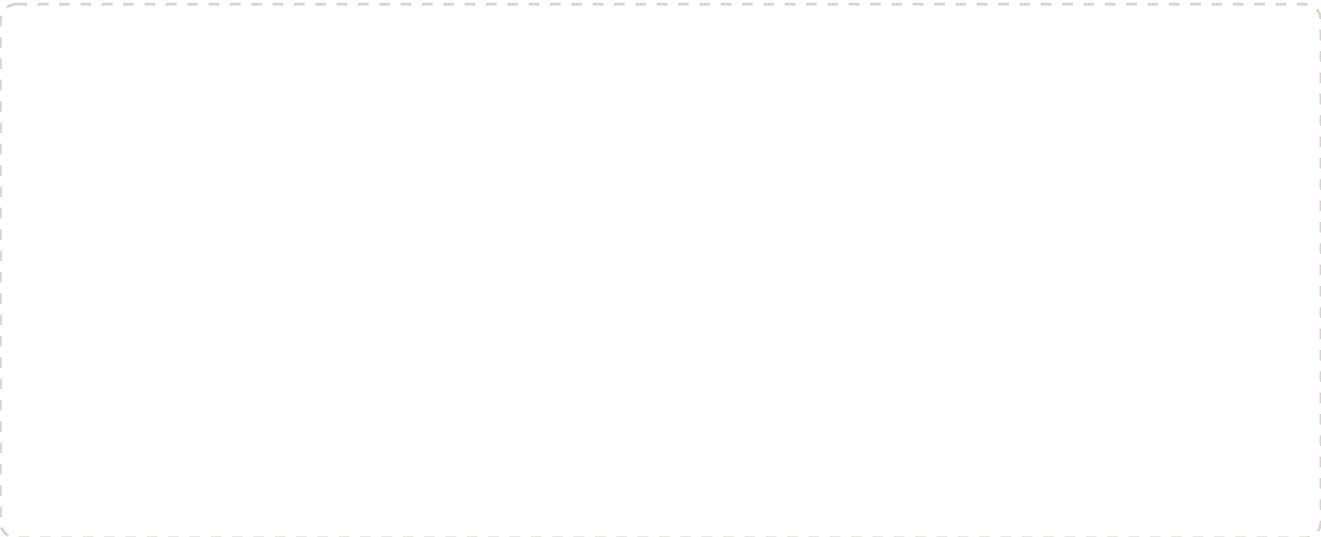
Feature	Found?	My symbol
Main door		
Gate		
Bench		
Tree		
Bin		
Path		
Playground		
Car park		

WORKSHEET 2

Our map

Draw the map from above. Add a key.

Map



Put features in the right places compared with each other.

Key

WORKSHEET 3

Testing the map

Did your partner find the hidden object?

What helped?

What was confusing?

One change to make our map better

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

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

Pupil	Uses plan view and symbols	Places features accurately	Uses the map to find the way

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

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Map Makers is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents W4C Geography & Environmental Studies programme (primary, level: foundation). 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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