



Nature | Education

GET TO KNOW
CONNECT • CREATE • CELEBRATE

GRAB N' GO ACTIVITY:

Mapping

OVERVIEW:

Before beginning this activity with your students, you should visit the outdoor location where they will be doing this activity.

MATERIALS:

- Clipboard
- "Mapping a Natural Landscape" Student Worksheet
- Pencil
- Pencil Crayons

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:

A good way to ascertain what your students already know about mapping is to show them a map of the town or city, and ask them to locate the school, their home, or some other important landmark.



Submit your work to the Get to Know Contest for a chance to win wild prizes & go to

GETTOKNOW.CA

to find more free resources and activities

MORE RESOURCES:

Find more educational resources at www.gettoknow.ca

Ages: 6+

Time: 30 minutes

PROCEDURE:

Step 1: At the field trip site, explain to your students the nature of this activity. Explain that they will be given about 15 minutes to draw a detailed map of a small location. The map should give the location of things such as stumps, logs, shrubs, herbs and trees, and the location of any special features such as animal burrows, tracks, and other interesting things they find within their area.

Step 2: We suggest you show the students a sample map (see attached) to demonstrate what a hand-drawn map could look like.

Step 3: Pass out the clipboards with the grid paper.

Step 4: Send your students to their assigned mapping spots with instructions to return in 15 to 20 minutes when called.

Step 5: After 20 minutes, call your students in check with them on their progress. If they are not finished, let them return and complete their maps if there is time.

Step 6: Ask your students for the highlights: "What really interesting things did you find and map out at your spot?" Let your students explain what they saw, and if time permits, guide the class back to their spot to show your and their classmates.



Nature | Education

GET TO KNOW

CONNECT • CREATE • CELEBRATE

GRAB N' GO ACTIVITY: Mapping

INTRODUCTION:

Landscapes are full of interesting natural features. It sometimes takes patience to see the subtle patterns in nature, but when you take the time to observe them, you will usually be rewarded with memorable experiences. For instance, a small patch of forest may contain several trees, some deadfall, a stump or two, and dozens of shrubs, plants, and other living or once living things. If you look closely, you might notice a stocking of moss growing up the base of a small aspen tree, a feather dropped by a bird, or a hint of a path made by squirrels moving from one tree to the next. You may notice insects foraging among the rotting leaves, or you may find signs of larger animals, such as hair or droppings. The time you take, the more you can see, and the more of the hidden story of this patch of forest is revealed to you.

An excellent way to capture some of the details of that story is with a map. Maps can show a snapshot of what's there, and can record other information, such as what events may have taken place at that spot over the course of time. In the course of drawing a map, the observer is forced to find things within the mapping area, identify them, and transcribe their locations to a paper representation of that area. In so doing, the details of the landscape become far clearer than they would otherwise.

OBJECTIVES:

- Draw a map showing the location of objects on a small patch of natural landscape.
- Use observation skills to locate and identify natural objects, and to estimate their positions relative to fixed landmarks.

INFORMATION:

A map is simply a diagram describing the shape and location of things in the real world, and where they are in relation to each other. A map may be a full-sized representation with a one to one scale, or it might present a proportional, scaled-down representation of a real location. A map may use symbols to represent real objects, or it might use unambiguous pictures to do the same thing.

Children's first maps tend to represent objects visually, with elements in their mapping area drawn to look like the real thing. As their intellectual and mapping skills develop, children's maps tend to encompass larger and larger areas, and make increasing use of symbols to represent real objects.

Symbols simplify the mapping process and let the student record more features found in the area. Eventually, students' maps will use mostly symbolic representations, making it necessary to use a legend or key explaining what the symbols stand for, and a scale to show how real distances are translated on the map.

In this activity, we assume your students are of elementary age and that they have relatively little experience with mapping. They will be making non-scaled maps of small areas on a natural landscape, in the order of 4.





Nature | Education

GET TO KNOW
CONNECT • CREATE • CELEBRATE

GRAB N' GO ACTIVITY:

Mapping

INTRODUCTION:

Use this sheet to make a sketch map of a small patch of forest, schoolyard, or meadow. Your teacher will help you pick a spot to make your map. Try to include all of the following:

- Large, fixed objects like trees and rocks;
- Plants, mushrooms, logs, and patches of moss, if present;

- Tracks, droppings, trails, or other evidence of animals in your map area
- Insect burrows, ant nests, or other possible insect hide-outs

You can make up your own symbols to represent different things, or you can draw them in any way you wish. Have fun!