

BUILDING ORIENTEERING SKILLS AT SCHOOL

Introduce your students to navigating, map making, and the sport of orienteering. Orienteering can be done with or without a map and with or without a compass. Here are some suggestions for having your students use navigating and map-making skills to create orienteering courses of their own:

SIMPLE MAP TREASURE HUNT

Have students create a simple map of the school, school grounds, a local park, or neighborhood (could use the maps from the “Create Your Own Map” pre and post activities). Have them work in pairs or small groups to hide numbered clues at various locations and mark these hiding spots on the map (e.g. Clue #1 is marked with a 1 on the map). Have groups trade maps and see if they can find each others’ clues. Afterwards, discuss what factors made this challenging? Were the maps to scale? Were the hiding places marked properly? What would they do differently next time? What did they learn about map-making and navigation?

Macro-photography extension: To add a digital/art component to this activity, have students take macro photographs of objects and mark their locations on the map. When other students complete the “treasure hunt” they have to identify what object the macro-photograph is a close-up of.

STUDENT-DESIGNED SIMPLE ORIENTEERING COURSE

After practicing direction-finding with a compass (this skill is introduced in “Blazing Your Trail”), have students create their own orienteering courses. Have students work in pairs and clearly mark a starting point for accuracy (this could be a mark on the ground, a hula hoop, a flag, etc.). Each pair of students will have cards numbered from 1-5. They will select a landmark, determine the direction of travel to get to it from the starting point (noted in degrees), and pace out the distance in average-sized paces (the size of an average-sized pace should be discussed by the whole group and demonstrated prior to sending students out to create their courses). They will record the direction of travel in degrees and the number of paces as Clue #1 on a separate sheet of paper (e.g. *Clue #1: 117°, 32 paces*). They will leave the card with a “1” on it at this first landmark and then will repeat the process with their other four cards, finding new landmarks and directions of travel each time. These short courses may or may not make a loop back to the starting point. At the end, each pair of students should be able to trade their clue sheets with other students and follow each other’s courses. ***It is important to remind students to look ahead rather than at the compass when following a direction of travel. Otherwise they may trip!*

MANITOBA ORIENTEERING ASSOCIATION

For more excellent orienteering and navigation skill-building ideas visit the Teacher Resource page of the Manitoba Orienteering Association at <http://www.orienteering.mb.ca/educators/index.htm>.