

## A unit to introduce basic map skills to fourth graders

### *Objectives*

In this unit, using materials close at hand--the city map from the telephone book and road maps of Winnipeg, students develop a basic orientation to map skills. A series of cooperative enrichment activities reinforces skills.

### *Basic Skills include*

- following directions
- identifying specific locations
- using map symbols
- developing sensitivity to map scale
- becoming acquainted (experientially) with distance

### *Enrichment activities include:*

- creating map symbols
- using specific places in creative writing
- developing a map

### *Desired Outcomes*

1. Students will become familiar with and able to read city and provincial maps.
2. Students will be able to plot a route on a provincial map.
3. Students will be able to use scale to determine locations one-half and one kilometer away from the school.
4. Students will be able to construct a map of their own.

### *Procedure*

1. Enlarge and laminate a simplified city map (indicating main roads, lakes, rivers, etc.) and place it on the bulletin board.
2. Students and teacher discuss the names of historic places and write on map with nonpermanent marker. The amount of detail varies with the level of interest shown by the students. The bulletin board map is truly a practice map for the following activities.  
When more familiar with the bulletin-board city map, students are asked to find a particular location (building, site) on individual smaller-scale maps and then mark it with a specific color. Teacher follows example on bulletin-board version.
3. Teacher introduces and discusses map symbols, then class creates a symbol key on the bulletin-board city map. Next, teacher distributes a city map with a list of ten historic places to each student. Students assign an appropriate symbol and color for each place. And draw and color it next to the name. They use the telephone book to

look up the address of each place and record that information. Then they move to their maps to find that specific address and record the proper symbol at the appropriate sites.

4. **The "Where Am I?" session.**

After reviewing directions, teacher divides class into teams of 3 or 4 students. Each team comes up to the bulletin-board city map and teacher gives members a "Where am I?" question, (for example: starting at Sargent Park School, go south on Dominion Street until you reach Portage Avenue. "What direction takes you to Main Street?") question, (for example: starting at Sargent Park School, go north on Dominion Street to Notre Dame Avenue and turn right "Where does Notre Dame take you ?") After all groups have had a turn, the teacher gives each group an activity sheet listing ten "Where am I?" questions along with a city map and list of symbols. Students work in teams and enter symbols on map to indicate their answers.

5. **Creative Writing Enrichment session.**

As a group, class brainstorms different reasons for why buildings are located where they are. They need to incorporate a certain number of places in their story, for instance, five buildings and five streets.

6. **Scale of miles.**

Teacher introduces this skill and students practice with an activity sheet and a map of the city. Using the school as the starting point, students work with a partner to find places that are a kilometer, six kilometers, and ten kilometers away. They must do this activity as if they are driving a car through streets instead of as the crow flies. Then the class meets as a whole and compiles a master list of the places each pair found.

7. **What is a kilometer?**

Most fourth-grade students have little concept of how long a kilometer really is. For this activity, teacher and students select one of the one-kilometer sites from the master list and walk there as a group. If willing, the physical education teacher can add to this activity by taking the students on walking routes, identifying the distance as they walk.

8. **A City of Your Own!**

Once students have a good idea of the kind of structures and parks in their own town, they create their own city maps for imaginary towns and include a symbol legend of their own.