

## Lesson plan

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## Learning Directions on a Map

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**Key points**

- Maps use the directions north, south, east, and west to help locate objects or features.
- Many maps have a compass or a small drawing in the legend to help identify the directions north, south, east, and west.

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**Lesson objective**

- Students will learn to use north, south, east, and west to identify relative locations and provide directions.

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**Material needed for this lesson**

- Illustration 3, showing a map of the park.

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**Suggestions for teaching this lesson (40-minute lesson)**

- Explain to the students that a direction is the point toward which something faces. For example, when you ask all the students to face forward, forward is a direction. Also, when you ask everyone to look up, up is a direction.
- Explain to students that north is at the top on most maps. Put illustration 3 on the floor with north oriented properly. Have the students sit around the illustration. Point out the star located in the center. Demonstrate how directions such as “forward,” “up,” “right,” etc., are ineffective when trying to plan movement on a map. To walk over to the dinosaur slide, students on one side might say “move right,” while students on the opposite side will say “move left.” Explain how maps use a much more effective set of directions: north, south, east, and west. West is the direction in which the sun sets. When facing west, north is to the right, south is to the left, and east is behind.
- Show the students where north, south, east, and west are marked on the illustration. Demonstrate to the students that to walk over to the dinosaur from the star, one would have to go east. Ask them which direction you would walk to go over to the barn? (west)
- Introduce the idea of directions between two points. Point out that not everything is directly north, south, east, and west of another point. Introduce students to additional directions—northeast, southeast, southwest, and northwest. Ask the students if they were standing on the star and looking at the carousel, what direction they would be looking? (southeast) Ask the students to help Nikki’s mother get to the pasture where Nikki landed the balloon. Choose different locations on the map where Nikki’s mother might be, then ask questions about which direction she would travel to go from that location to the pasture.
- Talk about relative location. Explain how we can use north, south, east, and west to talk about where one place on a map is in relationship to another. Demonstrate to the students that one place is north of another. Do the same for south, east, and west. Examples: the bridge is \_\_\_\_\_ of the dinosaur (north); the food tent is \_\_\_\_\_ of the carousel (west).

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**Suggested subjects for discussion and writing exercises.**

- Reproduce **Activity sheet 2** for each discussion and student. Have them select a site for a picnic in the park and mark the location with an X. The students should then provide (north, south, east, west) directions for someone at the north gate to get to the picnic site. For example, go south to the first path. Turn east and continue to the tower. At the tower turn south and meet me under the tree! Next, have students note the relative position of the picnic site to the star in the center. In our example, the picnic site is northeast of the star.