

RESOURCE LIBRARY
ACTIVITY : 20 MINS

Using the Language of Location

Students practice the language of location in relation to themselves and classroom objects.

GRADES

K, 1, 2

SUBJECTS

English Language Arts, Geography

OVERVIEW

Students practice the language of location in relation to themselves and classroom objects.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/using-the-language-of-location/>

Program



DIRECTIONS

1. Describe location in the classroom and in relation to other students.

Have students stand in a circle, arm's length apart. Ask students to look to the students on either side of them. Have them describe their location as "next to" their neighbor. Then help them practice concepts of near and far, by describing their neighbor as "near," and the students across the circle as "far." Next, pick two students who are not standing next to one another, and ask who is "between" them. Continue practicing this language using objects in the room. Tell students they are talking about the location of people and things in their

classroom.

2. Make a map of the classroom.

Use students' familiarity with their classroom. Ask: *How do we know we are inside the classroom? What else is inside the classroom?* Sketch a simple map showing the classroom's walls, doors, and windows on the board or on large paper. Ask: *What do you think these lines are?* (the walls) *What are these openings?* (door, windows) Ask students where the teacher's desk is located in relation to the door and windows. Then draw it in the correct location on the map. Emphasize that a simple map of the classroom is a small model that represents something that is really much larger, just as a model car represents a much larger actual car.

3. Have students describe where things are in the classroom.

Talk about other items in the classroom that can be included on the map, such as desks, chairs, carpets, or bookshelves. Place or draw other features on the map. Then use the map and the words "next to," "near," "far," and "between" to describe the locations of objects. Have students repeat statements using these words or think of their own statements using the language of location.

Modification

Instead of mapping the classroom, consider mapping the playground and its swings, slides, trees, and other features.

Informal Assessment

Have students orally describe places on the map of their classroom. Ask questions using "inside," "next to," "between," "near," and "far" with the sketched map. Make a list of students' statements using language of location on the board or paper, and display it with the classroom map.

Extending the Learning

As a class, make a map on large paper of the playground or the school. Have students decide what objects should be included. Ask: *How can a map of the playground or the school be useful to people?*

OBJECTIVES

Subjects & Disciplines

- English Language Arts
Geography

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- use the language of location to describe where objects and people in the classroom are located
- decide where objects in the classroom should be placed on a map of the classroom
- use the map to describe where objects in the room are located

Teaching Approach

- Learning-for-use

Teaching Methods

- Discussions
- Hands-on learning

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- Critical Thinking Skills
 - Analyzing
 - Understanding
- Geographic Skills
 - Analyzing Geographic Information

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

IRA/NCTE STANDARDS FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- **Standard 4:**

Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

- **Standard 1:**

How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

Preparation

What You'll Need

MATERIALS YOU PROVIDE

- Butcher paper
- Markers

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

GROUPING

- Large-group instruction

BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

Background Information

Combining spatial thinking about local environments—such as classrooms, playgrounds, or neighborhoods—with language learning can help students build both language arts skills and geographic understanding.

Prior Knowledge

Recommended Prior Activities

- [Describing Europe the Continent](#)
- [Exploring Maps and Models of Earth](#)

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
location	<i>noun</i>	position of a particular point on the surface of the Earth.
map	<i>noun</i>	symbolic representation of selected characteristics of a place, usually drawn on a flat surface.



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