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Introduction

The wonderful thing about teaching children map skills is that they really want to know how to read maps. To children maps are secret codes that any respectable spy must be able to figure out. Maps are keys to unknown places. Maps hold the promise of an adventure.

In *Map Skills: Grade 1* we start children with maps that are still largely representational. The challenge at this level is that the child's ability to decode the map and use map tools usually exceeds their ability to read the printed word. The learning standards at this level are typically very simple. First graders must

- understand that maps are representational.
- differentiate between water and land masses.
- find their home state or country on a map.

But first graders will become second and third graders who must know how to use the compass rose, the scale, and find places on a grid. First graders can begin to use these tools, too. The key is to keep the lessons fun, exploratory, and oral. If you find children are intimidated by the text on the activity pages, do not give the class the reproducible. Instead, use it to guide your discussion of the map. Give children the maps, and read aloud the introductory text on the activity page. Have children discuss how the information relates to that map. Ask children the questions on the page, and have them work together to solve each problem or follow the directions to complete the tasks.

The maps in this resource progress from quite simple to more complex. The most challenging maps in this book were "field tested" by first grade students and the response was enthusiastic. Use them in order. Full lessons on each element are not provided. Supplement difficult concepts with lessons from your social studies curriculum. Schedule about 20 minutes for each map experience. Invite children to bring in maps they find, and have the class examine them. Have the class find the title, key or legend, scale, compass rose, and grid on the map. Latitude and longitude are not discussed at this level.

Always invite the class to imagine what they could do with each map. The magic in a map is the possibility of new adventures. The skills children use will one day take them safely to the places they want to go. Conveniently, these skills also transfer well to a standardized-testing situation.



How to Use This Book

Hitting the Map Standards

Before you have children read and complete the activity page that precedes each map, lay a firm foundation for the activity by having children complete the Evaluate the Map reproducible (page 5). This reproducible will keep children's map skills sharp for test-taking and will better prepare them to think critically as they complete the activity page that accompanies the map. Copy the map on an overhead transparency, and display it so you can point to specific elements of the map during discussion. You may want to use the tips that follow as you do so.

1. Have children work in pairs the first time they complete the reproducible. More details are identified when two pairs of eyes examine the same map.
2. Read the directions to the class. Have children take a moment to look at the map. If there are labels, invite volunteers to read them. Point to each label as it is read and have the rest of the class follow along. Be sure children understand what each label means before moving on. For example, when children look at the first map, you may discuss what a patio is—point out that if a person were to walk through those doors they would be going outside.
3. Children may simply copy the title for question 1. For question 2, they should not repeat the information in the title. Have them carefully examine the map and say *This map was created by a person. What was the person trying to show or teach in this map?* Record responses on the board.
4. Children may need a thorough review of the map terms before they can complete question 3. Assign colors to each check box, and have children circle or underline parts of the map that correspond to each check box. Invite volunteers to do so on the overhead map.
5. Have children discuss their answers to question 4. Record their responses as a list on the board. When the discussion is complete, point to each word or phrase in the list and read it aloud. Then, encourage children to use the list to write a sentence that answers question 4. You may choose to have less fluent writers dictate their responses to you. Record their responses on an index card, and have them copy their answer onto the reproducible.
6. For question 5 invite children to simply jot down a keyword or words related to a part of the map that is confusing for them. Collect the reproducibles. Without reading names, quickly go through the reproducibles and read aloud the concerns. Use this information to clarify any areas of the map that are problematic for the class. You may spend more time on this step than on the others, but in return, children are likely to be much more independent as they complete the activity sheet that accompanies the map.

Name _____ Date _____



Evaluate the Map

Use the map to answer the questions.

1. The title is _____.

2. This map shows _____.

3. Check the box. This map has

☐ land and water.

☐ a compass rose.

☐ a key.

☐ grid lines.

☐ a scale.

4. How could you use this map?

5. What does not make sense to you?



Using the Activity Pages

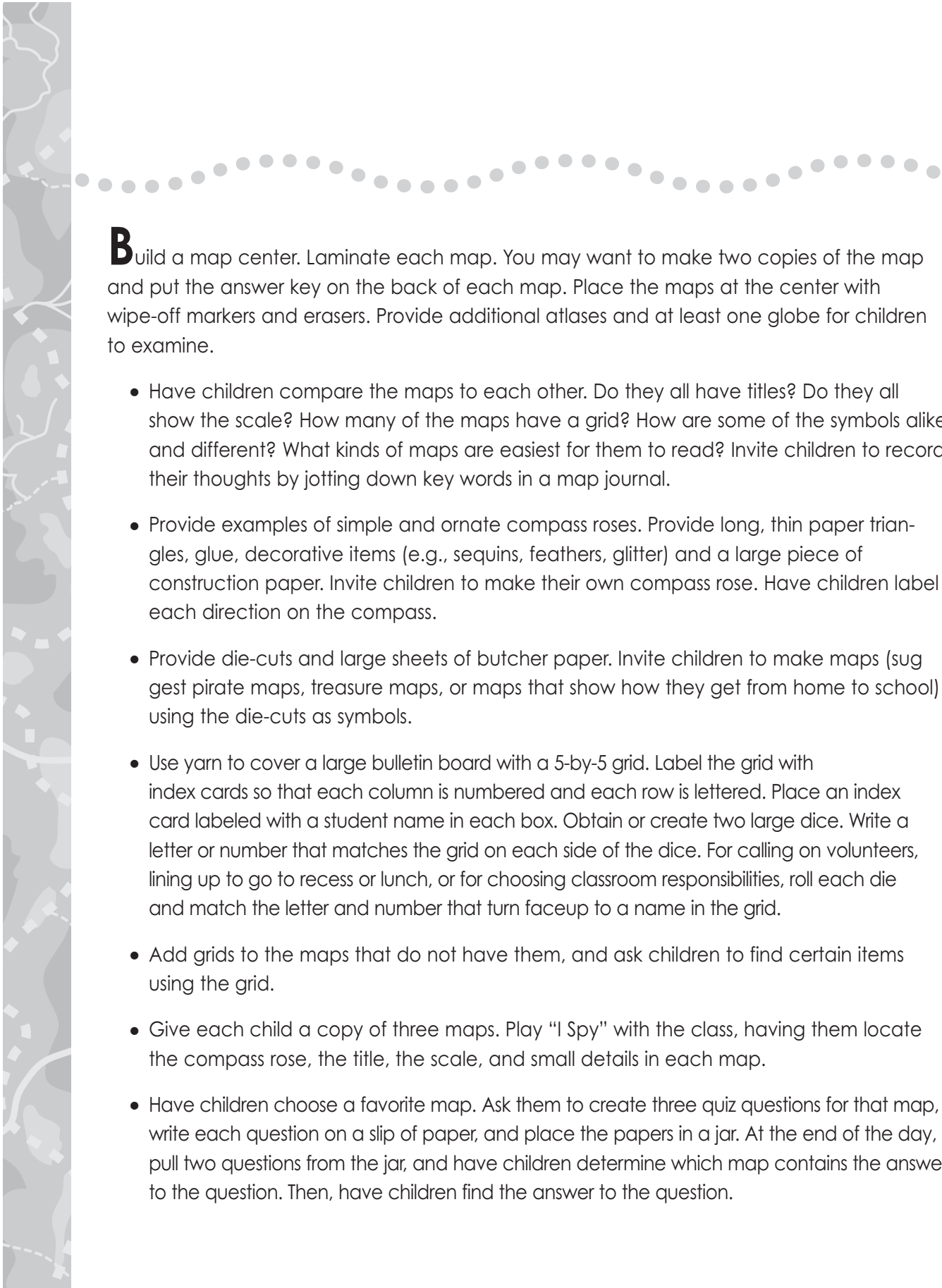
Copy the map to an overhead transparency. Decide whether you are going to have children record their responses on the activity page or complete it orally. If you have children do their own work on the activity page, copy it and distribute one to each child. Display the map transparency. Give children time to review the features of the map and then read aloud the instructional text on the activity page. Discuss and clarify any new terms. Have children look over the map and discuss any confusing symbols or features of the map. Then, walk children through answering the questions or following the directions on the activity page. Have children respond verbally or record their responses on the activity page. Encourage frequent discussions as children work.

Special Notes:

The first few maps all focus on two concepts only: that maps are shown from a birds-eye-view and that each item on a map represents a real thing. For children who have strong spatial skills, the concept of birds-eye view needs almost no explanation. However, many children at this age still struggle with the concept. Try this quick activity to help them understand the concept. In advance, use doll furniture to assemble a simple bedroom in a cardboard box. Cut out a door in the side of the box. Cut out some windows. Have children pretend to be a bird and “fly” slowly over the box. Then, have them return to their seats and draw what they saw. Children may fly over the “room” more than once to recall all the items. Point out the similarities between their drawings and the first map on page 9.

Page 12 and 14: Do not think of the maps that go with these activity pages as complete maps. There should be no scale or compass rose. Only the title is provided. The sole purpose of this exercise is to have children internalize the birds-eye-view concept and the idea that maps can represent real places and things. It is fine if a child’s “room” is missing typical bedroom items. What is important is that the child demonstrates an understanding that the symbols they draw are meant to represent a specific object in a particular location. Children may benefit from completing these activities in small groups so you can provide more assistance to each child. For page 14 you may need to explain or review what a plateau is. If children have not encountered the term in their social studies texts yet, explain that a plateau is like a hill with a flat top.

Page 36: Give children two 2" squares. Have them line up the edges of the square with the scale line to confirm that the length of the square equals five miles. Have them use the square to measure distances. Show children how to place the corner of the square on their starting location and mark the ending location on the edge of the square when they want to compare distances. Some distances on this activity page do not require the use of the scale. Children should be able to determine more than and less than just by estimating the distances.



Build a map center. Laminate each map. You may want to make two copies of the map and put the answer key on the back of each map. Place the maps at the center with wipe-off markers and erasers. Provide additional atlases and at least one globe for children to examine.

- Have children compare the maps to each other. Do they all have titles? Do they all show the scale? How many of the maps have a grid? How are some of the symbols alike and different? What kinds of maps are easiest for them to read? Invite children to record their thoughts by jotting down key words in a map journal.
- Provide examples of simple and ornate compass roses. Provide long, thin paper triangles, glue, decorative items (e.g., sequins, feathers, glitter) and a large piece of construction paper. Invite children to make their own compass rose. Have children label each direction on the compass.
- Provide die-cuts and large sheets of butcher paper. Invite children to make maps (suggest pirate maps, treasure maps, or maps that show how they get from home to school) using the die-cuts as symbols.
- Use yarn to cover a large bulletin board with a 5-by-5 grid. Label the grid with index cards so that each column is numbered and each row is lettered. Place an index card labeled with a student name in each box. Obtain or create two large dice. Write a letter or number that matches the grid on each side of the dice. For calling on volunteers, lining up to go to recess or lunch, or for choosing classroom responsibilities, roll each die and match the letter and number that turn faceup to a name in the grid.
- Add grids to the maps that do not have them, and ask children to find certain items using the grid.
- Give each child a copy of three maps. Play "I Spy" with the class, having them locate the compass rose, the title, the scale, and small details in each map.
- Have children choose a favorite map. Ask them to create three quiz questions for that map, write each question on a slip of paper, and place the papers in a jar. At the end of the day, pull two questions from the jar, and have children determine which map contains the answer to the question. Then, have children find the answer to the question.

Name _____ Date _____



The Living Room

Maps Show Places

Read.

Maps are pictures that show where things are. You could draw a map of your desk. You could draw a map of your house. You could draw a map of your town.

You read a map to get information. This map shows a room. If the room were dark, you could use the map and a flashlight to find what you needed quickly.

Use the map to answer the questions.

1. What could you sit on in this room? _____

2. How many bookshelves are in the room? How are they different?

3. One of the windows is not like the others. In what way is it different?

4. How can you get in this room?

5. How could you entertain yourself in this room?

The Living Room

