

# Using a Compass



**Recommended Grades:**

K-5



**Time Needed:**

15-20 minutes

## Description

- Students will have the opportunity to find north with a compass and practice finding the direction to places on the map.

## Learning Objectives

- Interpret compass directions
- Familiarize students with place locations in Kentucky

## Materials

- Kentucky Location Cards
- String and/or chain
- Compasses

## Preparation

- Familiarize yourself with where the places are that are listed on the Kentucky Location Cards

**Rules: (e.g., have students remove shoes before walking on map)**

## Directions

### Activity 1:

1. Have students stand around the edge of the map so that each student is facing the map.
2. Pass out a compass to each student.
3. Direct all students to find north with their compass by slowly moving in a circle until the compass points north. Everyone should be facing toward the north, in the same direction.
4. Ask for one student volunteer to stand on the town in which the school is located.
5. Show the students how to find the direction toward the town (student on the town) by slowly turning toward the student. Announce the direction. It is unlikely that students will be directly north, south, east, or west, so encourage students to be more specific, for example northeast, southwest.

6. Have students find the direction toward the town where the student is standing. Let students visit with their neighbors to confirm the direction is correct. Have some of the students share their direction toward the town.
7. Ask for another student volunteer. This time have the student take a Kentucky Location Card and have them stand on that spot.
8. Have students find the direction toward the location where the student is standing. Let students visit with their neighbors to confirm the direction is correct. Have some of the students share their direction toward the town/student.
9. Repeat steps 7 and 8 a few times or until all students have drawn a Kentucky Location Card.

### **Activity 2:**

1. Shuffle the Kentucky Location Cards and pass one out to each student. As you pass the cards out, put the students in groups of 2.
2. Have all the students work in their groups of 2 to find the card locations on the map.
3. Select 2 students to use as an example. The 2 students will use a string to connect the 2 towns. The chain can be used for the longest distances. Have the students hold the string on the location with their foot, so they can stand up to use the compass.
4. Each student will stand on their town and use the compass to find the direction to the other town. Have the students share their findings.
5. If you have a large class, then you may decide to have 4 pairs of students find their directions at a time. Thirty students (15 sets of 2) may be too many on the map as they will be in each other's way. The students who are not on the map can practice using their compass by finding the directions of other things in the room. You can also match up the towns ahead of time so there is minimal overlapping, and more students can be on the map.