



Put Me in My Place: Using Alphanumeric Grids to Locate Places

Author
Grade Level
Duration

Julie Letofsky
1-2
2 class periods

National Standards

GEOGRAPHY

Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

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

3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface

Element 2: Places and Regions

4. The physical and human characteristics of places.

AZ Standards

ELA

Reading

Key Ideas and Details

1.RI.1 and 2.RI.1 Ask and answer questions such as who, what, where, why, when, and how about key details in a text.

Writing

Production and Distribution of Writing

1.W.4 and 2.W.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY

The use of geographic representations and tools helps individuals understand their world.

1.G1.1 Use, explore and construct maps, graphs, and other geographical representations to support content focus. Key concepts include but are not limited to physical features (rivers, lakes, mountains, landforms, desert) and human features (dams, cities, parks, hospitals, schools, railroad tracks, farms, factories, houses).

1.G1.2 Use a grid to locate places.

2.G1.1 Use and construct maps, graphs, and other geographic representations of familiar and unfamiliar places in the world; and locate physical and human features. Key physical features include but are not limited to seven continents, oceans, lakes, rivers, mountain ranges, coasts, seas, and deserts. Key human features include but are not limited to equator, hemispheres, North and South Pole, cities, states, countries, regions, and landmarks

2.G1.2 Use maps, globes, and other simple geographic models to identify and explain cultural and environmental characteristics of places in the world based on stories shared.

Overview

Using maps to acquire and report information is an essential geography skill. Working with alphanumeric grids helps young children develop spatial perspective with maps and gives them the skill to answer the geographic question of "Where is this located?" If they can locate places uses an alphanumeric grid, then they will be prepared for later work locating places with latitude/longitude grids.

Purpose

In this lesson, students will learn and practice using an alphanumeric grid system. They will construct a neighborhood using a grid to locate common features. They will demonstrate their skill at using alphanumeric grids by locating places on a prepared map.

Materials

- For constructing a grid on a 3'x3' open wall space: 3-4 different colors of yarn, pushpins

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- *For constructing a paper grid to hang on a wall:*
3'x3' sheet of butcher paper, yardstick, different colors of markers
- Various colors of 9"x12" construction paper for creating neighborhood symbols
- Chart paper
- Common Sight Word Cards
- Neighborhood Grid
- Neighborhood Grid Questions and Answer Key

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Use an alphanumeric grid system to locate places on a map.
- Write two questions reflecting "Where is it located?"

Procedures

Prepare in advance:

- *A 3'x3' grid displayed on a wall for all children to see. Use different colors of yarn or different colored markers to make vertical and horizontal lines six inches apart. The colors will help children focus their eyes as they locate points on the grid. Label the vertical lines with letters. Label the horizontal lines with numbers.*
- *A variety of simple construction paper shapes to represent neighborhood features.*
- *Large chart paper for spelling words and placing map symbols*
- *Common Sight Word Cards*

SESSION ONE

1. Have students gather around the grid. Introduce the lesson by saying, "Today we will create a neighborhood map. We know that a neighborhood is a place where people live, play, and sometimes work. To create our neighborhood map, we first need to decide on the important places that we want to include in our neighborhood. Think to yourselves of all the places in a neighborhood. As I write the places on this chart paper, you will help me spell the words." (Accept all reasonable responses.)

2. As you write the words on the chart paper, stretch out the word sounds to prompt the children to help you spell. For example, say, "Park ... right, a park is an important place to play in a neighborhood. What do you hear at the beginning of park? /p/ ... right, that's a P. Then we hear /ar/ ... that's AR. What do we hear at the end of park? /k/ ... right, that's K."

3. Say, "Let's use a green circle as a symbol for a park on our map." (Tape a green circle next to the word "park" on the chart paper. Continue spelling out

words and selecting symbols for each neighborhood place.)

4. "Now that we've thought of the important places to include in our neighborhood, we will place them on a map. On the wall you see a special design called a grid. A grid is a tool to help us locate places on a map. This is called an alphanumeric grid because it uses letters of the alphabet and numbers. This line is line A." (Run your finger across line A.) "Can you see line 1?" (Call on a child to run finger along line 1.) "Do you see line B?" Move your finger in the air along line B. Continue in same way until children have focused on each horizontal and vertical line.

5. "Let's begin to construct our neighborhood with the school. If I say locate the school at B2, we follow the grid line B and the grid line 2 to see where they meet." (Run your fingers along the two lines to where they intersect.) "Right here is point B2." (Tape or pin the school at B2. Continue to suggest points to place the neighborhood features. Call on children to run their fingers along grid lines to correctly place items at those points).

6. When all neighborhood features are placed on the map, ask a series of questions to get children to focus on using the grid lines. Of course, these questions will also prompt children to use the map legend! For example, say, "What is the location of the school? What is the location of the gas station? What is located at C3? What is located at F4?"

7. If there is time, remove neighborhood symbols and arrange them in a different layout using different grid coordinates or coordinates suggested by children.

8. Conclude the session with, "This is how we locate places on a map."

SESSION TWO

1. Introduce today's session with, "Today we will use an alphanumeric grid to locate places on a different neighborhood map that I've prepared for you on a worksheet. To answer the questions on the worksheet, we need to review some common words." Project the Common Sight Word Cards and review the words. Then review words you spelled together on the map legend in previous session.

2. Distribute the Neighborhood Grid worksheets. "Let's review how the alphanumeric grid works. Point to line A on your Neighborhood Grid. Run your finger across it. Point to line B. Run your finger along it." (Continue through horizontal and vertical lines.) "Now let's find C3. Put one finger on line C. Put another finger on line 3. Move your fingers to find where these two lines meet. This is point C3." (Move around to check children's accuracy in locating this point. Continue with several other examples).

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3. "Now you will read the questions on the second worksheet. Use the grid to answer the questions. When you get to the bottom of the page, you will write two grid sentences yourselves. Be sure to spell correctly the common words we reviewed." Be sure to use capital letters where needed and punctuate your sentences.

4. Have student trade papers and answer the two questions written on the paper. Have students share the questions they were given and their answers.

Assessment

Children will use an alphanumeric grid system to correctly locate 8 of 10 places on Neighborhood Map Grid Worksheet in order to obtain mastery.

Children will correctly use spelling, punctuation, and capitalization when writing their two questions. Mastery will be considered 3 or fewer mistakes in spelling, punctuation, or grammar.

Extensions

Read books with neighborhood themes to set the stage for this lesson. Suggestions listed below in SOURCES.

In computer lab, children can use a simple drawing program to construct a playground or city map. Using line tools, they can overlay a grid, and using text tools, they can label lines with letters and numbers. They can add a compass rose and a legend/key. After printing their maps, children can

formulate geographic location questions about their maps for classmates to solve.

Create a giant grid outdoors! Try a basketball court or an open yard space. Use yarn or tape to mark grid lines; use traffic cones to hold letter and number labels. Call out a location on the grid and have one child at a time locate themselves physically on that point. You can also work on compass direction skills. For example, "Move one line south." or "What direction would you move to go from C4 to A2?"

Sources

How Many Stars in the Sky? by Lenny Hort, 1991, Trumpet, ISBN 0-440-84646-3 - A boy and his father travel from their suburban home through an urban area to a rural area in search of stars.

A Country Far Away by Nigel Gray, 1988, Orchard Books - A child in England and a child in Africa live similar lives in unique neighborhoods.

The Little House by Virginia Lee Burton, 1942, Scholastic, ISBN 0-590-41383-X - A little house watches its surroundings change over time.

The U.S. Department of Education has archived its Helping Your Child Learn Geography. There are several sections devoted to locating places.
<https://www2.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Geography/index.html>