Practical activities

Notes for the teacher - If your children need to review their learning, you can use these activities to support them.

Describe the map

The resources required for this activity include aerial maps/maps of familiar places/areas.

Activity: Prepare simple aerial maps/plans of places that the children are familiar with such as the school, classroom or local park. Ask the children to describe what they see. Prompt them with questions such as:

- What do you think this area is used for?
- Why do you think this part is different from the other part?
- What things can you see the most of in the aerial plan?
- Is there anything you can't name?

Compare and contrast

The resources required for this activity include two different aerial maps/plans of similar areas.

Activity: Give the children two different aerial maps/plans of similar areas (e.g. two parks). Give the children time to discuss the similarities or differences between the two in pairs or small groups. Display some key vocabulary and encourage children to use these words in their conversations e.g. bigger, smaller, closer, further away.

Map puzzles

The resources required for this activity include an aerial map cut into pieces and some string.

Activity: Give groups of children an aerial map cut into pieces. They must work together to put the map back together. They should discuss the pieces and how they fit using descriptive language e.g. "I know my piece goes here because it matches with the other half of the table on the other piece." Extend the activity by giving challenges to find places on the map and routes between them, using string to map out the routes.

Map detective

The resources required for this activity include simple aerial images, compass, key vocabulary cards and magnifying glasses.

Activity: The children are to pretend they are detectives solving a mystery. Give them clues that relate to locations on the aerial plan. They could use magnifying glasses to help them. They must describe the route and locations using compass points or directional language such as next to, near, above, below, left and right. These keywords could be written on cards for the children to refer to and use in their descriptions.

Tour guide

The resources required for this activity include aerial maps of the local area, string/coloured pencils/stickers.

Activity: The children are to act as tour guides, explaining their aerial map to a partner who is in role as a 'visitor'. They should speak in full sentences, telling their 'visitor' what they can see and do at different locations on the map and how to get from one point to another. They could use string, coloured pencils or stickers to help them.

Simon says

The resources required for this activity include aerial maps.

Activity: The children are to play a game of 'Simon says' using an aerial map. Say a range of things to get the children pointing to or finding routes or areas on the map e.g. "Simon says, find a route from the playground to the school."

Treasure hunt

The resources required for this activity include a map template, direction cards, compass and objects to hide.

Activity: The children are to play a game of 'treasure hunt'. Draw a simple map of the classroom or playground (or encourage children to draw the map) and hide objects. Children can use directional language, direction cards or compass points to direct others to the hidden objects.

Get teddy home

The resources required for this activity include a map template, compass, direction cards, teddy or another soft toy or character.

Activity: The children are to choose a starting point (Point A) in the classroom and encourage children to use directional language, direction cards or compass points to get teddy home (Point B). Point B could be a cosy corner or the reading corner.