

Places on a Map

Students need to know how to interpret maps through all the grades, but textbooks seldom have lessons on spatial relationships (calendars, multiplication charts, etc.).

Prepare boards by copying the *Map Grid* (p. 7-10) onto 11" x 17" cardstock (2 3/4" squares). Make two strips, one each for the side and top. Glue punch out paper pattern block shapes, connecting cubes (Unifix cubes), color tiles, tiny bears, beans, etc. in the spaces on the strips (not on the map—leave it blank!). Some strips could have varying amounts in each square. Stamp coins or glue paper coins on some strips. Sticker dots may be placed in the squares, and sticker dot cards made to use on the map. As a whole class activity, you could have a large chart with funny names written in the squares. Have a student tell you the location of Mickey Mouse. This activity is very flexible.

Begin the lesson by discussing columns and rows. Look at a penny and notice the columns on the Lincoln Memorial. Say "Columns are strong. They go up and down. Rows go the other way—side to side." Use an overhead geoboard to demonstrate how the side and top can be used to identify a specific place (letters on the top and the numbers on the side). Build pattern blocks on the overhead according to what the column block or row blocks indicate.

1. Provide each table with a different manipulative to use for building (e.g., pattern blocks, Unifix cubes, color tiles, teddy bear or animal counters, plastic coins, attribute shapes, bingo chips, two-colored beans, etc.). Students work as partners and build the materials onto the map.
2. Place a strip above the map and one on the left side.
3. Some children connect the cubes, some build with the shapes, some lay them flat. They love it!

It will be apparent who knows the mapping concept and who does not as you walk around the class. Partners help each other. The activity may be adapted to match the level of the students (e.g., coin combinations).

