

Delightful Directions

Summary

Students will play a variety of games and activities to understand Cardinal directions.

Main Core Tie

Social Studies - 1st Grade

[Standard 3](#)

Materials

- 30 Foam Balls
- Blindfolds
- City Maps
- State Maps
- [Direction Words](#) pdf
- [Farm](#) pdf
- [Animals](#) pdf
- Counters

Background for Teachers

Cardinal directions are a challenge for many first graders to learn, understand, and use. Prior to this lesson, you will want to have exposed your students to using directions in every day life. Discuss things like using their right hand to say the pledge, or discuss which side of the hall they are walking down. Also, familiarize them with the surroundings outside such as the mountains, lakes or rivers that may be close by. Use the terms east, west, north, and south as you describe them to the students.

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate a positive learning attitude.

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to Learn

The students will play a direction game. Take the class to an open area such as the gym or lunchroom. Lay out soft, foam balls across the floor. Explain to the class that their job will be to try and hit another student with a ball. Once students are hit, they are out. Let students explore and play the game. As they do, point out that the balls don't hurt. After they have played for five to six minutes, blindfold half of the class and have them play the game, while the other half of the class listens and watches silently. Let them play for about 2-3 minutes. Next, pair up the other half of the class and have them stand by their partner and give them directions such as, "move to your right, go down, pick it up, throw" etc. Afterward, have the students discuss with you which way was easier and why it was easier.

Instructional Procedures

Ask students to remember a time they got lost. Have them share what helped them to find their way.

Discuss how maps help us find our way to places and the importance of knowing how to use maps. Compare using a map to the time they played the game and had someone to tell them where to go.

Show a map to the class and point out features of it: mountains, lakes, states, (if using a US

map) cities, compass rose, and directions.

Introduce the words: north, south, east, west and place them on the board. Ask the students to share where they have seen and used these words before. Take time to discuss these with the class. Explain that we need to know where these directions are in order to be able to use them. Place direction signs in your room, according to where they exist.

Explain to your students that you are going to play a game that will help them learn north, south, east, and west.

Play *4 Corners* using the directions north, south, east, west. Pick one student to be "it." They go up to the front of the room, close their eyes, and count to 10. While they count, the other students move to one of the direction corners and stay there. With their eyes closed, the person that is "it" picks a corner using the words north, south, east or west, and whoever is in it, is out. Continue play until only one student is left. Management tips -- have them practice silent cheering and silent getting out.

Bring students back and have them share what helped them to remember which direction was which.

Introduce "Where Are the Animals?" game to students. Show them the *Farm worksheet* and point out certain features such as, the barn, fence, haystacks, etc. Also, point out the directions north, south, east, west, and practice using them. For example ask them, "Is the hay stack east or west of the barn?"

Explain that you have five animals that you will hide on the *Farm worksheet*. Place the five animals from your *Animals worksheet* on the *Farm worksheet*, without the class seeing it. Give each student the *Farm worksheet* and 30 counters that are 2 different colors, 15 of each color, that they can place on the *Farm worksheet*. Have students guess where the animals are hiding by using language such as, "Is it east of the hay stack one space?" Then students should mark their map with counters. One color is used if there is an animal, and the other color is used if there isn't an animal. Make sure to model this process using the board or overhead prior to beginning this game.

After they have played it as a class a few times, and you feel they understand it, have them pair off and play the game with a partner. As they do so, walk around and assist as needed. Remind them to look at the compass on their map to assure they are saying the right directions.

Extensions

High students -- introduce the terms northeast, northwest, southeast, southwest to them have them play the game using those clues to move diagonally on the chart.

Low students -- first work with cues such as right, left, up, or down making sure to point on the compass with direction they are moving. With time, help them to move on to using the direction names.

Family Connections

Have students observe what is north, south, east and west of their house and then draw a picture of it. When they bring it back to class, let them share their map with the class and explain it, using the direction names.

Play the "Where Are the Animals?" game at home.

Assessment Plan

Give students an unfinished map of your classroom. Have them draw in the objects that are missing using clues such as "draw a desk east of the bookshelf" or other clues, according to how your classroom is set up.

Go on a walk outside. Align the students with north, east, south, and west. Ask them which

direction the playground, school, mountains, etc are. Take notes of their use of the directions and those students that may need more work.

Place any of the above student work in students' portfolios.

Bibliography

Research Basis

Guastello, E.F., Beasley, T.M. & Sinatra, R.C. (2000). *Concept mapping effect on science content comprehension of low-achieving inner-city seventh graders*. ERIC. Retrieved November 28, 2006, from <http://www.eric.ed.gov>

In this article, the authors describe the results from a study that was done with seventh grade science students. One class was taught using direct teacher instruction and another class was taught using concept mapping to connect the subject matter taught. The end result was that the students in the concept mapping class did much better than the class that received direct teacher instruction.

Gibbs, H.J. (2004). Student portfolios: documenting success. *Academic Research Premier*. Retrieved November 28, 2006.

By reading this, we find that students and teachers both benefit from using portfolios in the classroom as a method of assessment. By using portfolios, we can learn more about a student's comprehension of the topic and their performance on their assignments over a period of time.

Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)