

# The Pony Express

## Summary

How do you get to school each day? Is it a well known or marked path? What would happen if they didn't know where they were going? Try to draw a map showing them the information they have just provided.

## Main Core Tie

Social Studies - 4th Grade

[Standard 1 Objective 2](#)

## Time Frame

1 class periods of 30 minutes each

## Materials

Paper  
Colored pencils  
Pencils  
rulers

## Background for Teachers

- They're Off! : The Story of the Pony Express  
by Cheryl Harness
- Buffalo Bill and the Pony Express  
(I Can Read Book 3) by Eleanor Coerr and Don Bolognese
- Pony Express!  
by Steven Kroll and Dan Andreasen
- Wanted: A Few Bold Riders: The Story of the Pony Express  
(Smithsonian Odyssey) by Darice Bailer and Tom Antonishak
- Young Riders of the Pony Express  
(Graphic History) by Jessica Gunderson
- The Mail Must Go Through: The Story Of The Pony Express  
by Margaret Rau
- The Sweetwater Run: The Story of Buffalo Bill Cody and the Pony Express  
(Picture Yearling Book) by Andrew Glass
- The Pony Express  
(We the People: Expansion and Reform series) by Jean Kinney Williams

## Instructional Procedures

1. Explain to the students that the need for maps has been around for a long time. Explain that the first mail service was through the Pony Express and how their path was marked.
2. Show the Pony Express video from This Day in History.
3. Explain to the class that they will be making a large map that shows the route they travel from home to school. These routes can be walking or bus routes, whichever students prefer.
4. Before students begin their maps, suggest that they bring a small notebook and a pencil with them on their next walk or bus trip from home to school. Encourage them to jot down the names of important streets along the way and to add landmarks such as parks, stores, and fire and police

stations. Have students keep in mind that their maps should be simple. Too much detail might be confusing.

5. After completing the map, have students mark the route from home to school with a colored line, add a compass rose to show directions, and draw a map key that shows what any symbols mean.

6. Before bringing the map to school, have each student show it to a friend or relative and ask them to describe the route out loud. An example might be "Go west when you leave your house. Walk a block past the park, etc." Students might find out at this step that they may have to make some modifications.

7. When all the maps are complete, have students use their individual maps along with a town or city map to create one large class map that shows each student's route from home to school. Remind students to include a compass rose and a map key. Display the map on a bulletin board and use it to teach map skills. Students will have more fun practicing this skill when they recognize places on the map.

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