

## A Good Sense of Direction

### Purpose

Students will use cardinal and intermediate directions to locate places on maps and places in the classroom, school, and community.

### Materials

*For the teacher:* chalk, chalkboard, masking tape, computer, Internet access, blank transparency, overhead projector, overhead marker  
*For each student:* copy of Black Line Master (BLM) *My Community Compass Rose*, pencil

### Activity

#### A. Pre-Activity Preparation

1. Draw a simple, unlabeled compass rose on the chalkboard.
2. Using masking tape, make a large compass rose on the floor in the middle of the classroom. Label the cardinal and intermediate directions by writing with a large marker onto squares of tape.
3. Go to a mapping Web site (e.g., [www.maps.com](http://www.maps.com) or [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)) and print out a map of your community, using the address of your school as the center of the map.
4. Make a transparency of the map and label other prominent landmarks (e.g., parks, libraries, theatres, etc.) with an overhead marker. Label at least one landmark per cardinal and intermediate direction.
5. Draw a compass rose on the map transparency if there is not one already.

#### B. Learning the Compass Rose

1. Direct students' attention to the compass rose on the chalkboard. Ask students if they know what it is.
2. Explain to students that it is called a compass rose and that there is one on every map to help tell the directions.
3. Ask student volunteers to name a direction and say where it is on the compass rose.
4. Write in the letter of each direction (e.g., "N," "NE," etc.) in the appropriate place on the compass rose.
5. Show students that the intermediate directions between the cardinal directions get their names from a combination of names of the cardinal directions (e.g., *northeast* is halfway between *north* and *east*).

(continued)

MEETING  
INDIVIDUAL



NEEDS

Encourage students whose first language is not English to write the names of the directions and landmarks in their first language as well as English.

connecting  
across the  
curriculum



#### Science

Show students how a magnetic compass works. Demonstrate magnetic pull with iron filings and a strong magnet, then take students on a compass walk to see how the compass always points north. Explain to students that because the Earth has a strong magnetic pull, the compass always knows where north is.

Standards Links  
2.3.2, 2.3.3

## Activity (continued)

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6. Have students gather around the masking-tape compass rose on the floor.
7. Tell students that they can refer to the compass rose to answer questions about where some items in the classroom are.
8. Ask students questions to identify directions of items in the classroom, such as: “Which direction is the chalkboard in? Which direction is the door in? Which direction would you go to get to the coat rack?”
9. Encourage students to think about the directions in terms of the school. Ask students: “Which direction would you go to get to the principal’s office from here?” Have students point with their fingers in the correct direction.

### C. Map of My Community


1. Have students return to their desks.
2. Place the transparency of the community map on the overhead projector.
3. Show students the location of the school and point out the other landmarks on the map.
4. Direct students’ attention to the compass rose on the transparency and demonstrate that directions are used to say where one place is in relation to another place (e.g., say: “The public library is *northeast* of our school.”).
5. Hand out a copy of the BLM *My Community Compass Rose* and a pencil to each student.
6. Instruct students to label the arms of the compass rose with the correct letters and to find one landmark for each direction, starting with the school as the middle (e.g., if the library is northeast of the school, students would label the northeast arm “NE” and write “library” on the line next to that arm).
7. Remind students to refer to the map on the overhead projector.


## Questions for Review

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### Basic Concepts and Processes

As students are completing their BLMs, ask them questions such as the following:

 Which direction would you go to get to school from the library?

 How would you know which direction to go?

 What community landmark is southwest of our school?

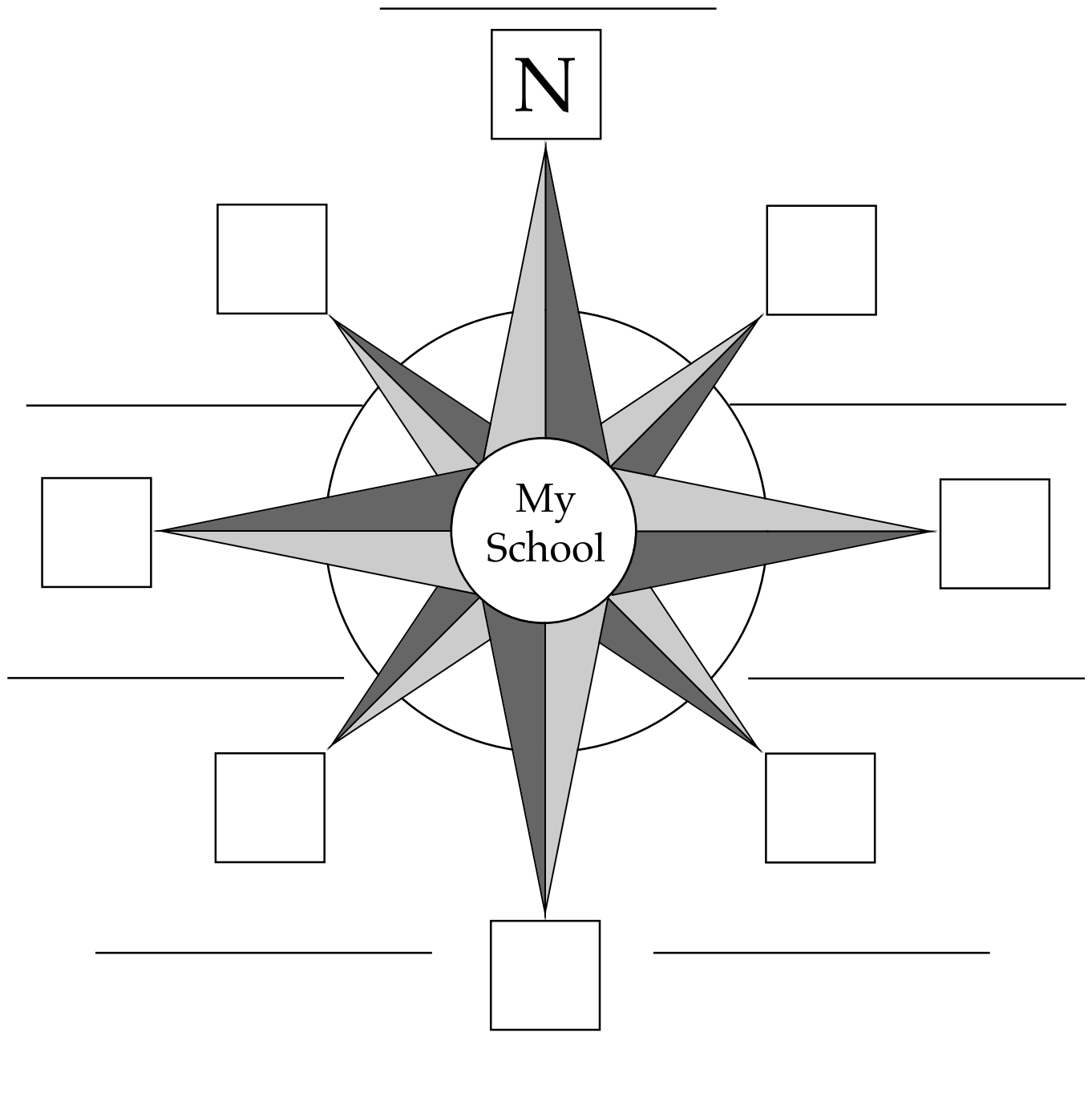
 What direction is between south and east?

 What two directions is northwest between?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# My Community Compass Rose

**Directions:** First, write in the letter for each direction in the boxes. North is done for you. Next, look at the map of your community and write the name of one place in the community for each direction.



# My Community Compass Rose

## Teacher Directions

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Place the transparency of the community map on the overhead projector. Show students the location of the school and point out the other landmarks on the map.

Direct students' attention to the compass rose on the transparency and demonstrate that directions are used to say where one place is in relation to another place (e.g., say: "The public library is *northeast* of our school.>").

Hand out a copy of the BLM *My Community Compass Rose* and a pencil to each student. Instruct students to label the arms of the compass rose with the correct letters and to find one landmark for each direction, starting with the school as the middle (e.g., if the library is northeast of the school, students would label the northeast arm "NE" and write "library" on the line next to that arm).

## Answer Key

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Community landmarks will vary, but cardinal and intermediate directions should be as follows:

