

Mirabelle's Marvelous Map Adventure: A 5-Day Journey

A homeschool lesson plan for a 6-year-old explorer.

Materials Needed for the Week:

- Large sheets of paper or a roll of craft paper
 - Crayons, markers, and colored pencils
 - Stickers (stars, dots, and other fun shapes)
 - A globe (or access to an online globe/map)
 - Small toys, figurines, or building blocks
 - A small box to decorate as a "treasure chest"
 - A special treat or small toy to be the "treasure"
 - Construction paper (especially blue and green)
 - Child-safe scissors
 - Glue stick
 - Clipboard (optional, but helpful for outdoor drawing)
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Day 1: The World from a Bird's-Eye View

Learning Goal:

Mirabelle will understand that a map shows a place from above, as if she were a bird flying high in the sky.

Activity Steps:

1. **The Toy Experiment:** Place one of Mirabelle's favorite small toys on the floor. Ask her to lie down on her tummy to see it at eye level. Talk about what she sees. Then, have her stand up directly over the toy and look down. Ask, "How does it look different now?" Explain that this new view is a "bird's-eye view."
2. **Introduce a Real Map:** Show Mirabelle a simple, colorful map (like a zoo map, park map, or a simple neighborhood map). Point out how the buildings, paths, and trees are all drawn from a bird's-eye view.
3. **Build and Draw:** Using building blocks, create a very simple "house" or "castle" on the floor. Together, look at it from the top down. On a piece of paper, have Mirabelle try to draw the shapes she sees from above. For example, a square building looks like a square from the top.

Today's Vocabulary:

- **Map:** A drawing of a place from above.
- **Bird's-Eye View:** What something looks like when you are looking straight down on it.

Fun Tip:

Use a mapping app on a phone or computer to look at your own house using the satellite view. Zoom in and out and see if you can find your yard, car, or a nearby park!

Day 2: Mapping My Room & The Magic Key

Learning Goal:

Mirabelle will create a map of a familiar space (her bedroom) and use symbols in a "map key" to show what things are.

Activity Steps:

1. **Become an Architect:** Stand in the doorway of Mirabelle's bedroom. Say, "Let's be map-makers! What are the most important things in this room?"
2. **Draw the Big Shapes:** On a large piece of paper, draw the shape of the room (a square or rectangle). Then, ask Mirabelle where her bed is. Draw a rectangle on the map in the spot where the bed is. Do the same for other large items like a dresser, a rug, or a toy chest.
3. **Create a Map Key:** In a corner of the map, draw a small box. This will be the Map Key. Inside the key, draw a small rectangle and write "Bed" next to it. Do this for each item on the map. Explain that the key helps everyone understand the symbols on the map.
4. **Decorate!** Let Mirabelle color her map. She can add drawings of her favorite toys or use stickers to mark special spots.

Today's Vocabulary:

- **Symbol:** A simple shape or picture that stands for a real thing on a map.
- **Map Key (or Legend):** The box on a map that explains what all the symbols mean.

Fun Tip:

Hide a favorite stuffed animal in her room. Then, put a star sticker on the map where the animal is hidden. See if she can use her new map to find it!

Day 3: Our Neighborhood Expedition

Learning Goal:

Mirabelle will identify local landmarks and create a map of a path she has walked outside.

Activity Steps:

1. **Prepare for Adventure:** Announce that today's mission is to map the outdoors! Grab a clipboard, paper, and a crayon or pencil.
 2. **Go for a Landmark Walk:** Take a short walk, either around your yard or down the block. As you walk, stop and point out important "landmarks." This could be a big, unique tree, a colorful flower pot, a fire hydrant, or a neighbor's fence.
 3. **Draw the Path:** Back inside, take a new large sheet of paper. Draw a line or a dotted line to show the path you walked. Did you turn a corner? Make the line turn a corner!
 4. **Add the Landmarks:** Ask Mirabelle to remember the landmarks you saw. Have her draw symbols for them along the path in the correct spots. (e.g., a green fluffy circle for the big tree, a red box for the mailbox). Don't forget to add them to a map key!
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Today's Vocabulary:

- **Landmark:** An important or easily seen object that helps you know where you are.
- **Path:** The line you follow to get from one place to another.

Fun Tip:

Collect a small, nature souvenir from one of your landmarks (like a fallen leaf from the big tree or a small stone from near the sidewalk). You can tape it to the map to mark the spot!

Day 4: The Great Treasure Hunt!

Learning Goal:

Mirabelle will successfully read and follow a simple map to find a hidden treasure.

Activity Steps:

1. **Prepare the Treasure:** While Mirabelle isn't looking, hide the "treasure" (a decorated box with a small toy or treat inside) somewhere in the house or yard.
2. **Create the Pirate Map:** Draw a map of the area where the treasure is hidden (e.g., the living room). Include a few simple landmarks like the couch, a chair, and a window. Draw a dotted line showing the path from the door to the treasure. Mark the treasure's location with a big "X."
3. **Begin the Hunt:** Present the map to Mirabelle with excitement! Say, "I found this secret pirate map! It leads to treasure! Can you help me read it?"
4. **Follow the Clues:** Help Mirabelle orient the map. Ask questions like, "Okay, the map says we start at the door. What's the first thing we need to walk past?" Guide her as she follows the path, pointing out the landmarks on the map and in the room.
5. **Treasure Found!** Celebrate enthusiastically when she finds the treasure!

Today's Vocabulary:

- **Treasure:** Something special and valuable you find at the end of a hunt.
- **X Marks the Spot:** The special mark on a map that shows you exactly where to find the treasure.

Fun Tip:

Now, it's her turn! Give Mirabelle a blank piece of paper and let her hide something for you. Have her draw her own treasure map to help you find it. This is a great way to see what she's learned!

Day 5: My Big, Beautiful World

Learning Goal:

Mirabelle will understand that a globe is a map of the whole world and be able to identify the difference between land and water.

Activity Steps:

1. **Introduce the Globe:** Show Mirabelle the globe. Explain that this is a model of our whole
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planet, Earth. Ask her what she notices about it.

2. **Land and Water:** Point to the big blue areas and explain that this is all water: the oceans. Point to the colored parts (green, yellow, brown) and explain this is the land, where people live. The big pieces of land are called continents.
3. **Spin the World:** Gently spin the globe. See if you can find the continent where you live (North America for the US). Talk about how big the world is.
4. **Torn Paper World Map Craft:** Give Mirabelle a large sheet of blue construction paper (this is her ocean). Next, give her green construction paper and show her how to tear it into several different-sized pieces. These are her "continents."
5. **Create the World:** Have her arrange her green "land" pieces on her blue "ocean" paper and glue them down. It doesn't need to be accurate! The goal is to represent the idea of land surrounded by water. Praise her wonderful world map!

Today's Vocabulary:

- **Globe:** A round map of the world.
- **World:** Our whole planet, Earth.
- **Ocean:** A very large body of salt water.
- **Land:** The parts of the Earth that are not covered by water.

Fun Tip:

Find some animal stickers or small figurines. Talk about where they live. Does the polar bear live on a hot continent or a cold one? Does the monkey live near the ocean? Place the animals on her new map where they might live.