

Mirabelle's Map Adventure: A Two-Day Lesson

Day 1: Finding Our Way with Moana

Focus: Introduction to the compass rose and the four cardinal directions (North, East, South, West).

Materials Needed:

- "Beyond the Reef" Moana compass activity worksheet and game board
 - Pencil and crayons
 - 4 pieces of paper
 - A marker
 - Tape
 - Optional: A real compass (if you have one)
 - Optional YouTube Video Suggestion: "The Compass Rose Song" by Rocking Dan Teaching Man or "Cardinal Directions for Kids" by Teach to Learn
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Lesson Plan (15-20 minutes)

Part 1: The Warm-Up - Four Corners (5 minutes)

What to do:

1. Before the lesson, take your four pieces of paper and write one cardinal direction on each: **NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, and WEST.**
2. Tape them up in the correct locations in your main learning space. (You can use a compass app on your phone to find true north).

What to say:

"Hi Mirabelle! Today, we are going to become explorers, just like Moana! Explorers need to know how to find their way. The most important tool they use is called a compass, which helps them know which direction they are going. Look around the room! I've put up four special words. These are the four main directions: North, South, East, and West."

"Let's play a quick game. I'm going to call out a direction, and I want you to point or walk to that sign as fast as you can! Ready? Point to... NORTH! Now, walk to... SOUTH! Hop to... EAST! Now tiptoe to... WEST!"

(Play for a few minutes until she seems comfortable with the four directions.)

Part 2: Guiding Moana - The Compass Rose (10-15 minutes)

What to do:

1. Take out the "Beyond the Reef" Moana compass activity. Sit down together at a table.
 2. Point to the compass rose on the worksheet.
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3. Guide her in labeling the four main points: N for North at the top, S for South at the bottom, E for East to the right, and W for West to the left. A helpful way to remember the order is the saying: "**N**ever **E**at **S**oggy **W**affles."
4. Read the first instruction on the worksheet together (e.g., "Start at the boat. Go south 2 spaces.").
5. Have Mirabelle place her finger on the starting point and move it according to the directions. Work through the first few problems together, then let her try one on her own while you watch.

What to say:

"Great job! Now let's help Moana on her adventure. Look at this circle here—it's called a 'compass rose,' and it shows us the directions on a map. Let's label it so we don't forget. What direction goes at the top? Yes, North! Let's write an 'N'. What goes at the bottom? South! Let's write an 'S'."

"To remember the order, we can say 'Never Eat Soggy Waffles' starting from the top and going clockwise. North, East, South, West. Now we're ready to guide Moana! The first direction says to go 'south 2 spaces.' Let's put our finger on the boat and move it south. One... two. Perfect! What picture did you land on?"

Independent Work (Optional, 10-15 minutes)

What to do:

1. Let Mirabelle finish the Moana worksheet on her own if she hasn't already.
2. Give her a blank piece of paper and crayons.
3. Ask her to draw her own simple treasure map of one room in the house (like her bedroom). She doesn't need to be perfect. The goal is just to draw a few key items (bed, toy box, door) and a big compass rose in the corner.

What to say:

"You are an amazing navigator! While I do my work, I have a secret mission for you. Can you create a secret spy map of your bedroom? Draw where your bed is, where your favorite toy is, and where the door is. Most importantly, don't forget to add a big compass rose to your map so another spy would know which way is North!"

Day 2: Our Neighborhood and Our World

Focus: Understanding map keys (symbols) and locating our place in the world.

Materials Needed:

- Neighborhood Map worksheet and comprehension questions
- "Where am I on the Map?" Activity Booklet
- Pencil and crayons or colored pencils
- Optional Library Book Suggestions: "Me on the Map" by Joan Sweeney or "There's a Map on My Lap!: All About Maps" by Tish Rabe.

Lesson Plan (15-20 minutes)

Part 1: The Warm-Up - What is a Map Key? (5 minutes)

What to do:

1. Draw three simple symbols on a piece of paper: a smiley face, a heart, and a star.
2. Ask Mirabelle what each symbol means or makes her think of.

What to say:

"Welcome back, my great explorer! Yesterday we learned about directions. Today, we're going to learn about map symbols. Look at these three little drawings. What do you think this smiley face means? (Happiness, good). And the heart? (Love). You see how a small, simple picture can stand for a big idea? Maps do the exact same thing! They use small pictures, called symbols, to stand for real places like a school, a house, or a park. The list that tells us what each symbol means is called a 'map key'."

Part 2: Exploring the Neighborhood (10-15 minutes)

What to do:

1. Take out the Neighborhood Map worksheet.
2. First, direct her attention to the map key. Go over what each symbol represents (e.g., the little book symbol means 'library').
3. Read the first comprehension question aloud (e.g., "What building is north of the park?").
4. Guide her to find the park on the map. Then ask her to look "north" (or up) from the park to find the correct building. Have her use the map key to identify the building.
5. Work through the questions together, letting her take the lead as she gets more comfortable.

What to say:

"Let's look at this map of a neighborhood. It looks like a fun place! Before we try to find anything, we need to look at our 'map key.' The key is our decoder that tells us what all the symbols mean. Can you point to the map key? What does the symbol with the little book mean? That's right, the library! What about the symbol with the apple? Yes, the school!"

"Now we can answer some questions. The first one asks, 'What building is north of the park?' First, let's find the park. Good! Now, which way is north? Up! Look up from the park. What building do you see? Now let's check our key to see what that symbol is. It's the... school! Fantastic work!"

Independent Work & End-of-Year Project (15-20+ minutes)

This part is designed to be the proof of learning for your end-of-year review.

What to do:

1. Introduce the "Where am I on the Map?" booklet. Explain that this special project will show her place in the whole wide world.
2. Go through the first two pages with her: "My Planet" and "My Continent." Help her color the Earth

and find/color North America on the world map.

3. Set her up with the booklet and crayons to work independently on the next pages as she feels ready. She can complete "My Country" and "My State" with your help finding Maine on the map. The final pages, "My City" and "My Home," are creative drawing activities she can do entirely on her own.

What to say:

"You have done such an incredible job learning about maps. For your final explorer project, you are going to make a book all about YOU and your place in the world. It's called 'Where am I on the Map?'"

"This first page is our planet. What is the name of our planet? Earth! Let's color it to look like the Earth, with blue for water and green for land. The next page shows all the continents. We live on the continent of North America. Can you find it and color it in?"

"Now it's your turn to be the artist and mapmaker. Your job is to finish this booklet. You can color in our country and our state, Maine. Then, on the last two pages, you get to draw your favorite place in our town and a beautiful picture of our home and our family. You can work on this now, and we will put it all together when you are done to show what an expert mapper you've become!"