TEACHERS ACTIVITIES

Theme:

With the right tools and some mathematical understanding, it is possible to "find" one's way out of almost any situation.

Topics For Discussion:

Ask students to share their experiences with being lost. Include those times when their families have been lost in a strange place, as well as individual experiences. How did they solve the problem?

Wendell and Floyd had many far-fetched reasons for being late to school. Invite students to use their imaginations to think of excuses for being late.

Discuss with students situations in which it is very important to follow directions. As a corollary, discuss circumstances when giving good directions is vital.

Start a map collection in the classroom. Include a variety of maps, such as city, state, U.S., world maps, a globe, and atlases, in addition to student made maps. Discuss the usual types of information that one finds on a map, including the symbols on different types of maps. Draw their attention to the map key and discuss its function.

Curriculum Extension Activities:

Revisit the book, *The Secret Shortcut*. Using a large piece of bulletin board paper, have students make a map of Floyd and Wendell's shortcut to school. Before they begin working, brainstorm the important details that need to be included and assign specific sections of the map to individuals.

Since maps most often show a bird's-eye view, encourage students to think about how things might look to a bird flying overhead and draw from that viewpoint. Possible scenes they might draw from a bird's-eye view include: their classroom with students sitting at tables or desks, a road with cars and trucks on it (what would be alongside the road?), a person riding a bicycle, a lake surrounded by a beach with an island in the middle, or other ideas they might have. (To give them an idea of how looking at things from this viewpoint alters the appearance of objects, place a few simple items on a table and have students sketch them from a bird's-eye view.)

Acquire some compasses and set up the opportunity for students to figure out how a compass works. Go to a playground, gym, or other large area where small groups can spread out. Give each group a compass and instruct them to release the needle on the compass, hold the compass flat until the needle stops moving and points north, and turn the compass until the needle and the mark for north are in line. Have groups post a paper flag indicating "North." Have the students also use the compass to locate east, west, and south, and post flags.

Place students with partners and have them use unifix cubes or Cuisenaire rods to create mazes. Display the mazes so other students can figure them out. Have the partners use graph paper (1-inch squares) and reproduce their mazes on paper. Students might also enjoy visiting web sites that allow them to download mazes and similar puzzles or to create their own. (http://www.puzzlemaker.com & http://www.puzzles.com)

Students can develop their concept of "maps" through a variety of map making activities. Possibilities include:

· *a treasure map*—Over several days, give small groups of students each a time when other students are out of the classroom and have them hide a "treasure." (The treasures might be a book that the teacher plans to read, a new game or puzzle, a treat, a new pencil for everyone, stickers, etc.) Each group is responsible for making a map that will lead the other students to the treasure. For this activity, have them use footsteps or paces instead of actual measurements to represent distance. This will provide an opportunity to discuss how such measurement "tools" vary from individual to individual rather than show exact distance.

- *a classroom map*—Provide small groups of students with yardsticks or meter sticks and graph paper. (Before they start, tell them how many squares on the graph paper equals one foot, one meter, etc.) Have them begin by measuring the dimensions of the room and marking the outline on their graph paper. Then have them measure to place windows, the door, bookshelves, cupboards, countertops, and any other fixtures around the perimeter on their map. As a class, decide which interior items to measure and place on the map. (Good mapmakers don't include everything—it's a good idea to focus on items that are seldom moved.)

- *a family map*—Each student will need a map of the United States. (Some students may need a world map.) Have them interview members of their family (e.g., grandparents, parents, siblings) to find out where they were born and mark these places on the map. Include places where relatives presently live. Make sure they include themselves. Have students make word labels or hand-drawn cutouts of houses or people to glue on the map. If families have moved, have students draw arrows on the map to show movement. Each student's map should reflect places that are significant to her or his family.

- *a map of the route to school*—Use this activity for family involvement. Depending on how they travel to school (walking, in a carpool, by school bus), have students (with their parents' help) make a map of the route. Stress to parents that the children should decide which landmarks along the way to include and how they will make the map key. Display the maps in the classroom.

Divide students into small groups and give each group the task of designing a park. Before groups start planning, brainstorm a list of things that are usually found in a park and agree on a set of symbols to represent each item on the list. Encourage them to use their imaginations to create the "ideal" park that will be enjoyable for both children and adults. Have lots of scrap paper available so groups can draw and cut out symbols that they can move around and do rough drafts of the layout. When their designs are finished, have them reproduce them on large pieces of bulletin board paper and display.

Have students do some research so they can write their complete address, beginning with their street address, city, and state, and continuing with their country, continent, hemisphere, planet name, galaxy name, and universe.

Either Wendell, Floyd, or both of them appear in these other books by Mark Teague: *Pigsty*, *The Lost and Found*, and *One Halloween Night*. Obtain these books and read the additional humorous and imaginative adventures of these characters.

Chris Cassone, the Orienteer featured in this episode, has a web site located at: www.treasurehuntadventures.com.

Supplemental Books:

MAPS & MAZES: A FIRST GUIDE TO MAPMAKING
by Gillian Chapman & Pam Robson (Millbrook)

WHERE DO I LIVE?
by Neil Chesanow, illus. by Ann Iosa (Barron's)

FROM HERE TO THERE
by Margery Cuyler, illus. by Ya Cha Pak (Henry Holt)

MY MAP BOOK
by Sara Fanelli (HarperCollins)

AS THE CROW FLIES: A FIRST BOOK OF MAPS
by Gail Hartman, illus. by Harvey Stevenson (Bradbury)

MAPS ("MAKE-IT-WORK" SERIES)
by Andrew Haslam (Two-Can)

LOOKING DOWN
by Steve Jenkins (Houghton Mifflin)

BLAST OFF TO EARTH
by Loreen Leedy (Holiday House)

SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD RIGHT NOW
by Stacey Schuett (Random House)

ME ON THE MAP
by Joan Sweeney, illus. by Annette Cable (Random House)

MAPS: GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE
by Harvey Weiss (Houghton Mifflin)

IT'S ABOUT TIME, MAX
by Kitty Richards (Kane Press)

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