



# Mapping My Journey to School

## Summary

Students are encouraged to use their senses to ‘rediscover’ their trip to school, creating a personal map that reflects the path they took and all the things they discovered on their journey.

See Links to Western Australian Curriculum at end of this document.

Year level: Years 3 – 9

Teaching and learning resource

## Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

- understand how to read a street map and know that symbols are used to represent different locations;
- use a map to find the location of both their home and school;
- choose the preferred or most efficient path to take from home to school, using a map;
- use their senses to become more aware of their surroundings and better connect to the world around them; and
- create a personal map that reflects their journey to school.



Students drawing their personal journey maps.



## Preparation

### Resources

**Activity 1** – One class set of tablets or computers to access Google Maps showing a three-kilometre radius around your school. If these devices aren't available you can use map printouts with a street directory.

**Activity 2** – Two class sets of the 'Sensory Journey Worksheet' (refer to page 10).

**Activity 3** – Completed worksheets from Activity 2, blank word document/canvas.

## Background notes

**Reading maps** is an important skill that students can learn and develop from an early age. It is a skill which combines both reading and maths and helps build spatial sense and visual literacy. A map is a tool that shows details about an area, which can include continents, countries, states and cities, or show the roads and landmarks of a town. It can show routes of a transport system (such as railway lines), different landforms and elevations, different kinds of natural resources, or varying temperatures in a specific area.

**Interactive maps, printed maps and street directories** are conventional maps, which are drawn in a clear manner, with commonly recognised symbols. For this activity, and to help students connect with their senses to observe the world around them, students are asked to draw a 'creative map'.

**Creative maps** have the notion that there are different ways of seeing. They may have different perspectives, different purposes or even different audiences and can be completely unique to any other map. Creative maps have their own individual style. Accuracy is not important, and drawings can be influenced by perspective. For example, something that seems more important can be drawn larger or in dominant colours.



A student's 'creative map'.

## Teaching and learning ideas

Teachers are encouraged to use a range of the teaching and learning ideas provided. The teaching and learning ideas provide opportunities to address multiple learning areas. Teachers can modify and extend ideas for different year levels and phases of schooling. Teaching ideas have been aligned to the Western Australian curriculum including identification of learning area, strand and sub-strand.

### Activity 1 – Mapping your journey to school

**Note: Use either Google Maps, street directories or map printouts for this activity.**

Explain to students that they will be using a map to find their way from home to school and to determine the best walking route to take. As a class, locate your school on the map.

Ask students the following questions:

**1. What is a map?**

Possible answer: A drawing showing where places are.

**2. Why is it important that we know how to locate places on a map?**

Possible answer: So that we can find our current location, find the location we wish to get to and figure out the best route to take.

**3. How do we know this is the location of a school?**

Possible answer: A symbol is used to identify it as a school.

**4. What other symbols can you find and what do they represent?**

Other identifiable symbols could include shopping centres, churches, hospitals, post offices.

**5. Which way is north? How do you know?**

Students should be able to reference the street directories or Google Maps (given as part of this activity) to identify the navigation legend, which should indicate which way is north.

### Mapping my journey to school

Have each student use the map to locate their home and ask students if they know how to find the co-ordinates on a map (in Google Maps you simply click a point on the map and it shows the co-ordinates at the bottom).

- Use a grid reference system to describe locations. Describe routes using landmarks and directional language.
- Ask students to identify the best walking route to school, tracing their way along the route and identifying landmarks they pass. It might not be the shortest route and they may want to avoid certain roads.
- Ask students to record the directions for their chosen path and encourage them to use these directions to walk to school the following week. If students live too far away to walk to school, ask them to choose a location closer to school from which to start their journey. See our 'Park and Walk guide' for ideas. Ask students to propose and implement a range of opportunities to increase their physical activity levels at school, while travelling to and from school, and at home.

- You might help kick-start this by setting the students a series of challenges to reach a certain number of steps each day. Students need to devise different travel routes to achieve this goal.

## Units of measurement

- Ask students to convert and construct suitable data displays, with and without the use of digital technologies, from given or collected data. Include tables, column graphs and picture graphs where one picture can represent many data values. Graphical data might include and compare distance, time, safety considerations and access to road crossings.
- Students should then share conclusions and give explanations based on the information and/or data displayed in texts, tables, graphs and maps (e.g. identify similarities and differences).

## Group activity

In small groups, interpret and compare results.

Read the following task to the students:

**You are part of a physical activity challenge that requires you to record your steps and total distance travelled to another destination (such as a park or playground) in your area. Set yourself a goal for the number of steps you want to achieve.**

- Choose a destination nearby and then calculate how far in metres and how many steps that equates to from your home.
- How could you incorporate this destination into your to and from school journey?
- In small groups, interpret and compare results.

## Conclusions

Consider incorporating the following elements:

- Discussion about factors that influence the decisions people make about where to live and their perceptions of the liveability of places.
- The influence of accessibility to services and facilities on the liveability of places.
- The influence the natural environment has on the liveability of places.

## Activity 2 - Sensory journey to school

1. Ask students to list all their senses (see, hear, smell, touch, taste).
2. Give every student a 'Sensory Journey Worksheet' and a pencil.
3. Take the students for a walk outside, around the school grounds. Explain that it is a 'quiet' walk so that they can use all their senses. While on the walk, ask some prompting questions:
  - How can you see, hear or feel if the wind is blowing?
  - What other sounds can you hear? Is it loud or soft? Natural or man-made?
  - What can you smell? Is it pleasant? What else does it remind you of?
  - What do you imagine that might taste like? Does the air have a taste?
  - Is it smooth or rough? Warm or cold? What is the temperature today?
4. Ask students to complete their worksheet with things they notice using their senses.

- Instruct students to identify one day during the coming week that they are able to walk to school using the route they had traced during activity one. As homework, give each student another copy of the 'Sensory Journey Worksheet' to complete on their walk to school.

## Learning journey

- Ask students to create their own learning journey.
- Students might incorporate elements of what they see, hear, interact with or wonder about as they make their way to school using one of their planned routes.
- The learning journey is both a verbal and vision presentation and can include displays of data using lists, table and picture graphs and interpretations of them.
- Students create a short text to explore, record and report ideas and events using familiar words and beginning writing knowledge.

## Reflection

Ask students to verbalise or document the differences between the language of opinion and feeling, and the language of factual reporting or recording.



A group of students using their sense of sight on their sensory journey.

## Activity 3 – Creative map making

1. Ask students to use their directions from activity one, and their completed worksheet from activity two, to reflect on what they experienced on their walk to school. Ask students to mentally 'walk through' their journey.
2. Each student requires a large blank canvas to create a map of their journey to school. Instruct them to put home in one corner and school in the other. Map creations can be print based or computer generated.
3. Sketch the route – from home to school. Use the following pointers to help the students.
  - Do a basic outline to start, with only the roads, paths and intersections.
  - Make it a map in your own individual style. It's your journey and won't be the same as anyone else's, even if they cover the same ground.

- Don't worry about scale or accuracy. Those things can be influenced by perspective, e.g. something that seems more important may be drawn larger; things that don't matter can be omitted.
  - Re-live the journey when drawing your map.
4. Ask students to add their own 'points of interest' to their maps. Draw attention to how this is done in conventional mapping – how churches, libraries are represented, etc.
    - Add personal landmarks. How will they be represented?
    - What pictures will you draw?
    - Will there be any text?
    - Consider your choice of colour and use of different sizes.
  5. Invite students to use a variety of techniques and forms such as sculpture, mixed media, printing, drawing and painting to create a 2D or 3D map.
  6. When students have finished their individual maps, ask them to share their drawings with each other and reflect on how they journey is displayed. Discuss and reflect on the following:
    - Are there differences in maps that cover the same ground? What sort of things and why?
    - Would your journey always be the same?
    - What sort of factors might affect your journey (weather, seasons, time of day, your own mood)?



A student visually mapping their journey to school.

## Extension activities

Ask students to compare the traditional map from activity one with their own personal map from activity three. Students should reflect on the similarities and differences between the two.

Provide students with cameras, or they could use their own iPad or smartphone, to take photos and/or video of various things, places, or items such as signs on their journey to school. These photos could then be turned into a small slideshow video which displays their journey to school in another unique way, allowing students to incorporate the use of technology.

Students could use freely available software such as [Apple iMovie](#) or [Clipchamp](#) in Windows 11, or could use a free service such as [Animoto](#), which is an easy to use website that instantly turns photos into videos and could be useful for this purpose.

## Assessment ideas

Assess your students' ability to:

- Locate school and home on a map and write down directions for the best walking route to school.
- Use their senses to complete the 'Sensory Journey Worksheet'.
- Describe how they have used visual conventions to represent their ideas on their creative maps.
- Compare their creative, personal map with a traditional map.
- Use cameras to capture well lit, nicely framed photos and video footage.
- Use software to edit images, capture sounds and add text to create a video representation of their journey and communicate their story.

## Links to the Western Australian Curriculum

**Table 1: Health and Physical Education**

Strand	Sub-strand
Personal, social and community health	Contributing to healthy and active communities
Movement and physical activity	Moving our body Understanding movement

**Table 2: Humanities and Social Sciences**

Strand	Sub-strand
Geographical knowledge and understanding	Places are both similar and different (Year 3) Factors that shape the human and environmental characteristics of places (Year 5) Place and liveability (Year 7) Geographies of interconnections (Year 9)

Strand	Sub-strand
Humanities and social sciences skills	Questioning and researching Analysing Evaluating Communicating and reflecting

**Table 3: Mathematics**

Strand	Sub-strand
Statistics and probability	Data representation and interpretation
Measurement and geometry	Location and transformation

**Table 4: Other subjects**

Subject	Strand	Sub-strand
English	Literacy	Interacting with others Creating texts
The Arts	Visual arts: Making	Developing skills and processes Ideas Skills Production Inquiry

### General capabilities

- Literacy; information and communication technology (ICT capability);
- Critical and creative thinking; personal and social capability; and ethical understanding.

### Cross-curriculum priorities

- Sustainability





# Sensory Journey Worksheet

Task: Write three examples of different sensory experiences you encounter.

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

What do I see?	What do I hear?	What do I smell?	What do I feel?	What do I taste?
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				