Getting a move on!
Orienteering

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Curriculum links: Key Stages 2 and 3 Physical Education, Key Stage 2 Geographical Skills

Learning Outcomes:

In this activity pupils are introduced to the sport of orienteering. Using a course around the school grounds, pupils embed their knowledge of maps through practical application. They develop and reflect upon skills allowing them to compete effectively in progressively more challenging activities.

By the end of this activity pupils will:

- Have built on their knowledge of maps, applying this knowledge in the field.
- Have taken part in an outdoor adventurous activity presenting intellectual and physical challenges.
- Have worked both individually and as part of a team to develop skills and solve problems.

What you'll need:

- Suitable maps (see activity notes)
- Orienteering markers (see activity notes)
- Pencils/paper
- Resources for navigation games

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Activity:

Introduce...

What? Orienteering activities.

How? Through discussion, establish what the class already understand about orienteering. Orienteering is a competitive sport similar to a treasure hunt. In pairs or individually pupils race to retrieve answers hidden around the school. To win, they will need to locate the answers and navigate between them quickly using a map.

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Demonstrate...

What? The basic concept of orienteering.

How? It's important to grab attention early on in the activity before too much skills work is completed. Use the 'Starburst' game to get pupils involved quickly. Place 15 markers (see activity notes) at landmarks around the boundary of a playing field or similar area. You also need a map of the area with all the landmarks shown. Produce enough copies for every pupil (plus some spare) but on each map show the location of only one of your markers. Starting from the centre of the area, give each pupil a map and send them to find the 'answer' on their marker. When they have the answer they return to you – a correct answer means they get a new map. Pupils run back and forth in a star pattern finding all of the markers.

Explain...

What? Plan effective routes.

How? Orienteering is about more than just navigating to a single point quickly. You also have to pick sensible routes between different markers. Use a card sort game to help pupils understand the different symbols on the orienteering map – some will represent barriers and areas that are difficult to move through (eg fences and lakes). Effective orienteering requires you to choose the best route depending on the terrain; the map shows you what the terrain will be like so you can plan ahead.

APPLY...

What? Practice and develop navigation abilities.

How? Play the 'Loops' game – this time you will need markers spread more widely around the school grounds. Pupils are sent to retrieve markers in pairs. The game builds progressively with rounds of increasingly complex navigation 'legs' between markers. First they find one marker and return, then two markers, navigating between them before returning, then three markers and so on. This progressive system means that each round requires more skill as pupils have more legs to navigate. For pupils who are less confident you may choose to stick to two markers, while others may complete up to five markers in sequence, or find markers close together instead of far apart.

Summarise...

What? This activity checks understanding of the content so far.

How? Stage a mini tournament to combine all of the skills learned and to reinforce the idea of planning. Assign each marker with a score value. Each pair is then given a target score to achieve within a time limit. They must decide which markers they need to visit to achieve their score. Markers that are further away have higher values. Pupils who are less competent are given lower target numbers to ensure they stay relatively close by.

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Activity notes

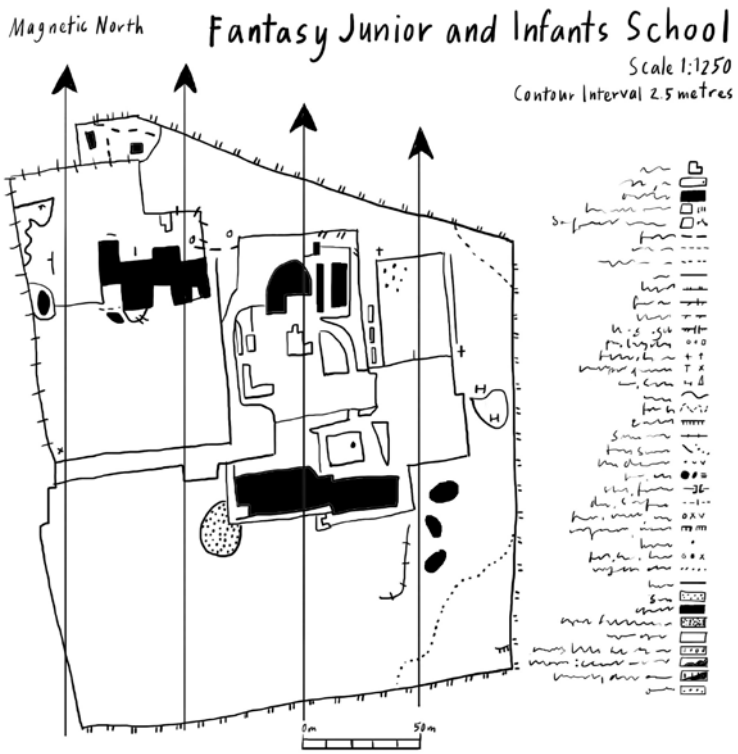
Orienteering maps

Any orienteering activity needs maps to work from. Orienteering maps are broadly similar to Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, however they are often at a much larger scale and use some alternative key symbols (eg terrain colour). You may prefer to use standard OS mapping as this is directly referenced in the curriculum.

Obtaining maps

The British Schools Orienteering Association website (**www.BSOA.org)** explains how to obtain a map of your school. Broadly speaking you can:

- Commission someone to create a map for you (cost: approximately £300).
- Adapt existing mapping – the OS Digimap service can provide maps to 1:2500 scale. This requires a small subscription but also provides access to lots of useful resources. Alternatively, use the free map creator at **www.oomap.co.uk**, which is supported by British Orienteering.
- Get your pupils to make one for you! The easiest way to do this is to use online aerial photography and trace the outline of your map over the top. You can then add as much detail as you need.



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Orienteering markers

Traditional orienteering markers are red and white to make them highly visible. They also have a number to identify them and some form of clue or answer. This could be a clip with a unique pattern of pins, a letter code, or even an electronic tag. Markers can be bought for less than £1 each – or make your own with pieces of ply board. Clues can be written on them with a white board pen, or for more options when using the markers, use a sequence of letters so that you can ask for the fourth letter on the marker. Other alternatives include plastic sports cones or old CDs.

Taking it further...

Map walks

To teach basic principles, give a small group of participants a route to follow between landmarks. Everyone else tags along and tries to keep track of the route so that they can tell you your exact location at any time and point to it on their map.

Mirrors

Participants place a marker in the grounds and mark its location on a map. They then return and swap maps with someone else. The other person has to find their marker.

Odds and evens races

Participants race against a partner, one completing all of the odd markers and one completing all of the even markers.

Cross-country routes

Everybody completes the same sequence of markers in order against the clock.

Retrieval race

You don't want to spend hours collecting markers at the end of the day. The final activity could be to assign each pupil a marker to bring back to you as quickly as possible.