



## X Marks the Spot

How well do you know your outdoor space? This activity encourages learners to take notice of what is around them and starts to introduce the concept of mapping in an outdoor space. This activity will help learners to familiarise and orientate themselves within their learning site, providing the building blocks to start thinking about what can be changed or improved for nature, and for play.

Before starting, a map of your outdoor space will need to be printed out or drawn. Depending on the group size, hide up to 5 different objects around the site outdoors, and mark each hiding spot on the map with an 'X'. Learners will use the map and their knowledge of their outdoor space to find each object.

### Teaching time

30-45 minutes

### Learning outcomes

- Use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of the learning site
- Use plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features

### Step by step

Before heading outside, you will need to create a 'map' of your learning space. This can be downloaded from online, or, if you have mapped your site boundary on the National Education Nature Park, this can be used. Some large features such as trees, raised beds, benches, can be added to the map to help learners navigate around their grounds.

Hide up to 5 different objects around the outdoor space, recording the locations on the map with an 'X'. These can be related to your space, such as a flower, or toy animals that represent what you might see outside – or these can be other surprises such as sweets or teddy bears. Make sure to hide these somewhere where they won't be seen right away!

Before starting the activity, take learners on a walk around your outdoor space, asking them to point out any significant features like large trees or play equipment. Split learners into pairs, with one map between them.

Give each pair a copy of the map and ask learners a few 'where am I?' questions to help them get used to orientating themselves on the map. For example, 'I am stood between the tree and the climbing frame, where am I on the map?'

Once they are confident in using the map to locate different places in the space, ask them to use their map to find the hidden objects marked with 'X'. Remind learners not to tell other groups where they have found the objects so that everyone has a chance to explore the map!

### Reflection

How did you use the map to find each 'X'?

### Green Skills



### Suitable for

Key Stage 1

### Location

Outdoors

### Season

Spring  
Summer  
Autum  
Winter

### What you'll need

Map outlining your grounds, marked with 'X's for the hidden objects – one copy per pair

Up to 5 objects to hide around your site

Clipboards for each pair, if needed

### Key vocabulary

Map  
Boundary  
Names of features

### Support and extension opportunities

Older learners could be involved in creating the map by walking around with a pencil and paper, and drawing the outline of the site.

Once learners have found the hidden object, they could be asked to add drawings to their map, or list what they saw as they explored, and where on their map: e.g. a bee, a tree, or other plants.



National Education  
Nature Park and  
Climate Action Awards



For more quality-assured learning resources visit  
[www.educationnaturepark.org.uk](http://www.educationnaturepark.org.uk)

Led by



Natural  
History  
Museum

With



RHS

THE  
ROYAL  
SOCIETY

Commissioned by



Department  
for Education

Partners



Learning  
through  
Landscapes



Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University

NBN Trust  
Making data work for nature



Royal  
Geographical  
Society  
with IBG  
Advancing geography  
and geographical learning



UK Centre for  
Ecology & Hydrology

Working with



esri UK  
THE SCIENCE OF WHERE