

# Stars in your lives

## A fieldwork activity using the free OS maps for schools

### Background

This activity has been designed to be a stimulating and fun way of practising map skills, using the free OS maps for schools. It is aimed at lower KS3. Ideally, it would be carried out at the end of a unit/set of lessons on map skills, where students had been taught the basics of map interpretation in the classroom. This activity could take the form of several “parts” as follows;

1. Part 1: Students introduced to task and use OS maps in the classroom to start planning their route
2. Part 2: The fieldwork; students work in their groups to complete the activities on the worksheet
3. Part 3: Students prepare an itinerary and sketch map to be sent to their “star”, outlining what they’ll be doing for the day

The information here will cover all three parts, and could form a whole-day activity. However, it would be possible to use the fieldwork as a stand alone activity if less time was available.

### Aim

To practice and consolidate map skills learnt in the classroom. This fieldwork activity will encourage pupils to follow a route and relate what they see on the map to what they see in reality.

### Objective

Students work in small groups to plan a route and itinerary for a star of their choice, using the OS maps of the local area

### Format

#### **Starter**

Ask students to consider which “star/famous person” (TV, film, sports, radio, author) they would most like to spend a day with if they had the opportunity. You could conduct a class survey and find out the most popular choices.

Students should then arrange themselves into groups and choose a “star” for their group.

Show students the introductory PowerPoint. Students could then spend a little time in their groups using the OS maps to consider where they might go with their star and what they might do. They should be given the likes/dislikes resource to help them make decisions

Encourage them to think about the route they would take. If time is available, students could draw a simple sketch and rough plan of their day.

If the fieldwork is to be done as a stand alone activity, or the group is less able, a pre-planned route could be provided.

#### **Main**

The aim of the main activity is to use their OS maps to travel their intended route and complete the activities on the worksheet (this should be given out, and gone through). There are a number of tasks to complete

1. Route description - a geographical description (distance, direction, relief, key features) of the route as they go around (a writing frame resource is provided for less able students)
2. Field sketches - of main features/points of interest
3. Digital images of main features/points of interest
4. Grid references/symbols - make a note of the 6 figure grid references of key features/points of interest (where sketches were drawn and photos taken)
5. They must remember the stars likes and dislikes, and complete this section of the worksheet

## **Follow-up**

If time is available this activity can be completed back in the classroom, or perhaps as a homework activity. The follow-up resource gives guidance to students on what they must do. In short, students must imagine that their star is getting really excited about the day they'll be spending with them and have asked for a run-down of their plans. Using the information collected on their fieldtrip students produce a detailed, annotated base map (sketched or provided depending on ability)

## **Differentiation / Extension**

During the fieldwork - more able students can complete all tasks. Alternatively, individuals/pairs of students could be given a role/task which they are in charge of, reducing the load for less able students - the groups results can then be shared once back in the classroom. More able students should be encouraged to annotate/label field sketches. They could also use compasses/GPS if available to add detail to their worksheets.

In the follow-up, the task can be completed individually by more able students or in pairs by less able students. More able students may also make a contour model of the route.

## **Embedding this fieldwork activity**

The National Curriculum outlines the map skills which students should be taught and given the opportunity to practice. The Ordnance Survey free maps are a great resource, which is often underused. Students use maps in geography lessons but are often not given the opportunity, and therefore lack the ability, to relate what they see on the map to the landscape and features that surround them. Ideally, this fieldwork activity would be embedded in/conclude a unit of work on map skills.

## **Adapting this activity for alternative sites**

Due to the nature of the activity, at least one suitable route could be identified from most schools. If only one route is available, this could be given to the students rather than letting them plan their own. This may be the more appropriate approach with less able students or where there are time/staffing constraints.

## **Resources**

- PowerPoint presentation
- OS maps of the local area
- Pre-drawn route plans in some cases
- Other resource sheets, e.g. stars likes/dislikes, follow-up resource
- Field work activity sheets
- Map cases if possible
- Clip boards
- Equipment: Digital cameras, GPS, compasses if possible