

T.O.O.L.S. for Work Supplement 11

Reading Maps

Materials: A local city map, a county or state map, a transit guide with maps

Prerequisite: Completion of Sessions 1-10

Lesson duration: 45 minutes

I. Map concepts and practice applying them

A. The object of this lesson is to introduce participants to the wealth of information that is available on maps, and to let them have fun exploring their discoveries with the instructor's guidance.

B. Compasses

1. Ask if participants know their directions: north, south, east, west.
2. Explain that most maps have a "compass" on them, and are also usually laid out so "north" is at the top of the map.
3. See if the participants can locate the compass on maps you brought in.
4. Ask why this might be important to know.

C. Scales

1. Explain that there is a note on most maps showing how many miles per inch, are represented on the map.
2. See if the participants can locate the scale on the maps.
3. Ask why this might be important to know.

D. Keys

1. Explain the use of symbols on a map. Explain that the symbols can vary from map to map.
2. See if the participants can locate the key on each map you brought in.
3. On a transit map, note the symbols representing different types of transportation, various bus or other stops, transfer points, one-way streets, etc.
4. See if participants can find a symbol on the map that they first saw in the key.
5. On a city map, note the symbols representing different public buildings, parks, schools, etc.
6. See if participants can find the school their children attend, or the fire station closest to their house.
7. On all maps, see how the street names are presented, with some "stretched" along so they are difficult to read. Note the way block numbers might be shown on longer streets.
8. On the county or state map, note the way freeways are shown, as opposed to smaller country roads. See if your map has tiny numbers along the highway lines to show the mileage between cities, or see if it has a grid showing mileage between cities.

E. Grids

1. Explain how a grid works, and how it can be used to find a specific street or building.
2. Practice using the grid to find different locations.

II. Other good stuff

A. Together with participants, explore other useful information a map offers. Practice using the information so they can see how it works.

1. Using a transit map, see if the participants can find the general route they might take to get from their house to your class or other location requiring public transportation.
2. Using a city map, see if the participants can find the general route they might take in the car or walking to get from home to your class or other location.

3. Using the county or state map, see if the participants can find the general route they might take to go from their home to the city hall in the next town or other city. (Use the key to see if specific public buildings are shown with special symbols.)

B. Point out that while there are basic tools such as compasses, scales, keys and grids that all maps have, lots of interesting and useful information may be offered on particular maps. Participants can now check a map they use for this additional information before using it.