

North, South, East & West · Conversation & classroom guide

Learning with a grown-up · Ages 4–8 · Flexible participation

What is east of the compass?

Learning aim: Use four compass directions to describe the positions of places from one clear reference point.

A five-minute conversation

Begin at the center of the compass rose. Follow one tip with your eyes before naming its direction.

Start here: Read one direction at a time; match it to a pictured object.

Explore further: Rotate the drawing and explain why the letter N still marks north in the drawing.

What is east of the compass?

Answer cue: The flowers are east, to the right of the compass on this picture.

Which direction takes you from the compass toward the tree?

Answer cue: North. Follow the north tip upward to the tree.

Which two directions are opposites?

Answer cue: North and south are opposites; east and west are opposites. Show a pair across the compass center.

Keep the idea clear

The picture is a practice garden, not a real navigation route. North is at the top here because the compass rose shows it. Turning yourself does not change north; left and right depend on which way you face. Map pages can also be rotated.

Try: Make a four-direction picture

Materials: Paper and a pencil or crayon, or use pointing and spoken descriptions.

1. Draw a cross and put N at the top, E at the right, S at the bottom and W at the left.
2. Choose a center and draw one simple place at each end.
3. Give a direction from the center and ask a partner to point to the matching place.

What this can show: Can the child identify the flowers as east from the compass center and show one opposite pair? Stay together and use the picture or an indoor drawing. No trip, purchase, cutting, water access or real address is needed.

Return to it: Turn the paper. The N still marks north on the drawing; is it still at the top of your view?

North, South, East & West · In the classroom

A 20-minute classroom lesson

Prepare: Read the picture and answer cues. Have the optional explorer's notebook available. Paper and a pencil or crayon, or use pointing and spoken descriptions.

Words to explore

north — A compass direction opposite south.

east — A compass direction opposite west.

south — A compass direction opposite north.

west — A compass direction opposite east.

3 min · Notice: Look together: Begin at the center of the compass rose. Follow one tip with your eyes before naming its direction.

4 min · Compare: Discuss: read one question and invite children to point to the evidence.

8 min · Try together: Draw a cross and put N at the top, E at the right, S at the bottom and W at the left. Choose a center and draw one simple place at each end. Give a direction from the center and ask a partner to point to the matching place.

5 min · Explain: Try and explain: Draw a cross and put N at the top, E at the right, S at the bottom and W at the left. Choose a center and draw one simple place at each end. Give a direction from the center and ask a partner to point to the matching place.

Understanding check: Can the child identify the flowers as east from the compass center and show one opposite pair?

Answer guidance: The flowers are east, to the right of the compass on this picture. North. Follow the north tip upward to the tree. North and south are opposites; east and west are opposites. Show a pair across the compass center.

Read labels aloud and describe shape and position. Accept speech, signing, pointing or eye gaze; do not rely only on color.

A response to keep

Use page 6: point north from the center, then show the opposite direction. Add a matching north arrow to your map on page 7.

One clue I can explain now...

Something else I wonder...

<https://kiddos.ai/learn/olivia-the-globetrotter/four-directions>

Related story: Olivia the Globetrotter stories — Olivia's Paris and San Francisco stories celebrate noticing places. This invented garden extends that habit into direction language; it is not a location from a book.

Our discovery record

Use words, marks, a drawing or an adult's notes. Keep this page with you; nothing needs to be uploaded.

Date / time (if useful): _____

My question or idea

What I noticed

What I think now

What I want to explore next

Stories to continue together: <https://kiddos.ai/books>

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