

Just Notes on GPS Ideas from Teachers/Bloggers

- I set up 4 separate course on a looping trail (A ,B, C, and D) with 5 waypoints for each group. Each group had a GPS (preloaded with their waypoints) and a sheet with waypoint hints and space to color in a box for each container they visited. The containers all had different colored crayons, so that groups could prove that they had found them. 2 groups started at one end of the loop, and 2 groups started at the other end. The caches were staggered enough that while we occasionally saw other groups, we weren't in site of them the whole time, and so that any given kid can come and participate in this activity 4 times without ever looking for the same container.

Besides the 5 waypoints for containers that each group had programmed into their GPS, everyone had our meeting location and 3 bonus caches near our pickup point...this was great as a safety device, and as a motivator to get them back to the pick-up area in time for our bus-ride home. 2 of the bonus caches were simple containers with crayons (like the other containers) to prove that it had been found...the 3rd cache was an actual geocache, filled with trade-items and a logbook for students to sign...so that they could get a feel for what a real geocache was like...

Out of 23 caches, our groups found 22...not bad for a bunch of 11 year-olds...

Now that I have the system worked out, and the documents all generated and tested, I'm excited to reproduce and share this activity!!!

- I and fellow geocacher teacher in my school both teach 8th grade We do a combined activity. He's the science teacher and does the discussion of the GPS Unit, the environment and hiking and things like that leading up to the actual field trip. He sets up some very easy caches right outside the building a few days before the trip for practice. I'm the math teacher and prior to the trip, discuss the mathematics of latitude and longitude. I bring geography into it also using national as well as world maps. On the day of the trip, we have the students already in groups of 2 or 3, based on the number of kids. A few days before the trip, the other teacher and I go to the local county park and set up a series of 10 caches in the woods but close enough to the parking area that we can monitor the students if necessary. Each group is given the coordinates of a cache along with a hint. When they find the cache, inside that cache are the coordinates for the next in the series along with a hint for that one. After about 1.5 hours, we take a break and then if any groups have not finished the 10, they

finish them up. Throughout the caching, the other teacher and I give assistance to the groups that need it and walk from group to group checking things. After lunch, we take a hike along the trails in the park and find one of the caches hidden there. We have done this two years in a row and the kids have said that it was one of the best field trips ever.

- One thing I did for a class I taught this summer was I hid plastic Easter eggs each with a word in it. Once found, the kids had to decipher the sentence that each of the words were a part of. It said, "Thank you for being such good students!" I hid 7 eggs that time.
- idea: GPS connect the dots to create image

GPS golf - set a tee and a hole with distance and par for each hole.

Cachers use frisbees to shoot down the course and record strokes as frisbee throws to get within 2 metres of hole. Tee/Hole can be labeled with hula hoops, driveway reflectors (the kind on the stick), flags, signs

Create own TB's - ie paper butterflies/monarchs and track their migration, Flat Stanley would work, or buy official travel bugs and track movement.

Create a scavenger hunt using google maps - or do an open hunt.

Searchable by grade.

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