

Navigating with the Stars and a Compass

Introduction:

In the past, many First Nations people relied on nature to help guide them to different places and find different resources. They used the stars, Sun, Moon, plants, and water to find their way.

Today, we can also rely on technology to help us navigate, often without having to look to nature to guide us. Natural navigation is a useful skill, but it can also be a rare skill in many places.

In this exercise, we will explore both aspects of traditional and modern forms of navigation.

Materials:

- Notebook/Paper
- Pencil
- Compass
- Map from Mapping Exercise

Part 1: Traditional Methods of Navigation

An Elder or community member will bring you on a tour outside. They will share knowledge that they have about using nature to navigate.

After the tour, you and your classmates will participate in a talking circle. You will share stories and knowledge of what you have learned about using the stars and other celestial bodies to navigate.

Part 2: Using Traditional and Modern Methods of Navigation

1. Find the North Star using constellations in the night sky.
2. Once found, point the compass in the direction of the North Star. What does the direction read on the compass?
3. From where you are standing, position your body so you are facing the direction of the Band Office or another important landmark in the community.
4. Using the North Star, what is the direction you would need to travel to reach this destination?
5. Now, use your compass and point it in the direction of this destination. What does the direction read on the compass?

Part 3: Questions

Answer the following questions in your notebook or on a separate sheet of paper:

1. Is the North Star a reliable tool to use for navigation? Explain your answer.
2. What other methods could you use to find North without using a compass?
3. Would you rely on stars to navigate if all technology failed? Explain your answer.