

BE A NATURALIST! MICRO MAPS LESSON DETAILS

Micro Maps

(45 minutes)

STEP ONE. Begin the activity by reviewing the tools that a naturalist uses.

What types of things did Lewis and Clark do to show people what the West looked like?

They did journaling, sketching and made maps along their journey to represent the landscapes of the West.

STEP TWO. Ask students to read page 6 in their *What's in Your World?* booklet.

STEP THREE. Tell students that they are going to be using naturalist skills of journaling, sketching and mapping to investigate the natural world as Lewis and Clark did.

STEP FOUR. Take the students outside with journaling, sketching and mapping supplies. Ask the students to make observations of the outside space, using their senses. The students should record their observations in their journals or notebooks.

STEP FIVE. Next, tell the students that they will be doing a mapping project. Though, instead of a large map of an area, they will be creating a micro-map--a close-up map that shows details of a small area.

Discuss the concept of scale and perspective with students as well. During this activity, they will be working in pairs or small groups to measure out a 1-meter square, using a tape measure or meter stick, and marking the corners of their 1-meter square with stakes or flags. Next, they will run string or surveying tape between the stakes to mark the square.

STEP SIX. To begin their micro-map, the students will draw a square on a piece of graph paper, which will be the method of recording what they find. Next, have the students sketch the larger and more general features in their plot. After, have the students get down on their knees and look very closely at their square plot.

What do you see?

Are their plants, insects, worms?

Is the soil sandy or rocky?

Remind students of different features on a map and using symbols to represent features in their plot. Using colored pencils, have them record the details of their plot on their map, working from one corner, outward until they have mapped the whole square meter.

STEP SEVEN. Once the students have finished, ask them to use their observations and micro-maps to create a list of all the things that they have found. They may write a general list or a more detailed list with names of plants and animals. Ask for volunteers to share their findings with the class.

