

## Directions

**T**his activity can link well with directions work in maths, geography or orienteering. It would be equally effective in either a familiar environment (for example encouraging the children to look closely at their school grounds), or to help children get to know a new area (for example during a residential visit).

Begin by giving the children compasses (in groups or pairs) so that they can identify the directions correctly themselves. As an alternative, you could encourage your children to look for natural indicators of the directions, for example: moss usually grows on the shaded North side of trees or walls; the sun rises in the East and sets in the West.

Ask the children to decide which direction they would like to face for the start of the poem. (They may choose North, as this seems logical, but it could depend on the area, for example they may want to begin by facing in the direction of a significant building or an interesting tree.) Ask the children to look in this direction and write a line about something interesting that they can see. For example:

To the North, the sky is hidden by trees

They should then face a new direction and write another line:

To the East, a village snuggles in the valley

And again:

To the South rolls the misty sea

And once more:

To the West there stands an old stone cross

The children now need to look at the same directions again, one at a time. They should focus carefully and add another line to the one they have for each direction. For example:

To the North, the sky is hidden by trees  
Their bony fingers stretching upwards

To the East, a village snuggles in the valley  
Cosy and warm in the afternoon sun

To the West there stands an old stone cross  
Cool in a coat of green lichen

To the South rolls the misty sea  
Restless and uncomfortable

The children can then repeat this process until they have written four lines about each direction:

To the North, the sky is hidden by trees  
Their bony fingers stretching upwards  
Saluting the wild winds  
And waving at the wandering clouds ...etc.

The activity can be adapted to suit the age or abilities of the children, for example younger or less able pupils could write a collaborative poem with each group just writing about one direction.

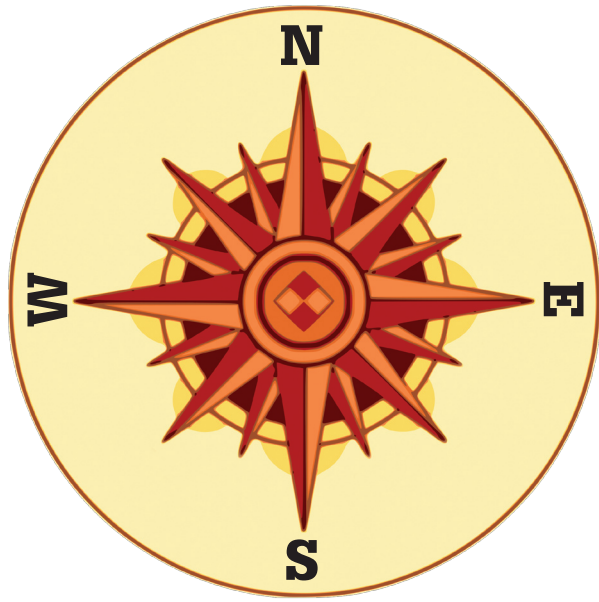
The sheet on the next page can be photocopied for each group to record their ideas.

# Directions

Name(s):

Four horizontal dotted lines for writing.

Four vertical dotted lines for writing.



Four vertical dotted lines for writing.

Four horizontal dotted lines for writing.