Families and Schools

Kelsey Donnelly, Susan Hejl, Beth Kastl, Kelly Kekel, Carol Bacak-Egbo, Annie McMahon Whitlock
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About the Authors - Families and Schools

Kelsey Donnelly
Coloma Elementary School
Coloma Public Schools
I graduated from GVSU with degrees in special education and elementary education. I began my career as an educator in Glendale, Arizona working with students with autism and coaching middle school girls flag football. I moved back to Michigan in the winter of 2016 and began working as an elementary resource teacher! When work isn’t keeping me busy, I am a big baseball and hockey fan and often you can find me at a sporting event.

Beth Kastl
Floyd M. Jewett Elementary School
Mesick Consolidated Schools
Beth is an elementary teacher from Floyd M. Jewett Elementary school, where she has worked in a variety of grade levels including first and third grade.

Kellie Kekel
Lincoln Elementary School
Bangor Township Schools
Kelly teaches first grade at Lincoln Elementary School in Bangor Township Schools.
Susan Hejl
KND Elementary
Kaleva Norman Dickson
Susan has been a first grade teacher in the Kaleva Norman Dickson School District for 26 years. She earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education from Central Michigan University and a Masters of Arts in Curriculum and Teaching from Michigan State University. Outside of school, Susan enjoys singing, gardening, exercising, kayaking and spending time on the lake.

Annie McMahon Whitlock
Assistant Professor
University of Michigan-Flint
Annie McMahon Whitlock is an Assistant Professor of Elementary Education at University of Michigan-Flint. In addition to teaching the elementary social studies methods course, she is the Elementary Education Program Coordinator, focusing on the student teaching experience. Her research is centered on teaching social studies through civic engagement, place-based inquiry, and integrating language arts and literature.

David A. Johnson
Project Manager
Michigan Open Book Project
Dave began his career teaching 8th grade United States History in Mesick, Michigan. After almost a decade in the classroom, he took a job at Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District (WMISD) as an Instructional Consultant for Social Studies. He is shared across 11 ISDs in Northern Michigan that form the Northern Michigan Learning Consortium. He completed his Masters in Educational Leadership through Central Michigan University in 2011 and is Co-Project Director of the Performance Assessments of Social Studies Thinking (PASST) Project in addition to his duties as the Pro-

The Michigan Open Book Project
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About the Readers - Families and

Joseph Baumann -
Joe joined the Cadillac Footlitters in 2016, coming from having performed many times on the stage with Riverwalk Theater in Lansing, Michigan. Some of his favorite roles have been Lancelot in Camelot, Captain Scott in Terra Nova, and Nathan Rothschild in the Rothschilds.

Melissa Kendell -
Melissa has enjoyed performing in productions like Into the Woods and a Christmas Story. She's been a part of various charity performances including the annual United Way Murder Mystery and Dancing with the Y Stars.

Kelli Simons -
Kelli has been in many local theater productions including the Mother in a Christmas Story, the Baker's Wife in Into the Woods, Tansy McGinnis in the Nerd. She comes from a talented theatrical family.
Chapter 3

Where are we?

How do we describe where we are?
How do we describe special places in our school?
How do I describe where I live?
For Teachers
The First Grade text is meant to be explored visually by students like a traditional “big book”. Some teachers may also want their students to have a copy of the book as a digital text on an iPad, Chromebook, or other digital device. Either way, the way students interact with this book is different from other MI Open Book materials.

Each short reading is meant to have some teacher interaction go along with it. We tell you what those are in each section.

This chapter also requires construction of a small box. You may use the lid of a ream of paper for creation of this box, or have a sturdier one built for you. This same box will be used across all K-2 books. You may want to have one sturdy one built and shared between teachers.

A brief PowerPoint presentation detailing the reasons for building this box is available in the orange box on this page.

Printable PDFs with many of the images you may choose to use in your classroom model are available here:

- Doors and Cubbies
- Greenboards and Clocks
- Posters and Map
- Rug and Flowers
- Window Book Cases
- North, South, East, West Greenboards

This presentation by Dr. Phil Gersmehl provides a brief overview of the model as well as the science reasoning behind it.
Reading is a Geographical Act

Letters are spatial shapes - Round or square, simple or complex, symmetrical or not, with or without “panhandles”.

Direction is important - The only difference between some pairs of letters - b and d, p and q, n and u - is the direction they face.

Words are spatial sequences - Meaning depends not just on the letters but the order in which they are arranged. (Tar and rat mean different things, both as nouns and as verbs!)

Phrases are spatial associations - They are grammatical elements that occur together in the same part of a sentence. Of course, we don’t say “grammatical elements” in first grade, but we do say “white and cat together help us describe Fluffy better than either word alone.”

Words have spatial auras - Nearby words have more influence than distant ones - “I’m walking in an oak forest” means I’m walking and the forest is oak, not “I’m an oak and the forest is walking”

Texts can be diagrammed as spatial hierarchies - Smaller clauses are nested inside larger sections. We can do things in the early grades that make the idea easier to teach later.

Page layout is a set of non-random spatial patterns - Many layout devices, such as paragraph spacing, indents, callouts, and bulleted lists depend on pattern recognition to convey part of the meaning.

Spatial positions can imply logical relationships - Many rhetorical devices such as alliteration, alternation, or phrase repetition use analogical positioning to carry some of their meaning.

Interactive 3.2 Reading is a Geographical Act

A series of activities to be completed in conjunction with this chapter.

The Michigan Content Expectations for 1st Grade

1 - G1.0.1 Construct simple maps of the classroom to demonstrate aerial perspective.

1 - G1.0.2 Describe places using absolute (e.g., home address) or relative location (e.g., left, right, front, back, next to, near).

1 - G1.0.3 Distinguish between landmasses (continents) and bodies of water (oceans) using maps and globes.

1 - G2.0.1 Distinguish between physical (e.g., clouds, trees, weather) and human (e.g., buildings, playgrounds, sidewalks) characteristics of places.

1 - G2.0.2 Describe the unifying characteristics and/or boundaries of different school regions (e.g., playground, reading corner, library, restroom).
Section 1

How do we describe where we are?

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INQUIRY

1. How do we describe where we are?
2. How do we describe special places in our school?
3. How do I describe where I live?

WORDS TO INTRODUCE:

- location
- model
- map
- birds eye view

For the Teacher

1. G1.0.1 Construct simple maps of the classroom to demonstrate aerial perspective.
2. G1.0.2 Describe places using absolute (e.g., home address) or relative location (e.g., left, right, front, back, next to, near).
3. G1.0.3 Distinguish between landmasses (continents) and bodies of water (oceans) using maps and globes.
4. G2.0.2 Describe the unifying characteristics and/or boundaries of different school regions (e.g., playground, reading corner, library, restroom).

In this chapter you’re going to need to build the classroom in a box described at the start of this chapter.

Review this widget on direction words if necessary with your kids.

Interactive 3.3 Where is the dog?

This whole chapter shouldn’t be done quickly - it is building some very important geographic foundations for students. Finish this section by practicing drawing a map of the classroom using a birds eye view.
There are many ways to tell people where we are--our location.
We can show people our location by making a map.
You might remember from last year that to make a map we need the Super Shrinking Machine!
The Super Shrinking Machine can shrink anything! If I hold a bus in my hands, can I take a ride in it? Can I climb inside it? Is it still a bus?
The toy bus is a model of a real bus. A model is a smaller item that is like a larger object. A model of a bus stands for a real bus.
When we make **maps**, we are super shrinking our world! Let’s start with our classroom.

What do you think it would be like if we shrunk our classroom?
If we shrink our classroom, it can become a model of our real classroom. We can make our own model of our classroom. First, we line up our model so it lines up with our classroom walls. Next, we need to put the windows and boards on our model’s walls. We want them to match our classroom walls.
After we have put our windows in place, we need to name our walls.

Let’s name our walls N, S, E, and W.
These letters are the first letters in our walls’ names. N is for north. S is for south. E is for east and W is for west.

Let’s stop and name our classroom walls and the walls in our model.
Next, our classroom model needs doors and other items that are in our classroom.

What else do we need in a model of our classroom?
To build our model, we need to be able to describe where things are. We can tell if things are in front of or behind something. We can tell if objects are near or far apart. We can tell when an item is next to something.

In the picture the rug is next to the step stool. Let’s review describing words!

Interactive 3.4 Where is the Dog?

The dog is near the house.
Let’s use describing words.

Where is the rug in this classroom?

Where is the clock?
Let’s stop and add details to the model of our classroom. We add our clock, doors, and bookshelves. Finally, we add the items that are inside of our room. Let’s add our tables, desks, and rugs.
Our shrunken classroom is a model of our real classroom.
Now, we can make a map. A **map** is a flat picture or a drawing of a place. A map can show a large area, like the whole Earth, or a small area, like our classroom.
When we create a map, we use a *bird’s eye view*. A bird’s eye view looks down on a place from above.
What does the bird see? Where is the yellow treasure box in this room?
Does the puppy have a bird’s eye view? How do you know?

How is the bird’s view different?
The puppy sees the sides of the bowl and the plate. The puppy sees the bowl on top of the plate. The bird sees two circles. It sees the bowl inside of the plate.
Let’s practice making a map of our classroom using a bird’s eye view.
Section 2

How do we describe the special places of our school?

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INQUIRY

1. How do we describe where we are?
2. How do we describe special places in our school?
3. How do I describe where I live?

WORDS TO INTRODUCE

- globe
- regions

For the Teacher

1 - G1.0.1 Construct simple maps of the classroom to demonstrate aerial perspective.

1 - G1.0.2 Describe places using absolute (e.g., home address) or relative location (e.g., left, right, front, back, next to, near).

1 - G1.0.3 Distinguish between landmasses (continents) and bodies of water (oceans) using maps and globes.

1 - G2.0.2 Describe the unifying characteristics and/or boundaries of different school regions (e.g., playground, reading corner, library, restroom).

Midway through this section put this resource down and head out for a small field trip of your school.

When you return have students build their own map of their school.

Writing Connection: Have students write about their answer to the section’s supporting question: How do we describe the special places of our school?
We can make our maps better by including details. When we show where we are, we can include areas called regions. **Regions** are areas used for one type of activity.
Each special area in our or classroom can be a region.

What areas do we have in our classroom? What activities do we do in those regions?
Look at the photograph of a classroom. What things do you see? What activity would you do in this region? How do we know?
Our school also has regions. One region in our school is the gym. We can do special activities in this region. We can throw balls and run around in the gym. We can’t run around and throw balls in our classroom.
Look at the pictures. Can you figure out other regions that might be in a school? What would you do there?
These first graders explored their school’s regions.
They walked from their parking lot, to their track, to the baseball field, and back to their classroom! They saw many things along the way.
When they got back to class, they used glue and scissors to build a map of the regions they visited on their adventure.
Now it’s time to go on our own field trip and make a map of our adventures. We can use what we have learned about regions to build a map of the regions we visit.
Our Earth also has special regions. Our Earth is made up of areas of land and water. The land is called continents. The water is called oceans.
We can show the land and bodies of water on a globe. A **globe** is a model of the whole world. It is round like the Earth and shows all of the Earth’s continents and oceans.
On a globe we can see our Earth’s different regions. Our Earth has large regions of land or water.
On a globe or a map different regions are different colors. On a map or a globe, water usually looks blue. The land can be green or many different colors.
Section 3

How do I describe where I live?

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INQUIRY

1. How do we describe where we are?

2. How do we describe special places in our school?

3. How do I describe where I live?

WORDS TO INTRODUCE

address

For the Teacher

1 - G1.0.1 Construct simple maps of the classroom to demonstrate aerial perspective.

1 - G1.0.2 Describe places using absolute (e.g., home address) or relative location (e.g., left, right, front, back, next to, near).

1 - G1.0.3 Distinguish between landmasses (continents) and bodies of water (oceans) using maps and globes.

1 - G2.0.2 Describe the unifying characteristics and/or boundaries of different school regions (e.g., playground, reading corner, library, restroom).

Have students describe what is around where they live.

This song is about learning your address. Ask students if they know their address.

The envelope is a web link to the school that has been pictured throughout this chapter. Show your students a satellite view of your own school too!
You can tell your friends where you live by describing what is around your house. You can tell what is nearby your house. You can tell what is in front of and behind your house.
How can you describe what is around where you live?
We can describe where we are or we can give our exact location. Your exact location is your address.
An **address** is your house’s number and your road’s name. It tells others where you live. Your mailman uses your address to bring your mail to you.

Let’s sing!

**Interactive 3.5** Where do you live?
Our school has an address and your house has an address.

Let’s use an address and visit a new place. Click on the envelope below!
We can show people where we are on a map or a globe. We can describe where we are located and tell what is nearby. We can tell our address and give our exact location. We have many ways to tell people where we are.
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