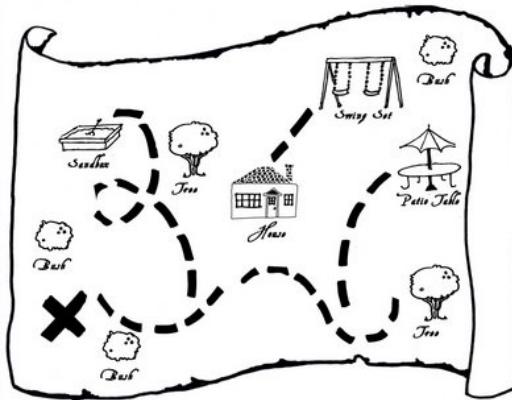


## Penny Hide and Seek

**Grades K-5**

*Big Ideas: Place*

*Education for Sustainability and Place-Based Learning begins with the idea that understanding our own place gives us a better understanding of the world. When teachers and students have cultivated a sense of place in our school and home communities, we begin to understand the interdependence and interactions of social, economic, and ecological factors.*



**Activity Description:** In this activity, students will make their own map, and the map serves a purpose. Students will begin to look closely at a place by describing the location of the hidden penny by its position in relation to other objects. Students trade maps to find a penny hidden by a classmate. Through this activity students begin to see what elements make up maps, and uncover how mapping skills help us interpret our place in the world.

*This activity can be done outside, or in the classroom.*

### **Essential Questions:**

- What makes up your place?
- What stories do maps tell?

### **You will need:**

Pennies  
Pencil  
Paper  
Clipboard

**Time:** 45 minutes, longer if outside.

**Before the Activity:**

Identify a specific place you would like your students to map. Keep the following in mind:

- a) If outside, choose a limited space in the playground, wooded area or school field.
- b) Take into account the time spent walking to and from the mapping site.

**Activity:**

- 1) Discuss: What stories do maps tell? How do maps tell a story?
- 2) Give each student a penny, pencil, paper and clipboard.
- 3) Allow a few minutes for the student to hide the penny within the chosen area. It is okay if they see other students hiding pennies.
- 4) Give each student about 10 minutes to draw a map of the penny's hiding spot. The map can include words, pictures, number of steps, symbols, or anything else the student wants to include.
- 5) Collect all the completed maps and then hand them back out randomly to students. If a student ends up with their own map, they can trade with another student.
- 6) Students will follow their classmate's map to the location of the penny.
- 7) When all the pennies have been collected, have the students sit in a circle to debrief.

**Debrief:**

- What did you discover about this place through this activity?
- What was the most helpful thing on the map in finding the hidden penny?
- What made it hard to find the penny?
- What are some good guidelines for drawing a map? (If your class is doing a lot of mapping activities, it might be a good idea to post the list of guidelines in the classroom)

**Variations and Extensions:**

- Try hiding objects other than pennies like colored rocks, legos or plastic animals.
- Older students can work in teams to hide and map multiple objects. For example, give each student team four or more objects to hide. Have them map the directions from one object to another like a treasure hunt before trading maps with another team.

Adapted from: David Sobel, (1998) *Mapmaking with Children: Sense of Place Education for Elementary Years*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.