

THE AMAZING RACE

ALGEBRA EDITION

1. Take an overhead sheet and put grid lines on it spaced about 1"x1". Draw a frog in the center (doesn't have to be an award winning frog), and 6 flies in random squares on the grid. The question is "Write down how many spaces left or right, then up or down does the frog have to travel to get to each of the flies?" (starting at his original position every time). This is the warm up to the lesson.
2. Discuss the warm-up and the importance of traveling horizontally first, then vertically. Lead into a discussion starting with "Have you ever been lost before? What did you do to get out of the situation? What could you use to avoid the situation?" Talk about maps, coordinate grids/systems and how to find places on them.
3. Introduce students to a coordinate system, the x and y axes, and how to record position of points on it. Keep stressing the importance of X first, Y second.
4. Have students then login to Navigator. Setup the Activity Center for students to contribute 0 points (basically be a cursor on screen) and put the provided map as a background on the graph. Make the window 25 in all directions, with interval 1. Ask students to move their cursor to (enter city here). Have them tell you what the coordinates of that city are. Move on to the rest of the cities, one at a time. Also, switch up some questions with "Which city is at (x,y) coordinates?"
5. Once finished, you move to the actual Amazing Race game. Take 5 - 6 maps out of an atlas and hang them around the room (laminated if you want them to last longer). Create some questions about that map (about 4 - 5, like "What are the coordinates of the city XYZ?, What city is at (x,y) coordinates? What (insert special state item or place) is at (x,y) coordinates?, etc" and put them on a half sheet of paper. Do this for all of the maps. Have prize system worked out for when groups finish.
6. Start each group of students at a different map (having one open to start with is a good idea). They must bring their answers to you and must have them reviewed, you will then give them the next set of questions for the next map. Have something for the teams that finish first, second, third, and so on.
7. Have some sort of finishing exercise and a homework assignment for practice.

With maps, one of the coordinates will be a letter, it might cause some confusion for students, so address that. I used states I have lived in (Arizona, Indiana, Michigan, Maryland) plus the U.S.A. map so I can ask one trivia type question on each with a clue built into the question.