

Orienteering Activity

Background: Orienteering, often called **Mapsport**, involves using a map to locate specified marks, known as **Controls**, within a defined boundary. Orienteering is an international sport, dominated by European athletes, but from time to time we have kiwi orienteers who manage to participate competitively in the major leagues. In its simplest form it could be likened to a treasure hunt using the legend on the map rather than verbal clues to find the “treasures”. On the simpler courses, compasses are not used so that the orienteer is required to use the features marked on the map to navigate from control to control, and, as in any educational activity, the initial teaching component is critical to the success of the activity.

There are several teaching points which contribute to orienteering success. In addition to reading the legend and identifying the physical features on any map, the following terms describe habits used by all orienteers.

Fold (the map), **Thumb (the map)**, and **Orientate (the map)** are three concepts to introduce in the initial teaching. An A4 map is best folded so that the orienteer can place a thumb on their current location, while “pointing” the map in the direction of the next Control they need to locate. **Handrailing** is another simple but very effective concept in using the map for navigation. In Lonsdale Park, this means following a path, running alongside a building, or a fence. (In the competitive sport the same applies e.g. following a ridge, a river, a track or a fence could be deemed to be termed handrailing).

At Lonsdale Park we have located 20 controls using features on the map (two controls are in the bush). The controls are marked on the maps using a (red) circle and identified by a number. On the ground, the individual controls are shown by a metal rectangle (100x80mm) fixed to various features.

Each control is identified by a black number on the top (nos 1-20) which corresponds to the number on the map. The two blue letters at the bottom are the “treasure” which the orienteer records as proof of having “visited” the control. You might ask the orienteer to record the first letter, or the second letter, or both. See later for variations in the activity. The master map shows all the controls and all the letters. Make sure you keep this map to yourself!

Printable maps will be emailed to you as part of the booking process. We suggest you print at least one map per person, and aim to use it on two or three occasions (see suggestions below). Paper maps get damaged very easily so part of the challenge is to ensure the orienteers look after the map. Sealable plastic bags are often used in competitive events.

As this activity involves writing, we suggest that you have a supply of pencils (stubs are far better than longer pencils) and pieces of A5 card (half A4) and paper clips to hold the maps to the card.

Teaching the Map: We suggest that you assemble your group at the Camp Fire area where you will notice the blue triangle on the top step to indicate the start finish point. This

is usually shown on a map as a red circle with a triangle inside. If you have not already done so, we suggest you talk to your group about the task involved and the need to use the symbols (legend) on the map to locate themselves as they work through the course. A useful approach would be to ask the children to face the road and look at and talk about the physical features they can see, and without turning their heads, point to the commando course, the bush behind them, the stiles, the road etc. Issue the maps and using the features on the map, ask the group to relate them to the actual objects within their range of vision.

At this stage, we suggest the maps are folded, and you get the group to put their thumbs on the start/finish circle. Ask the group to point their maps toward the stile into the bush, and then walk to the fence counting the steps on the way. (This helps get an idea of the scale of the map). At the stile point out the controls there showing the number of the controls along with the letter codes which they will be collecting. Ask them to turn the maps towards the nearest corner and "handrail" along the fence. At the corner, instruct them (a) to put their thumbs on the map at where they are, (b) to look at the water tank, (c) find it on their maps, (d) orientate the maps to point at the tank and jog to it. From the water tank, repeat those steps and return to the start finish.

At this point we would ask the group to look at their maps and consider the location of controls 1 and 2. Refer to the map and the answering grid below. Explain that Control one is designated by the number 1, Control 2 with number 2 etc, and that their task will be to locate the controls and write a letter, (or letters) into the space below the number. Invite them to suggest where control 2 might be. Ask them to **thumb their maps** and point them towards controls 1 and 2. Ditto for control 3 and 4. Etc.

Getting Underway. What you do next depends on the size of your group, and how proficient they are. We are envisaging that an average group would be no more than 20, but the following process could work with 30. To cater for class groups we have set out two course scenarios. The odd numbered controls go in one direction, (anti-clockwise), and the even numbered controls in the other direction.

Session 1: Pair the children and issue **one** map with piece of card pencil etc per pair. **Instruct the group that when they go off they will be collecting only the first letter of the controls they are visiting, and that they are expected to visit the controls in numerical order.** Send the first pair off to find the odd numbered controls 1 through to 19, and the second pair off to find the even numbered controls. Wait a couple of minutes then sent the next two pairs off, one doing the odd controls, the other doing the even controls, and **reminding them again that they are only collecting the first letter.** In ten minutes you should have 20 of your group doing Mapsport. Later, reassemble the group and have a debrief.

Session 2: Using the same map and pairs repeat the exercise but using the other course, this time visiting the even (or odd) numbers, but still collecting the first letters.

Session 3: Using the same map and pairs, we suggest you discuss the concept of route choice. If each of you had to find 10 controls as quickly as possible, how would you divide the task. This is essentially a relay activity with one member of the pair collecting up to 10 controls before handing the map over to the other member who gathers the rest. When you

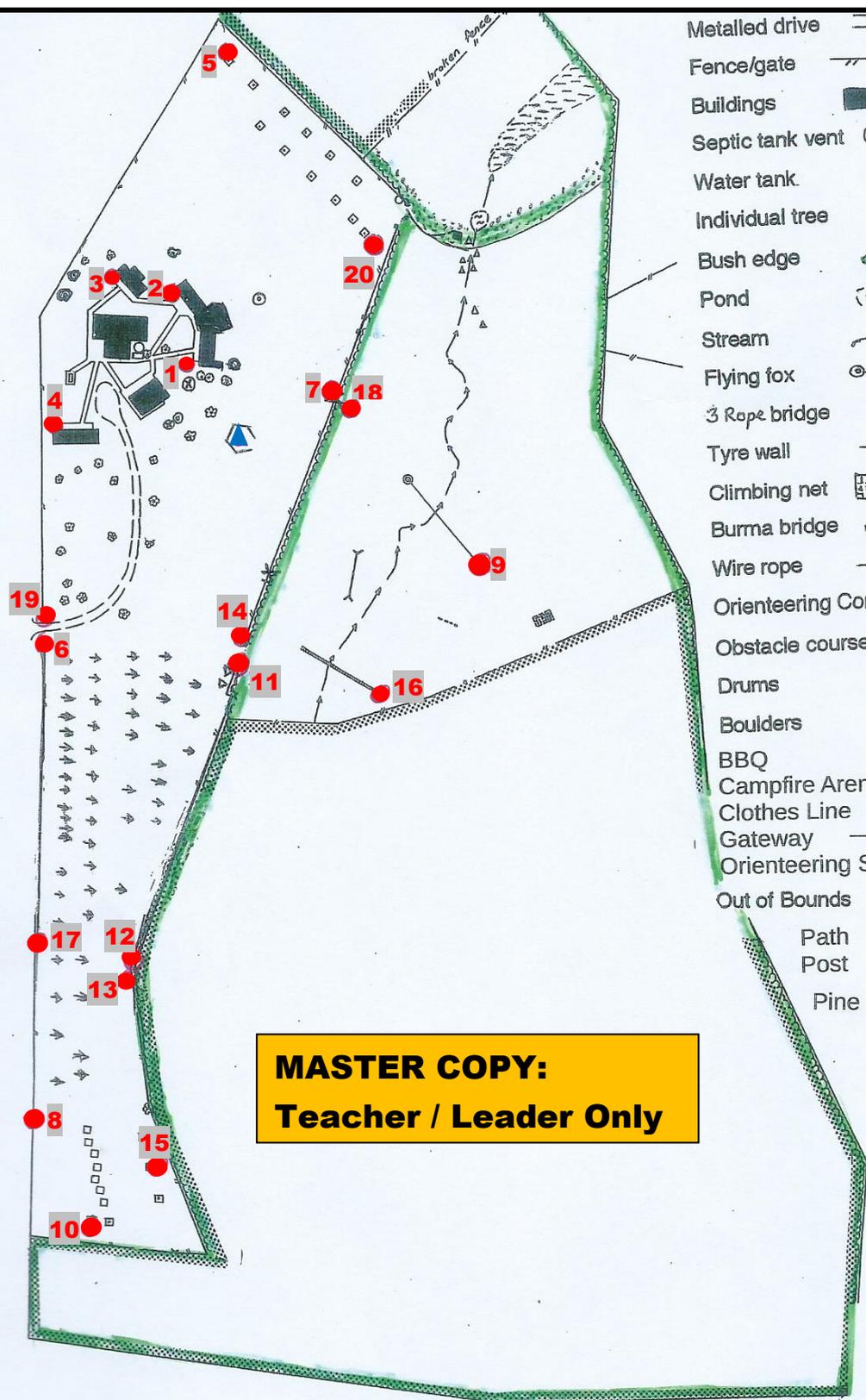
begin, send the first member of each pair off in a massed start, their task being to visit no more than 10 controls in any order gathering the second letter of those controls. There is no need to follow the numerical order for visiting the controls, and any direction is legitimate. Visit no more than 10, return to the base and hand the map over to the second member of the pair to collect the remaining letters.

Session 4: Use the remaining maps to have a group relay. Create teams of 5 to collect 4 controls each in any order. Only one team member runs at a time. Teams need to consider their running orders and make sure the fastest runners do the longer legs.

LONSDALE PARK – ORIENTEERING MAP

Legend

- Metalled drive
- Fence/gate
- Buildings
- Septic tank vent
- Water tank
- Individual tree
- Bush edge
- Pond
- Stream
- Flying fox
- 3 Rope bridge
- Tyre wall
- Climbing net
- Burma bridge
- Wire rope
- Orienteering Control Point
- Obstacle course
- Drums
- Boulders
- BBQ
- Campfire Arena
- Clothes Line
- Gateway
- Orienteering Start/Finish
- Out of Bounds
- Path
- Post
- Pine Tree



**MASTER COPY:
Teacher / Leader Only**



Control	1	3	5	7	9	11	13	15	17	19
Letter Code	LS	YZ	HM	TQ	NY	RU	PA	VR	PS	KN
Control	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
Letter Code	XG	IO	CW	UT	AH	BG	QB	EX	DK	JP

