Trail Explorers

Read the map. Help the team.



Solve map-grid puzzles, build a smart pack and tackle team safety missions with an adult.

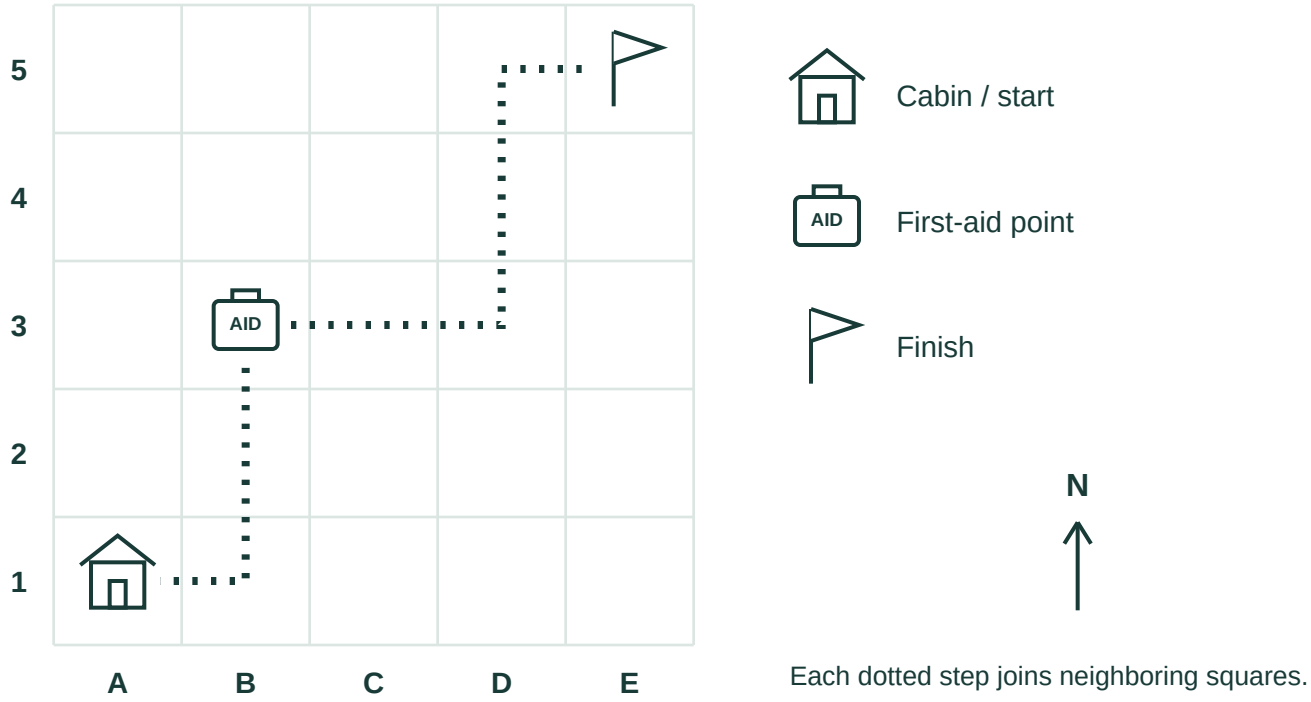
MAP QUESTS / PACKING MISSIONS / SAFETY SMARTS

Explore with a responsible adult. These activities are not medical training or permission to travel alone. In a U.S. emergency, call 911. Never make a real emergency call for practice.

Free to print. No membership needed. Answers and grown-up notes on page 8.

The checkpoint challenge

The fictional RMSDC trail has three checkpoints. Read the grid: letter first, number second. Each dotted step is one square.



North is up, east is right, south is down and west is left on this practice map. The key explains the symbols. Real maps may be drawn differently: always check the north arrow.

YOUR MISSION

1. Write the grid squares for the cabin, first-aid bag and finish.
2. From A1, follow: east 1, north 2, east 2, north 2, east 1.
3. Count the steps from start to finish. Do not cut corners.

Fictional practice map. Not for real navigation.

Build a team pack

A smart pack solves problems. Match each item to its job, then compare your choices with a grown-up.



TRAIL KNOW-HOW

Think in jobs: navigation, drinking, food, warmth, light and first aid. Adults choose equipment for the route, conditions and group. A phone alone is not a complete plan.

YOUR MISSION

1. Match: WATER / HEADLAMP / MAP to THIRST / DARK / ROUTE.
2. Your teammate packed snacks but no jacket. What is missing?
3. Draw or list two extra items an adult recommends for your trip.

Draw, sketch or jot down your ideas here.

Practice with a grown-up. Use a pretend phone for any role-play.

The missing-junction mystery

The trail signs no longer match your plan. Your buddy suggests a shortcut downhill. What would you say?



TRAIL KNOW-HOW

Stop together. If lost, stay put unless there is immediate danger. Signal with a whistle. In an emergency, tell 911 your last known location and useful landmarks; follow instructions.

YOUR MISSION

1. Write one reason not to try the unknown shortcut.
2. On page 2, pretend your last known point was B3. Describe it.
3. Role-play a calm help call with an adult. Do not dial for practice.

Draw, sketch or jot down your ideas here.

Practice with a grown-up. Use a pretend phone for any role-play.

Your first-aid support crew

Teamwork includes noticing trouble and speaking up. You can be useful without doing treatment you have not learned.



TRAIL KNOW-HOW

Check for danger before approaching. Get adult help. Serious bleeding, unresponsiveness or abnormal breathing needs 911. Follow the dispatcher and your training; do not move someone with a possible head, neck or back injury.

YOUR MISSION

1. Pick a safe job: FETCH THE ADULT / TRY A NEW TREATMENT.
2. List two location clues you could give an emergency helper.
3. Ask an adult to show you the first-aid kit and discuss a class.

Draw, sketch or jot down your ideas here.

Practice with a grown-up. Use a pretend phone for any role-play.

Beat the storm clock

The last thunder was at 2:10 p.m. Your group is already safely inside an enclosed visitor building.



TRAIL KNOW-HOW

Stay in safe shelter for at least 30 minutes after the last thunder. New thunder restarts the wait. Safe choices include substantial buildings or enclosed metal-topped vehicles with windows up, not trees or tents.

YOUR MISSION

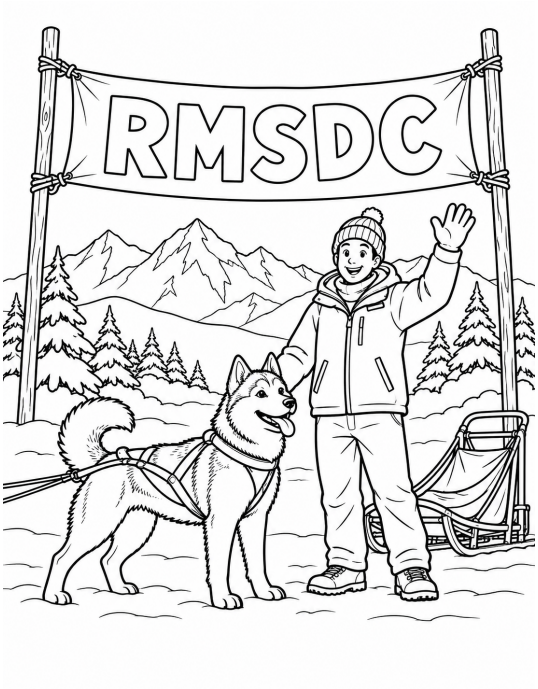
1. What is the earliest time the 30-minute wait could end?
2. Thunder rumbles again at 2:25. What is the new earliest time?
3. Write a reason to check the forecast before leaving home.

Draw, sketch or jot down your ideas here.

Practice with a grown-up. Use a pretend phone for any role-play.

Plan a tiny expedition

Choose a familiar short walk with an adult. Fill this in together before you go. Keep personal details at home.



TRAIL KNOW-HOW

A trusted person who is not on the outing needs your route and expected return. Keep the group together. Turn back when your adult leader says conditions or time are no longer right.

YOUR MISSION

1. Our route and adult leader: _____
2. Our return time and trusted home contact: _____
3. One reason we would turn back: _____

Draw, sketch or jot down your ideas here.

Practice with a grown-up. Use a pretend phone for any role-play.

Trail debrief

Talk through the choices together. Good judgment matters more than finishing quickly.

Page 2: The checkpoint challenge. Cabin A1; first aid B3; finish E5. The route takes 8 steps and passes D3 and D5.

Page 3: Build a team pack. Water: thirst. Headlamp: dark. Map: route. Add suitable layers; an adult checks the complete trip-specific pack.

Page 4: The missing-junction mystery. A shortcut can take you farther off route. B3 is the first-aid checkpoint. Stay together and communicate what you know.

Page 5: Your first-aid support crew. Fetch the adult. Give a trail name, checkpoint or known location. Learn treatment skills in a hands-on class.

Page 6: Beat the storm clock. 2:40 p.m.; after new thunder at 2:25, at least 2:55 p.m. Adults still assess conditions before leaving shelter.

Page 7: Plan a tiny expedition. There is no single right route. The plan should fit the group, weather and daylight. A trusted contact stays informed.

For adults: Adapt to your child's abilities. Activities are supervised practice, not medical advice or a substitute for certified first-aid training. Do not practice risky scenarios outdoors. No fire-making, wild-food tasting or solo exploration is required.

Sources and further learning

NPS: Ten Essentials
https://www.nps.gov/articles/10essentials.htm

NPS: Outdoor Emergency Plan
https://www.nps.gov/articles/gtgemergencyplan.htm

American Red Cross: First Aid Steps
https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/first-aid/performing-first-aid/first-aid-steps

National Weather Service: Lightning Safety
https://www.weather.gov/safety/lightning-tips

Original RMSDC activities and illustrations; no endorsement by the source organizations. Source review: 2026-10-17