

Tea-stained Treasure Map

Make an antique-looking map packed full of adventure and imagination using a piece of white paper. After distressing and soaking in cold tea, your map is well on its way to igniting some creativity. Hide clues along the way, or simply follow the compass rose directions on your treasure map to your own "X marks the spot"!

Materials:

Paper, black tea (or any dark tea), boiling water, baking dish, pencils and markers. Optional embellishments: gold coins, pirate swag, ribbon/twine, and stickers

Directions:

Make the paper

*Note: The paper dries **overnight**, so this is at least a two-day activity. Use the time to **preview books or websites** to familiarize you and your audience with the ideas of maps, a compass rose, cardinal and ordinal directions.*

1. Adults – start by brewing a few cups of tea. **After the tea cools**, pour it into a large baking dish (at least the size of the paper you're using).
2. Make your map look old by crumpling a piece of white paper. Uncrumple the paper and tear pieces off the sides the edges, **creating a weathered effect**.
3. Place the paper into tea and **soak** for 30 - 60 minutes. Longer soak time means darker results!
4. Remove from the tea, and leave the wet paper to **dry overnight**. Use plastic wrap to protect your surfaces from stains.

Make the map

1. The next day it's time to create the map! Include a **title** ("My Treasure Map" for example), the **compass rose** directions (North, South, East, West).
2. Then use **symbols or pictures** to show a treasure island, the room you're in, or whatever your map's future holds. Use **dotted lines** to connect the path. Pencils, colored pencils, and markers work great.
3. Perhaps hide something special at the end, like a chest with shiny or chocolate coins, a new book, or a satisfying riddle. Try using **clues** to move from one portion of the map to the next, **scavenger hunt** style!
4. Looking for inspiration? To see **examples**, check out the activities page on the website: [joanruddimanedd.com](https://www.joanruddimanedd.com).
5. **Share** your map by submitting your works of "arrrr!" (My 7-year-old insisted we include a pirate's "arrrr" joke!) at **#LittleChildrenBigActivity** on Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter.



Booklist: Check out these or other mapping-inspired tales. Use one as an introduction to the concept, while you wait for the paper to soak or dry, or as a follow-up to your adventures. What's your favorite map-inspired tale? Submit your titles to Joan at JoanRuddimanEdD@gmail.com.

[Pete the Cat and the Treasure Map](#) by James Dean

[Max and Ruby's Treasure Hunt](#) by Rosemary Wells

[Follow that Map!: A First Book of Mapping Skills \(Exploring Our Community\)](#) by Scot Ritchie

Board Game: [Ticket To Ride: First Journey](#)