

Pack Your Sled for An Arctic Exploration

OBJECTIVE

Given limited resources and various methods of travel, students will chart a course across the Arctic.

MATERIALS

- copies of map on page 23, enlarged 130% on 11" x 17" paper
- ruler
- pencils
- reference books on arctic explorers such as Frederick A. Cook, Sir Hubert Wilkins, Robert E. Peary, Matthew Henson, or Will Steger

BACKGROUND

Early arctic explorers needed to plan carefully in order to survive harsh environmental conditions. Even with modern communication and travel technologies, arctic explorers today must also plan carefully. Food shortages, broken gear, and worn shelter can all bring disaster to an expedition.

Modern-day arctic explorers include Will Steger and the International Arctic Project. The research team traveled from the Russian arctic island of Severnaya Zemlya in March, 1995, to Resolute, Canada, in July, 1995. A daily journal of the trip is available on the Internet. Find <http://ics.soe.umich.edu/ed712/IAPPprofile.html>



ACTION

1. Discuss as a class the expeditions of early explorers. What were the hardships? In what ways is exploration easier today?
2. Discuss specific items people would need to survive. List items on the board. Weight is very important when traveling by sled, boat, or plane. Can students approximate the weights of the items listed?
3. Divide students into working groups. Distribute the enlarged copy of the map. NOTE: The map scale applies only when page is enlarged 130%.
4. Have students choose starting and ending destinations. Also choose supplies and methods of transportation from the list below. (Speeds estimated for best travel conditions.)
 - canoe-sled holds 454 kg (1,000 lb.) and travels 48 km (30 mi.) a day.
 - Twin Otter plane holds 3,178 kg (7,000 lb.) and cruises at 370 km/hr. (230 mi./hr.)
 - dog sled holds 545 kg (1,200 lb.) and travels 40.2 km (25 mi.) per day
 - skiers can pull 45.4 kg (100 lb.) and travel 16 km (10 mi.) per day
 - hikers can carry 22.7 kg (50 lb.) and travel 9.6 km (6 mi.) per day
5. Use the map to chart a course. Student groups can present results to class.

