

DIY Compass Challenge

History of the Compass

Before the invention of the compass, the position, destination, and direction at sea were determined by knowing relief of the coast and observing the sun and stars. Ancient sailors often did not get away from the coast. The invention of the compass made it possible to determine the direction one was sailing even during cloudy times or in the open sea.

A compass is a navigational tool that reacts to the magnetism of the Earth, and is used for determining sides of the world. The magnetic compass is very simple!

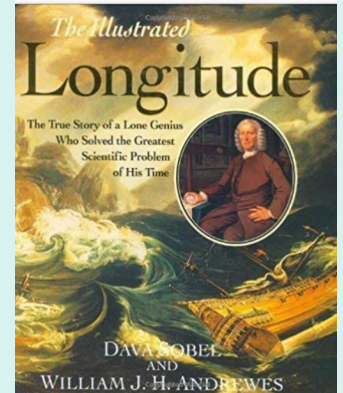


Fact: An unknown inventor– It is not known who invented the compass, but the first people to use the magnetic needle to point towards directions were the Chinese. In 1040 they described how magnetic pins were made.

Fact: Origin of name: According to legend, the word “magnet” derives from the name of the city Magnesia in Asia. There there was a magnetic ore site in ancient times.

Fact– North Magnetic Pole– The North Magnetic Pole is located in northern Canada and it’s exactly where the compasses are shown to us. If you are at the top of the magnetic North Pole the farror will turn into a circle because you are surrounded by a north magnetic field!

Check out these other great literacy connections!



Everyday Science: Cool Physics Facts!

*Current GPS and navigational systems we have in our phones and cars use principles of directions in compasses.

*A mariner’s compass can have two or more magnets permanently attached to a compass card.

*The compass is one of the Four Great Inventions from Ancient China.