

Practice Tips: Which Way's North?



USEFUL WORDS TO KNOW: Here are some representative words you should know.

Interstate highway	Index	Dashed line	Airport
State highway	Mileage table	Solid line	Weigh station
Toll road	Map key	Dotted line	State capitol
Scenic byway	Compass rose	Political boundary	County seat
Surface street	Coordinate system	Railway	University

USEFUL WEBSITES TO SEE: We verified these in January of 2025.

National Geographic site for learning elementary map skills:

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/map-skills-elementary-students/>

Education.com worksheet for learning about map grids:

https://www.education.com/worksheet/article/map-grid/?referral_url=kidsgeo.com

The Digital Library of Georgia provides this historical Georgia road map from 1922:

https://dlg.usg.edu/record/nge_ngen_dixie-highway-map-1922-001-2

USEFUL THINGS TO TRY: Practice with your teacher or at home with a parent.

1. Beginning in 2025, we use the 2023-2024 GA DOT official road map for the competition. We provided two practice copies to each school in 2024. The GDOT map divides our state into north and south sections, one on the front side and the other on the back. Use your school's copy to complete these activities.
 - a. Use the index to locate these towns and cities (check both sides): Hinesville, Manchester, Macon, Jessup, Riddleville, Valdosta, and Dublin.
 - b. Use the Mileage Chart to find the total driving distance for this trip around north Georgia: Start in Atlanta and drive to Gainesville. Drive from there to Athens. Next, drive over to Augusta. Return home to Atlanta. What is your total mileage?
 - c. Measuring distances: Locate the airport in Macon. Find the five closest airports to Macon. How far is each from Macon? Use the "Scale in Miles" in the key at the very bottom of the front side of the map (north GA).



- d. Penny Placing: Get five pennies, five index cards, and a timer or stopwatch. Have a partner secretly select five of the counties from the County Index. Write one county name on each index card. Now spread out your map, get the timer ready, and go!

As your friend calls out the first county name, find its location in the Index, and place a penny on your map right on top of the county name. Repeat for the remaining 4 counties. How long did you take?

Switch places with your friend and pick 5 different counties. Who is faster? You and your friend might race again to look for different information like largest city in the county, name of an airport in the county, etc.

- e. Statesboro Blues: Use Mileage Chart to figure out the driving distance for this trip: Atlanta to Macon via I-75, then Macon to Statesboro, primarily on I-16. How many hours are needed to drive this distance at 55 MPH?
- f. City inserts: Use the inset map for Macon to find these answers. (i) Which of the two interstate highways passing through Macon serves as a Hurricane Evacuation Route? (ii) Ocmulgee Blvd goes right past the Downtown Macon Airport. What type of highway is Ocmulgee Boulevard? Does it have more than two lanes?
- g. Other map features: Georgia has three Outdoor Recreation Areas (ORAs). Where can you find their names? Find the compass rose. In which section of the map is it located? Georgia is bordered by five states. What are they?
2. National Geographic created a nice grayscale map of Georgia that skips almost all of the roads and focuses on the rivers and natural features. They also provided a set of 16 “tiles” that you can print and assemble into a larger version. Both are available on the Fernbank Science Center web site. Use these links:

[National Geographic GA Poster - Single Page](#)

[National Geographic GA Poster – Tiled Version](#)

- a. The Altamaha River flows into the Atlantic Ocean. What other Georgia rivers join to create the Altamaha?
- b. Name three lakes lying along the Chattahoochee River.
3. Released Quizzes: These were used in previous DESO competitions.
- a. Released quiz with Student Answer Sheet and answer key: [Quiz from 2015](#)
- b. Released “story time” quiz featuring a visit to the Georgia coast. (See next page.)

Released "Story Time" Quiz: Let's Go to the Beach!

You are at your Grandmother's house in LaGrange, Georgia. Starting from there, your family will travel together by car to your family reunion on Jekyll Island, one of Georgia's beautiful coastal islands. Fill in the blanks about things you see along the way.

Your grandmother lives in LaGrange, the largest city in Troup County. (Find it using the County Index to establish your starting point.) She lives near _____, a large, man-made lake on the Chattahoochee. Travelling south on I-185, you pass through the next major city in Georgia, _____, where you turn onto US80 and head east towards Macon. US80 is also identified as a Georgia State Highway, GA____. You can tell that other number is for a State Highway because the number is outlined with a _____.

Once you reach Macon, your grandparents eventually get onto one of the major interstate highways, heading almost due east. This highway is _____. The road takes you to Savannah, where you could easily visit one of Georgia's other well-known barrier islands, either _____ or _____, but you need to continue going south!

You turn onto I-95 and follow it down to Brunswick, located in Glynn County. Turning onto US17, you drive through Georgia's beautiful marshes of Glynn, which long ago inspired a Georgia poet to write these opening lines to a famous poem about the marsh and its islands:

Glooms of the live-oaks, beautiful braided and woven

With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven,

Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs

Your family passes by the bridge bearing the poet's name, the _____, and arrives at Jekyll's beach, where your cousins are waiting to bury you in the sand. The reunion has begun!