



FUN FACT #3: Measuring Your Pace / Using Your Pace to Determine Distance

Did you know you can measure how large a fire is by walking around it?

Target age group

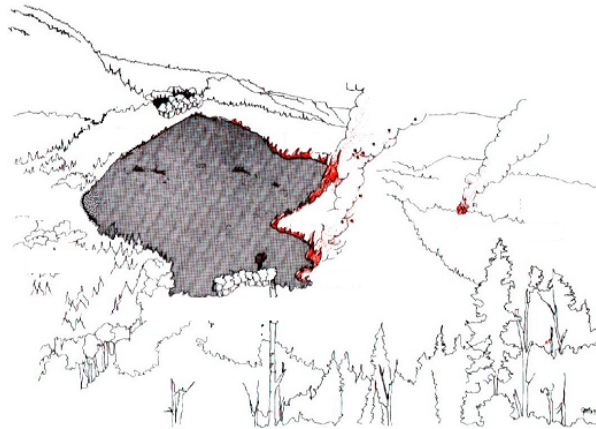
- Grade 4 – High School
- Grade 3 (with instruction)

Materials needed

- ✓ Tape measure
- ✓ Something to mark the ground where you start and where you end (stick or chalk depending on your measuring surface)
- ✓ Lime (spread to form a large square - Activity 3)
- ✓ Flat surface (no slopes)

Information

- The size of a Forest Fire is measured in acres (1/4 acre, 1/2 acre, 1 acre...15 acres...500 acres...etc.)
- An acre is 208 feet x 208 feet
- The fire perimeter is the outside boundary of a fire's area



Question

- Why is knowing the size of a wildfire important?
- What is a pace? (A: distance covered by taking a right step, then a left step - we use the pace as our means of measurement)

Activity 1: Determining the distance of your pace

TIP: be sure to walk in your normal way to get an accurate reading

- Using a stick or with chalk, mark the ground at the tip of your right shoe (before your first step) and then again where the tip of your left shoe lands after your second step.
- Measure to determine how long your pace is.
- Repeat if necessary.

Activity 2: Use your Pace to measure a farther distance

- Mark on the ground a starting point & ending point (make it long).
- Count how many paces it takes to walk the distance from one end of the marked line to the other end.
- Multiply the number of paces you walked by the length of your pace (for example: 15 paces x 5 feet).
- What distance did you pace out between the starting and ending marks?
- Check it with the tape measure – do Activity 1 over if your paced result in Activity 2 is far off from the tape measured result.

Activity 3: Using Your Pace to measure a wildfire

- Square off the “fire perimeter” which is outlined on the ground with lime by walking it and counting your paces.
- Use skills from Activity 1 and Activity 2 to get your answer.
- How large is the fire?

Note: Your paced distance is your own. It will be different from that of any others in your group. BUT...your results or the distances you will pace out should be very close to that of others participating in this activity!

