



# Run and Jump!

Students will use math and design skills to create a cross-country course that honors Maryland traditions in hunting and a mounted military.



Hand out jump ropes. Who can jump? Have fun watching students display their skills! Point to a small bale of hay. Who can jump it? Students will have to organize themselves to all have a chance to jump over. Lay a jump rope about three feet in front of the hay bale. Who can jump from the rope over the hay bale? Move the rope farther from the hay bale to make the jump longer. Have fun!



Give each student a copy of a sample cross country course map. If possible, observe horses and riders on a course. Describe how today's events in cross-country have their origins in calvary and military drill history. How long has it been since the U.S. Employed mounted soldiers on horseback? Are there still honorary uses of mounted soldiers in today's military?

Today's cross-country events focus upon endurance, especially jumping. Explore the distances between jumps on the map. How is the course timed? What are the major elements of the course?

Arrange for a rider to speak to the students about their horse and equipment. Encourage questions regarding training and competition. Use this time to really get students interested in the sport.

# Explain

Designing a cross-country course is serious business! Like all good golf courses, tennis courts, and football fields, professional designers and builders construct courses and jumps with attention to many details, like turf, the materials used in creating obstacles, and carefully measuring distances and heights with accuracy.

Study the maps to inspire students to think about building a course on your farm. Show pictures of some interesting and even famous jumps and obstacles found at courses in Maryland and around the world. Explain symbols, numbering, how to follow course direction, and water features.



Fair Hill Cross Country Course Map

Discuss specific characteristics of the natural landscape of your farm that make it well-suited for a cross-country course. Point out the different materials used to construct obstacles and jumps. Some materials are natural such as logs and hedging, while some materials are manmade such as poles, plastic, and brick.

Finish the tour at an area that has been set aside for the next activity, well clear of horses and riders. Students are about to design their own course!



Divide students into pairs or threes. Give each team a clipboard with a new map attached. The new map is of the sample course they will help construct. Assign each team a numbered jump or obstacle from the map which shows the height or width of the jump to be constructed there. Give each team a tape measure. Announce that they will help to build a cross-country course for their own class to run!

Explain that the building activity is not the race - any materials taken from the main supply should be returned if they decide not to use them. Teams should not hoard materials.

*Stress security and stability of the built obstacles, that you and farm staff volunteers will offer advice on how to make their constructions safe and sound. Point out that footing is important, that students consider whether the ground is hard or springy in the approach and landing areas.*

Ceremoniously pull a large tarp off of a materials collection. Have a variety of building materials assembled, both natural and man made. Logs, poles, hay bales, cloth, pumpkins (in season), boxes, rope, buckets, beams, cardboard boxes can all be used. Ask an adult chaperone to monitor the collection during the building activity.

Allow students ample time to build and try out their jumps. When the class has finished assemble everyone at the start. Ask for five student volunteers to run and jump the the course while being timed. Have students average the finish times and announce a reasonable course time to finish. Teams can now compete for finish times!

You may want to ask an adult chaperone or farm staff to help with timing the teams. Have fun and celebrate as course records are broken!



It's time to dismantle the course. But before students begin taking things apart, ask each team to describe three things they learned about cross-country events today. No repeats between groups. Release the teams to dismantle their jumps and obstacles when all teams have contributed.

Personally, invite students to return to the farm to attend an event. If you offer camps, lessons, volunteer opportunities, then sincerely offer the experience to the students. Do you have a coupon to share? Do you have an informational brochure or event program you can send home with them? Thank them for coming out to the farm today!