History and Social Studies | Unit 2

Day 1: Maps show places

A map is a drawing or picture that shows selected places and features. A map can show a classroom, neighborhood, state, or a larger area. Mapmakers choose what to include, so a map does not show everything.

A map title tells what the map is about. A map key, also called a legend, explains what symbols mean. A symbol is a mark or picture that stands for something else. A blue line might stand for a river if the map key says so.

Imagine a map with a star for a school and a blue line for a river. The star is a symbol for the school. The real school is a place, not a star drawn on paper. This is an imaginary map.

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Day 1: Maps show places

Practice: Questions 1–4. Read the lesson first.

1. What is a map?

2. What does a map title tell?

3. What does a map key explain?

4. What is a symbol?

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Day 1: Maps show places

Practice: Questions 5–8. Read the lesson first.

5. On the imaginary map, what does the star stand for?

6. On the imaginary map, what does the blue line stand for?

7. Is the star itself the real school?

8. Does a map show every detail of a place?

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Day 2: Directions

A compass rose or north arrow shows directions on a map. The four main directions are north, south, east and west. On a map with north at the top, south is at the bottom, east is to the right, and west is to the left. Check the north arrow because maps can be turned.

Imagine a north-up map. A park is above a library. The park is north of the library, and the library is south of the park. A school to the right of the library is east of the library.

Practice by drawing a small map and marking north. Add a square for a library and a circle above it for a park. Label your symbols in a key. This is a model, not a map of a real neighborhood.

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Day 2: Directions

Practice: Questions 1–4. Read the lesson first.

1. Name the four main directions.

2. On a north-up map, which direction is at the top?

3. Which direction is at the bottom?

4. Which direction is to the right?

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Day 2: Directions

Practice: Questions 5–8. Read the lesson first.

5. Which direction is to the left?

6. In the imaginary map, is the park north or south of the library?

7. Is the library north or south of the park?

8. Why should you check the north arrow?

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Day 3: Alabama and its places

Alabama is a state in the United States. It has cities, towns, rivers, hills, forests and a coast along the Gulf of Mexico. A city is a community where people live and work. A river is a natural flow of water.

The Tennessee River crosses north Alabama. A map can help us find the river and nearby communities, but a map by itself does not tell us whether the water is safe to enter or drink. Ask a grown-up and use current local information.

Physical features are parts of the natural landscape, such as rivers and hills. Human-made features include roads and buildings. People use maps to locate both kinds of features.

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Day 3: Alabama and its places

Practice: Questions 1–4. Read the lesson first.

1. What country includes Alabama?

2. Is Alabama a state or a country?

3. Name a natural feature found in Alabama.

4. Which river crosses north Alabama?

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Day 3: Alabama and its places

Practice: Questions 5–8. Read the lesson first.

5. Is a river natural or human-made?

6. Is a road natural or human-made?

7. Does a map alone prove river water is safe to drink?

8. Name one use for a map.

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Day 4: Map scale and distance

A map is smaller than the place it shows. A scale helps tell how map distance relates to ground distance. For this imaginary map, suppose 1 inch on the map stands for 2 miles on the ground.

Worked example: A line that measures 2 inches on this imaginary map stands for 4 miles, because 2 groups of 2 miles make 4 miles. A 3-inch line stands for 6 miles. These are practice numbers, not measured distances between real places.

A straight line on a map may not follow the roads people travel. Use the scale printed on the map you are reading, and check whether the map has been resized.

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Day 4: Map scale and distance

Practice: Questions 1–4. Read the lesson first.

1. What does a map scale help us compare?

2. In the imaginary scale, 1 inch stands for how many miles?

3. At that scale, 2 inches stands for how many miles?

4. At that scale, 3 inches stands for how many miles?

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Day 4: Map scale and distance

Practice: Questions 5–8. Read the lesson first.

5. Are the example distances measurements between real places?

6. Does a straight line always follow a road?

7. What should you check on the map before measuring?

8. Why are the map and the real place different sizes?

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Day 5: Independent map check

Use what you learned about maps. For questions 6 and 7, use this imaginary scale: 1 inch on the map stands for 2 miles on the ground. A grown-up may read directions aloud.

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Day 5: Independent map check

Practice: Questions 1–4. Read the lesson first.

1. What does a map key explain?

2. On a north-up map, which direction is at the top?

3. On a north-up map, which direction is to the right?

4. Is a river a natural feature or a human-made feature?

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Day 5: Independent map check

Practice: Questions 5–8. Read the lesson first.

5. Name the river that crosses north Alabama.

6. At the imaginary scale, how many miles does 1 inch represent?

7. At that scale, how many miles do 2 inches represent?

8. Explain why a star on a map can stand for a school but is not the real school.