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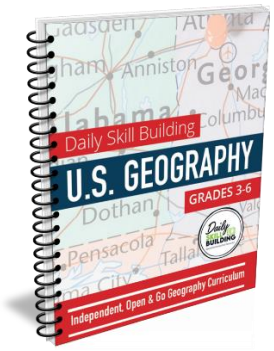
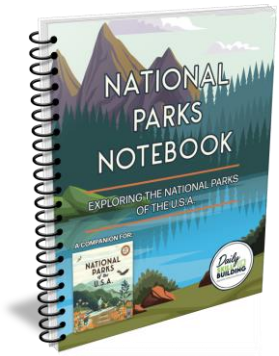
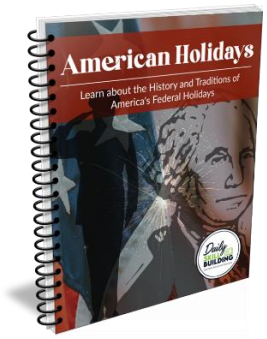
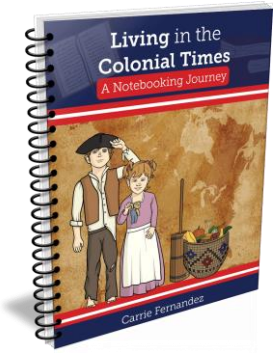
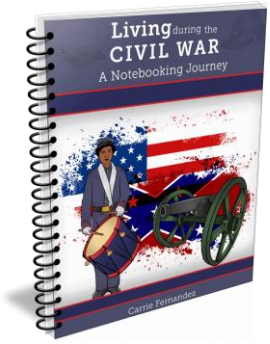
Easy-to-Use, Open & Go Homeschool Resources
That Make Homeschooling Easier!

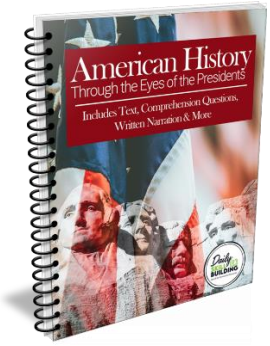


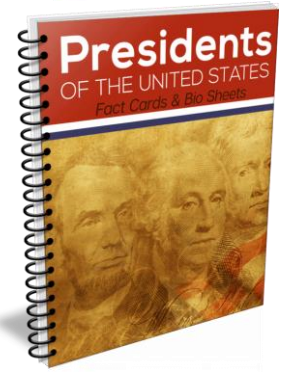


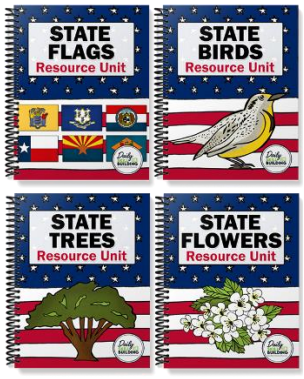


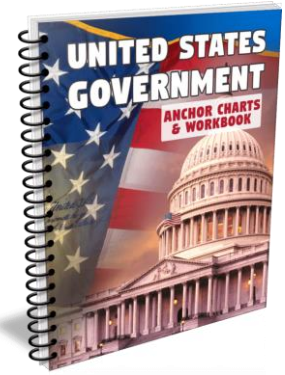












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Types of Maps

Maps are an important part of our lives. We use them to plan road trips, learn about history, understand what we hear on the news, know what kind of weather to expect, and more. Whether we use a printed map or GPS, the job of a map is the same—to give us information about a geographic area. That area could be a town, a state, a country, or the entire world.

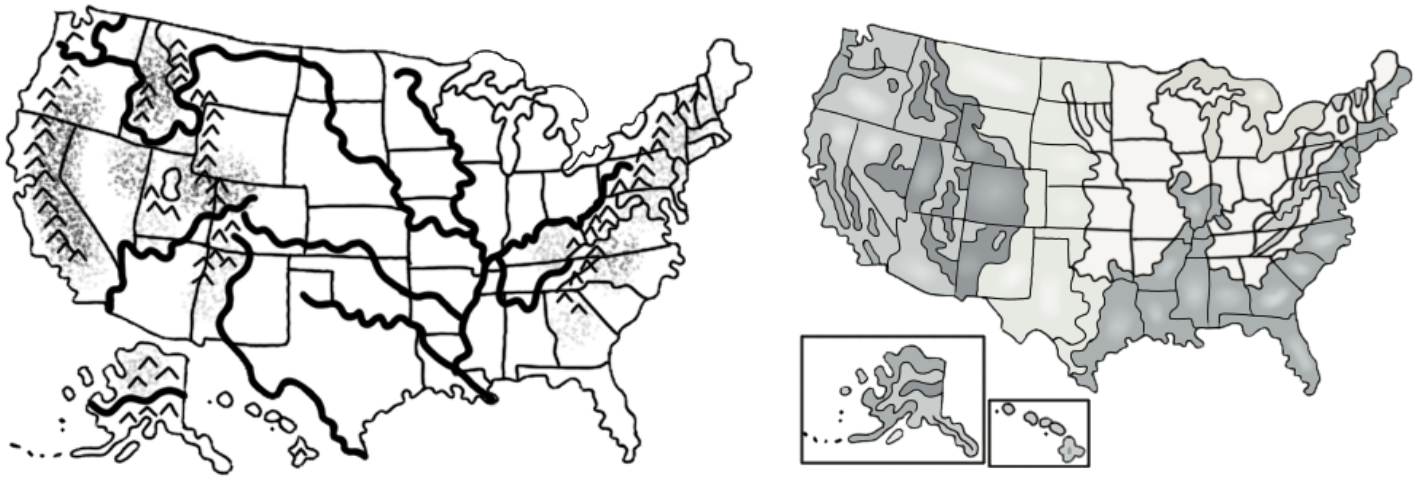
Obviously to do this many jobs, we need many different kinds of maps. One of the types we're most familiar with is a political map. A political map is a general reference map that shows man-made boundaries such as states or countries. It usually also shows bodies of water, as they are a key part of determining boundaries.

Political Map

An historical map just shows the history of a place. These can be especially helpful if you have several historical maps of the same place. They let you see how borders have changed over time. This historical map does that by adding dates to the sections of the map.

Historical Map

Physical maps may show boundaries like political maps, but a physical map's focus is the land itself. It may show mountains, rivers, and other similar features, and it may be color-coded to show the various elevations in an area, using green for the parts of the country that are lower, such as coastal areas, brown for mountains and higher elevations, and various shades in between.



Physical Maps

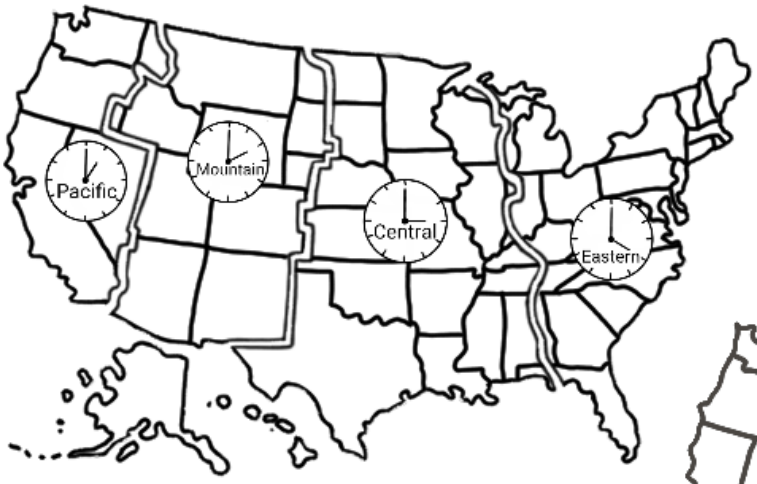
We see weather maps all the time. They show the weather that is forecasted for an area, such as sunshine, clouds, or rain. They also show things like cold fronts or warm fronts.

A climate map shows the overall weather patterns for an area. It doesn't show specific weather but shows what the overall conditions are like in an area. Depending on where you are in the world, there may be climate maps for different seasons. They can reflect average temperatures, rainfall, or other conditions.

Weather Map

Climate Map

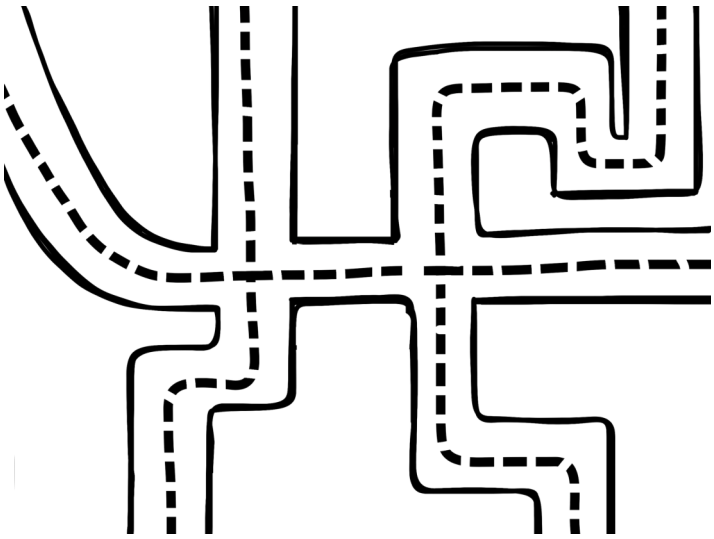
There are many other types of maps. In fact, you could create a map to show almost any information related to a geographical area. There are time zone maps that show the boundaries of established time zones and transportation maps. Transportation maps show things such as roads, railroad lines, routes for airplanes, etc.



Time Zone Map

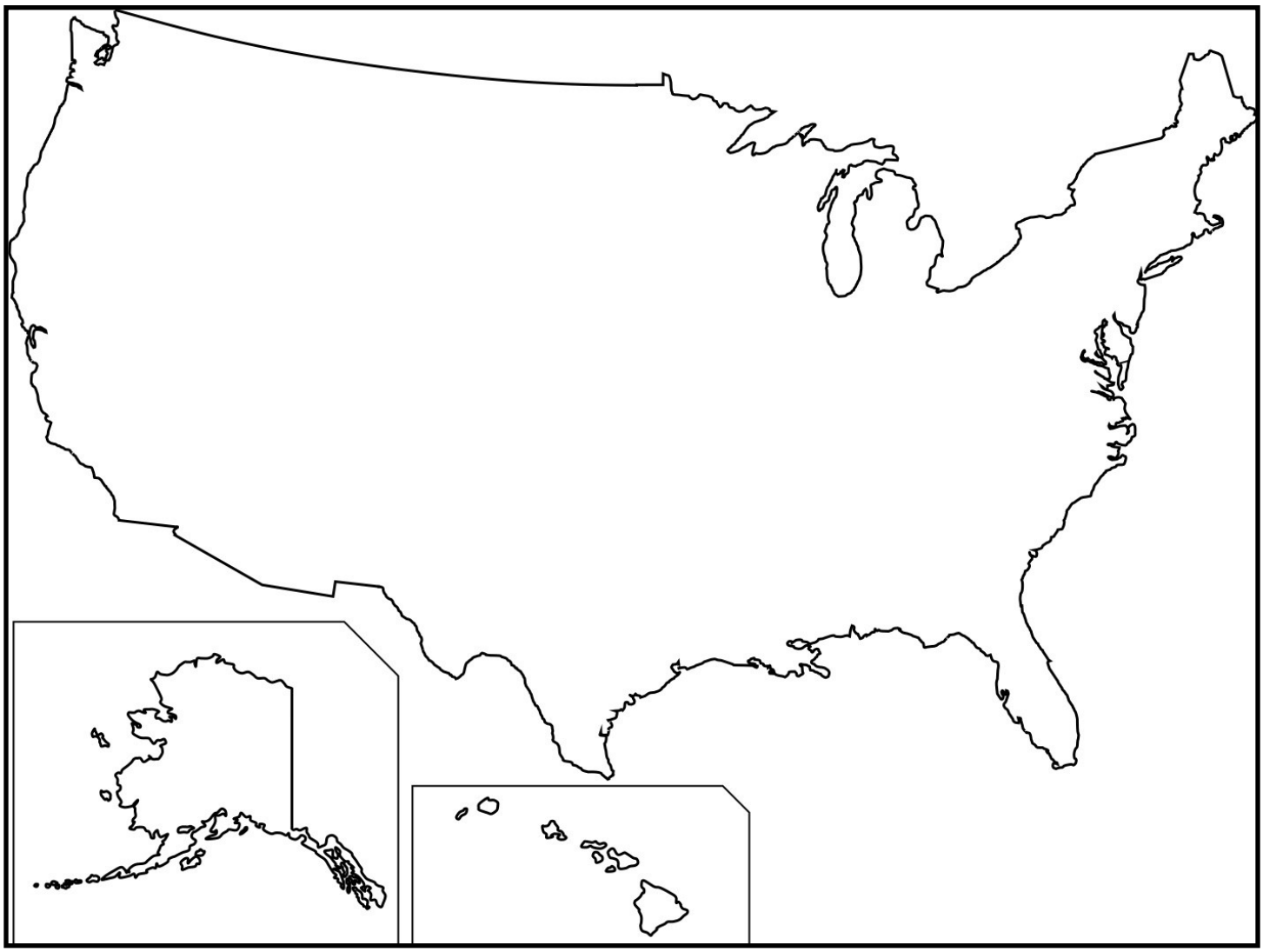
Transportation Map

And of course, there are street maps with streets and roads labeled for nearly every town and city so you can find your way from one place to another.



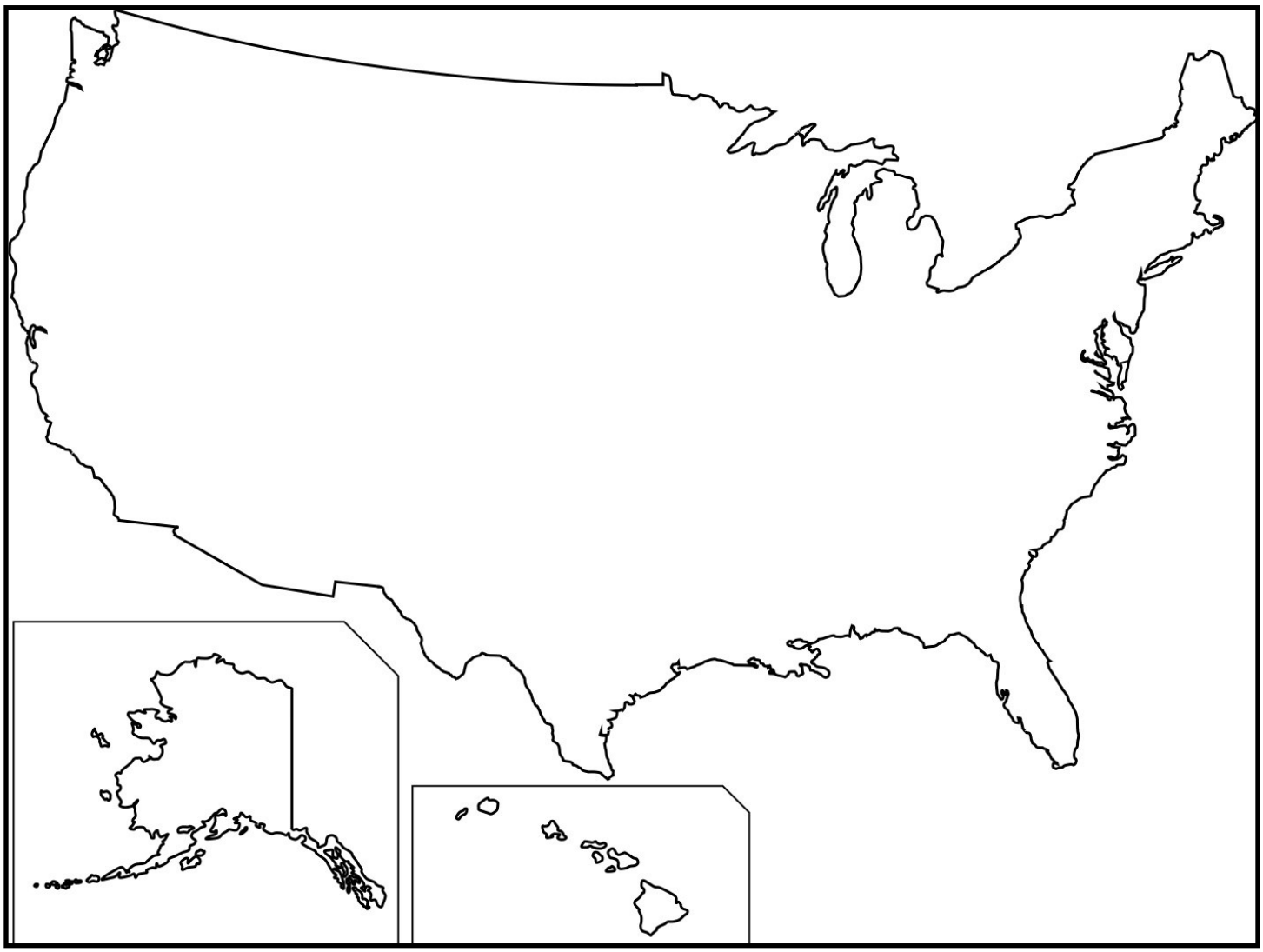
Political Map

Draw what is missing from the map below to make this map a political map.



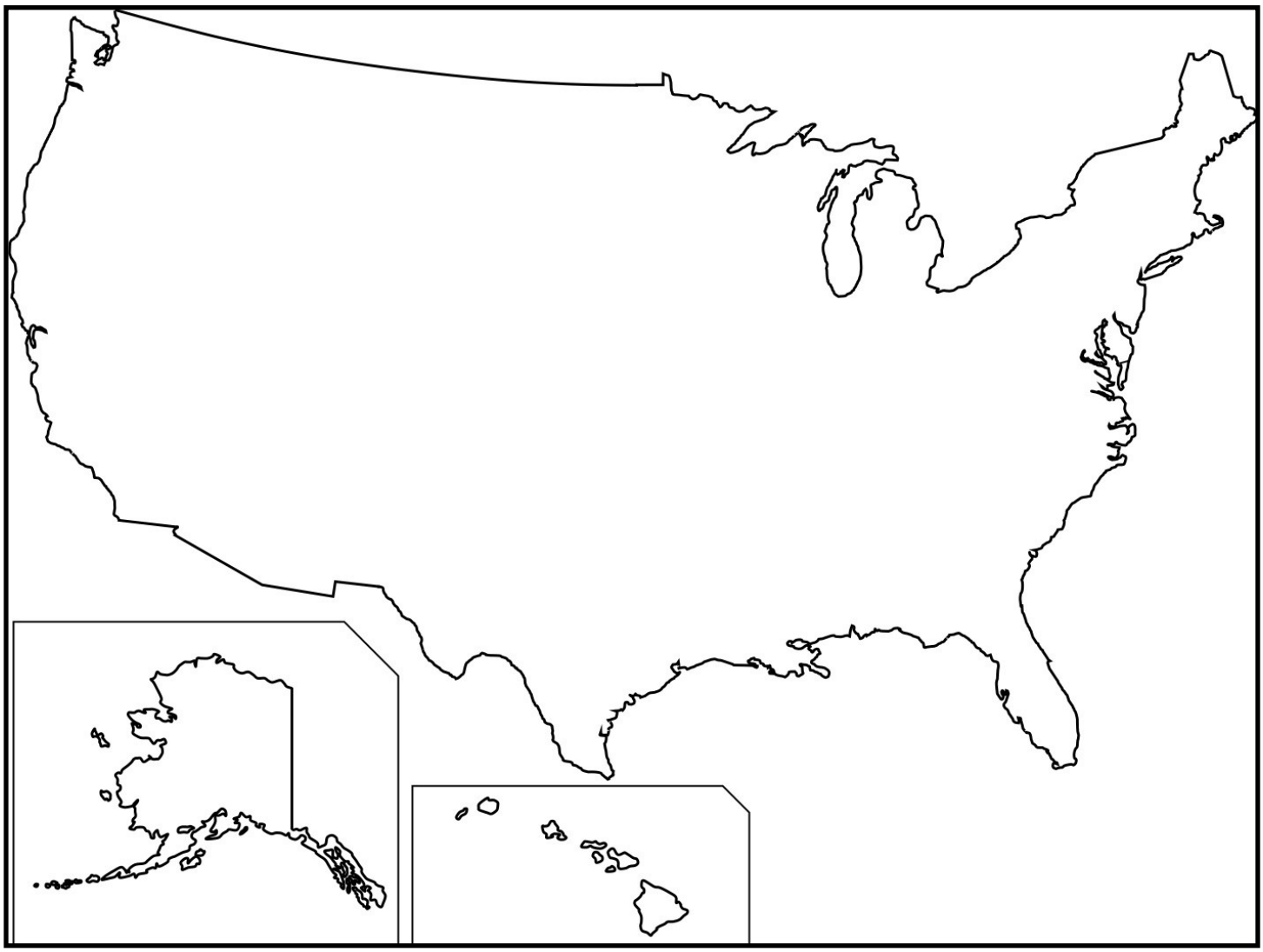
Physical Map

Draw what is missing from the map below to make this map a physical map.



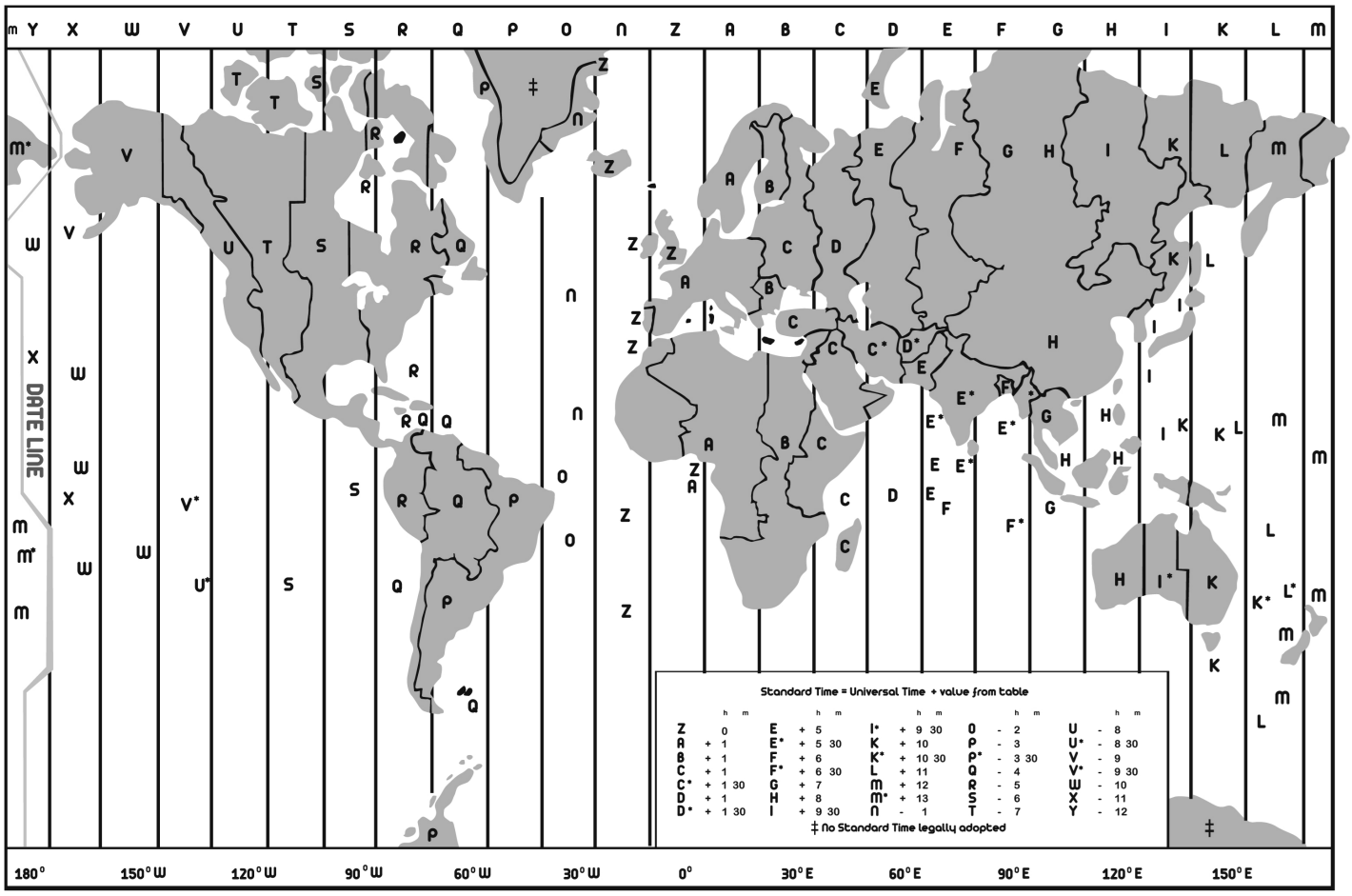
Weather Map

Create your own weather map below. Write a short forecast at the bottom of the page.



Time Zone Map

Choose two cities in the world and mark them on the map. Next, choose a time for the first city and calculate the time in the second city using the map below. Repeat for six additional cities.



City 1: _____

Time chosen: _____

City 2: _____

Time: _____

City 1: _____

Time chosen: _____

City 2: _____

Time: _____

City 1: _____

Time chosen: _____

City 2: _____

Time: _____

City 1: _____

Time chosen: _____

City 2: _____

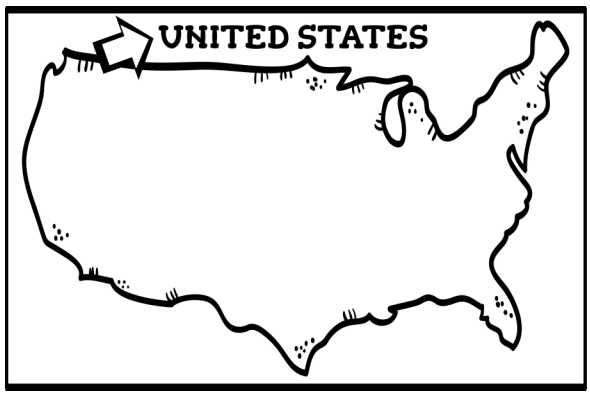
Time: _____

Parts of a Map

For all their differences, there are some things that most maps have in common. They usually all have a title, data frame, scale, legend, and compass rose. Many also have a north arrow and latitude and longitude. Some have a map index, and some have inset maps.

Title

We'll start with the title. This may seem a bit obvious, or even unnecessary, but a title can be very important. It tells you at a quick glance what you are looking at. You may recognize the United States when you see it on a map, but what if you were looking at an elevation map of the Andes Mountains? Or a map of flooding along the Mississippi River? Would the information those maps were communicating be as obvious at first glance?

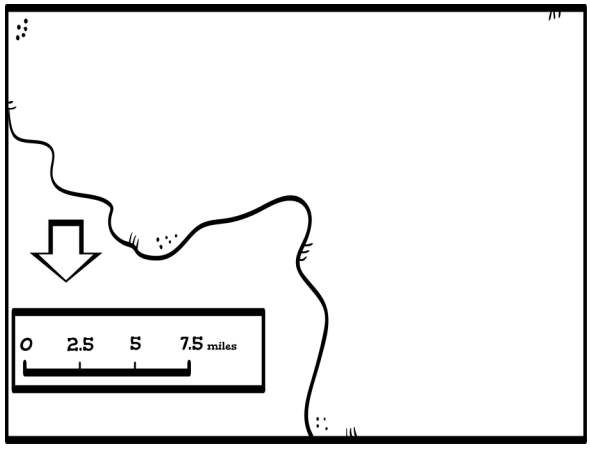


Data Frame

You see data frames all the time, but you probably don't think of them by that name. A data frame is simply the representation of the information. On the map of Europe at the right, the data frame is the drawing of Europe. In the map above of the United States, the data frame is the drawing of the United States.

Scale

The scale of a map can be extremely important. Imagine you are a tourist in a big city. You can fold up a street map small enough that it fits in your bag or your pocket. But without a scale, you have no way of knowing how far it is from one place to another. You could find yourself walking for miles! A scale shows what distance on the map represents a distance, such as a mile, in real life.

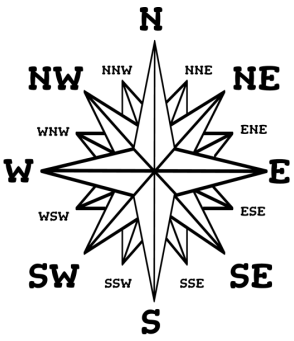


Legend

A map legend is the key to the map. It unlocks the meaning of the map by showing what the symbols on the map mean. In the case of a street map, the legend might look like the image on the right. It shows you how to quickly find a hotel, a police station, a post office, gas or car repairs, a hospital, etc. In the case of a physical map, it would show what the various colors represent.

Compass Rose

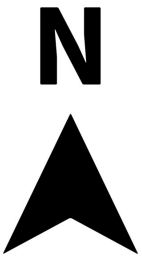
The compass rose is an important part of a map. It shows the four cardinal directions—north, south, east, and west. It may also show any number of other directions such as northeast, southwest, etc. Without it, you would have no way of knowing what direction to head.



Have you ever had your GPS or a set of directions tell you to “head east” when you are leaving a parking lot and have no idea whether that means to turn left or right? Thankfully, most of the time, the GPS or directions will also tell you whether to turn left or right, but keep in mind that GPS and the kinds of directions we’re used to having today haven’t always been around. When Daniel Boone pioneered trails and told others how to follow him, he had to use directions they could determine by the position of the sun and other factors.

North Arrow

You don’t find a north arrow on all maps, but when you do, its purpose is to help you align the map to north. It helps you know how to hold the map so that what the map shows as east is really east. Imagine you are standing on a street corner holding a map. The map shows the place you want to go is east of you and indicates you should turn right. But wait. Turn around and face the opposite direction. Now if you turn right, you’ll be headed in the opposite direction. But the map still shows east on your right. That’s why holding the map in the right direction is so important. By lining up the north arrow with what is actually north, you can stay on track and not end up going the wrong way.



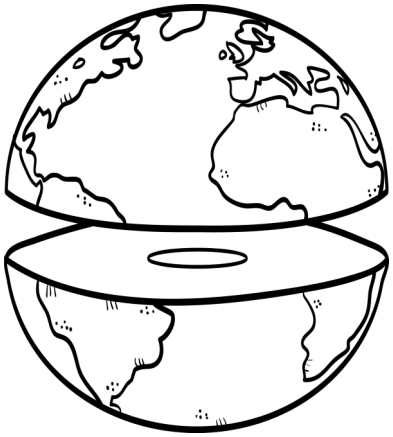
Latitude

If you look at a globe or many types of flat maps that show a large area such as a continent or the entire world, you'll probably see lines (called parallels) of latitude. In order to make navigation over long distances possible, people created a grid of imaginary lines that covers the entire world. Using this grid allows people to pinpoint locations hundreds or thousands of miles away and navigate to them. Parallels of latitude are the lines that go around the planet east and west. The main parallel of latitude used for reference is the equator. Its latitude is 0°. Latitude is calculated north or south of the equator. The North Pole is 90° north, and the South Pole is 90° south.

Longitude

Longitude is the other half of the grid system that we use for navigation. It is made of lines (called meridians) of longitude that circle the planet north and south. They cut the earth into 360 pieces, one for each degree of a circle. Longitude is calculated east and west of the prime meridian, the line of longitude that passes through Greenwich, England. If you count 74° west longitude, the line you stop at passes through New York City and many other places as well.

Hemispheres

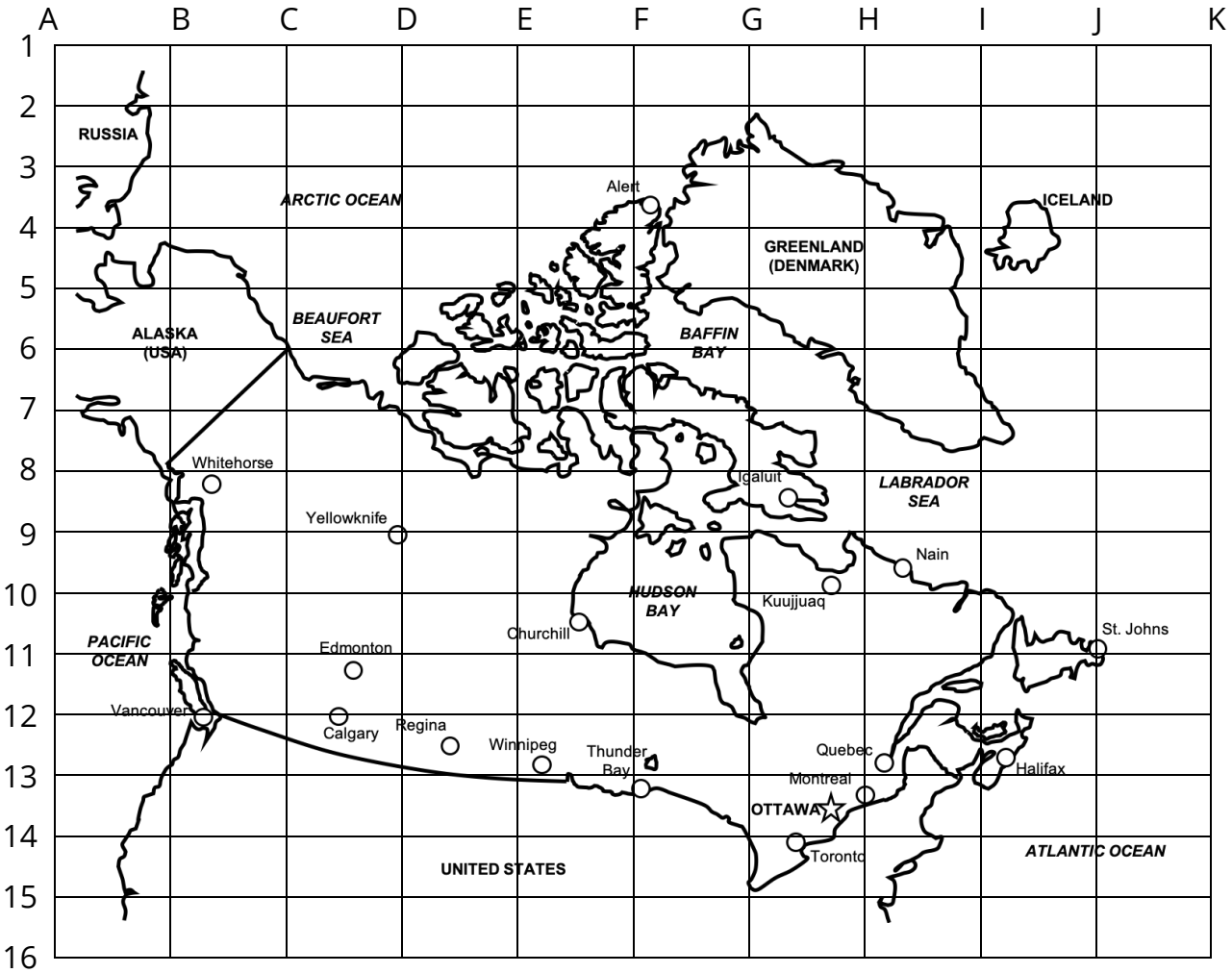


While we're on the subject of latitude and longitude, these lines are also what determine the hemispheres. A hemisphere is simply half of a sphere. The equator divides the earth into the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. The Eastern and Western Hemispheres aren't as easily separated, but most geographers set the dividing lines at 20° west longitude and 160° east longitude. This puts Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia in the Eastern Hemisphere, or Old World, and North and South America in the Western Hemisphere, or New World.

Map Index

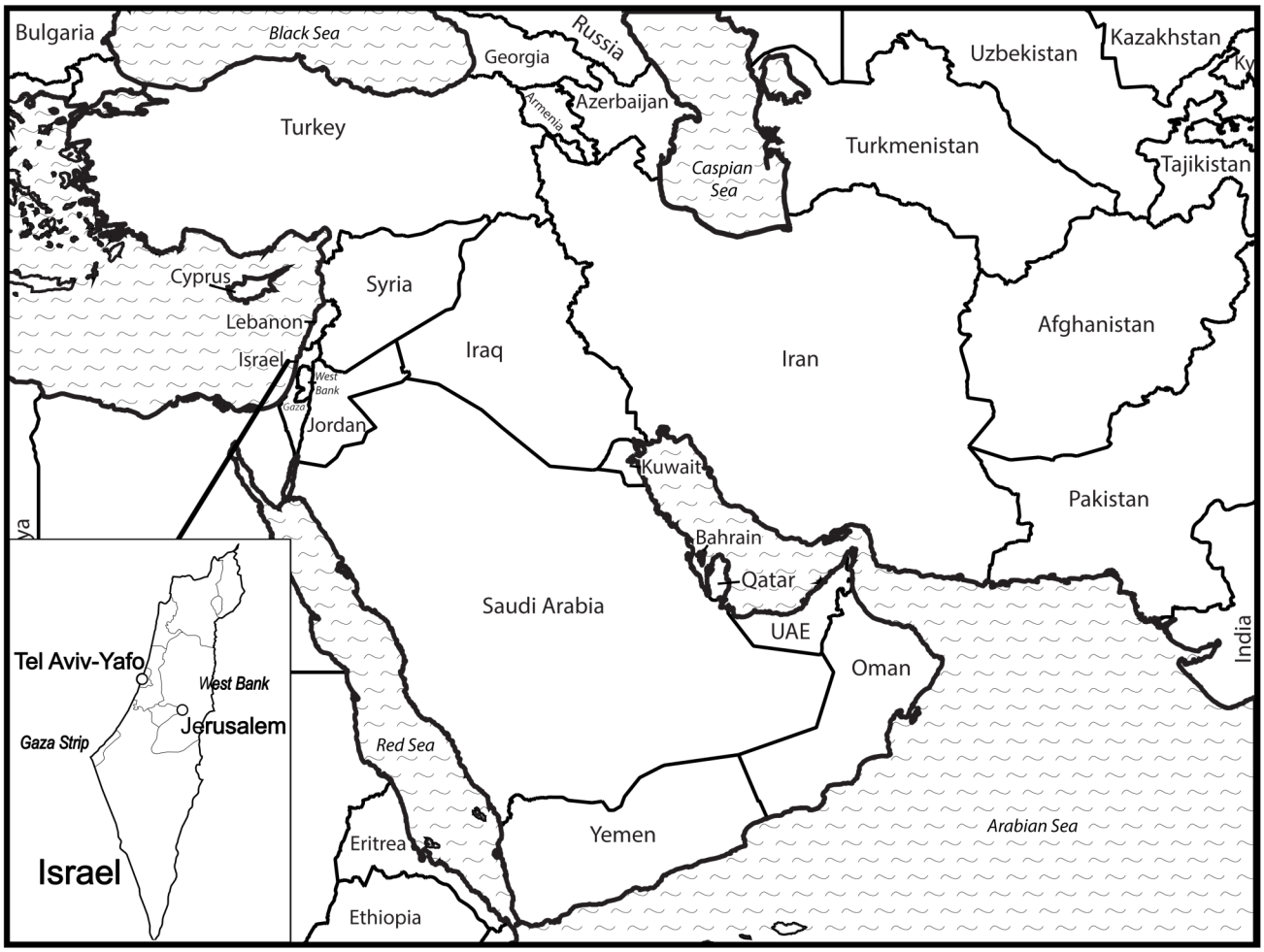
If you know the latitude and longitude of a place, you can find its exact location. For example, New York City is 40.730610, -73.935242. However, if you're looking at a map of New York and want to figure out where New York City is, those numbers are much more detail than you probably need. That is why many maps also include a map index. This is a simple way to show the coordinates of locations on that specific map. You couldn't use those coordinates to tell someone in another country how to navigate to New York City, but you could use it to find the city on a specific map.

For example, a map index for the map below would show that St. Johns is J-11 and that Yellowknife is D-9. By finding those two coordinates on the map, you could quickly locate both cities.



Inset Map

An inset map is used whenever the mapmaker wants to show more detail on an area than what can be shown on the main map. It could be used to spotlight a city, a country, a recreational area, or any other feature. This map of the Middle East has an inset of a map of Israel.



Create Your Own Map

We've talked about a lot of different maps and ways we can use them. On the next page, draw your own map. It can be of anything you like, but try to include as many of the following parts as you can: title, data frame, scale, legend, compass rose, north arrow, coordinates for a map index, a map index, and an inset map. For this map, it is OK if your scale is not a true scale. Just draw one to show what a scale is and how it is used.

Latitude and Longitude

Using an atlas, or an online resource with a parent's permission, find the approximate latitude and longitude of ten cities and record what you find below.

City: _____
Country located in: _____
Latitude: _____
Longitude: _____

City: _____
Country located in: _____
Latitude: _____
Longitude: _____

City: _____
Country located in: _____
Latitude: _____
Longitude: _____

City: _____
Country located in: _____
Latitude: _____
Longitude: _____

City: _____
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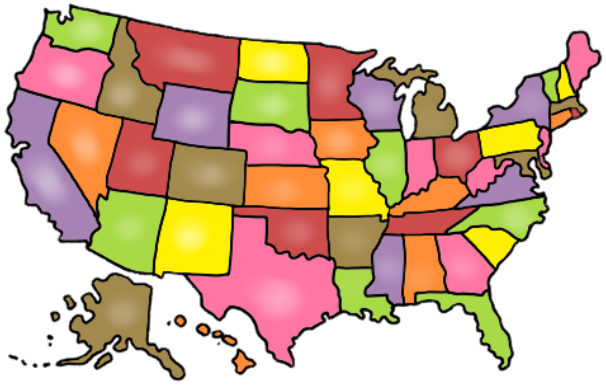
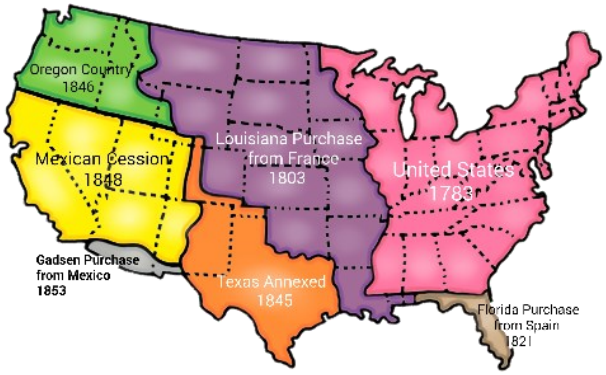
City: _____
Country located in: _____
Latitude: _____
Longitude: _____



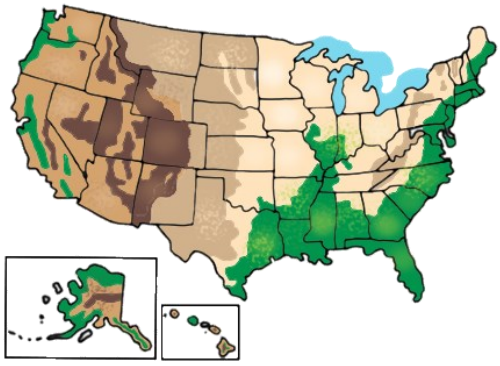
Political Map

a general reference map that shows man-made boundaries such as states or countries and often also shows bodies of water



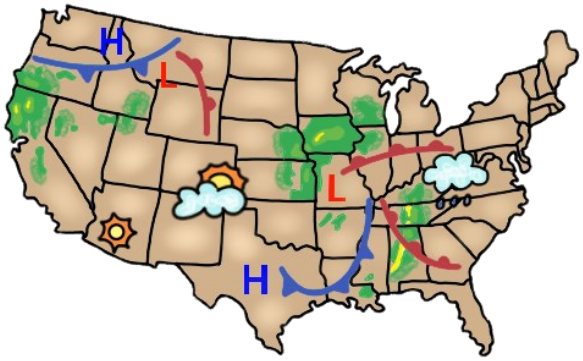
Historical Map

shows the history of a place and how borders have changed over time



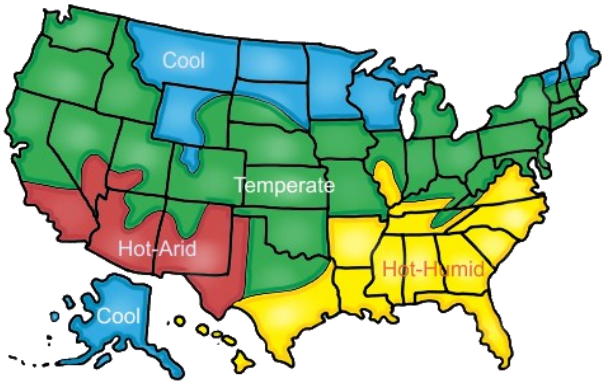
Physical Map

may show boundaries like political maps but focuses on the land itself such as mountains, rivers, elevations, and other physical features



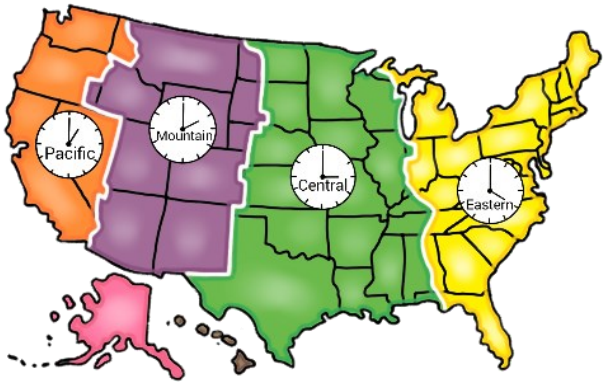
Weather Map

shows the weather that is forecasted for an area



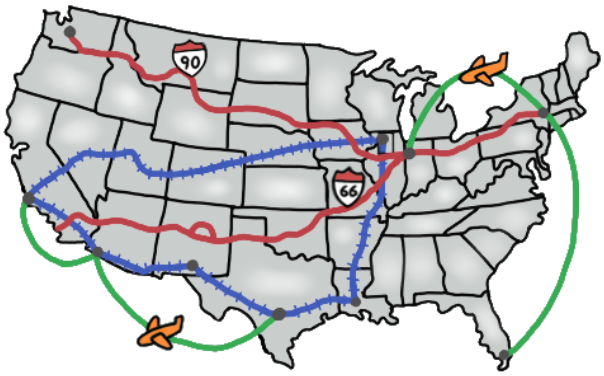
Climate Map

shows the overall weather patterns for an area; can reflect average temperatures, rainfall, or other conditions



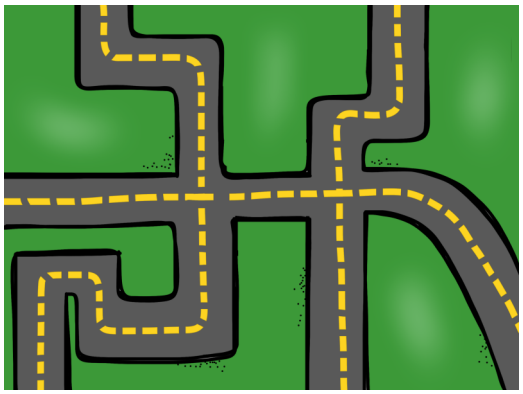
Time Zone Map

shows the boundaries of established time zones



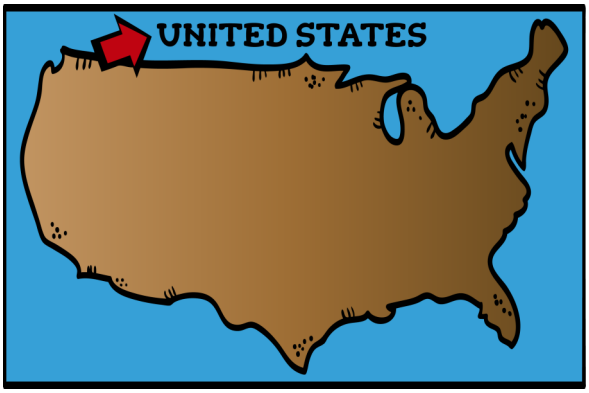
Transportation Map

shows things such as roads, railroad lines, routes for airplanes, etc.



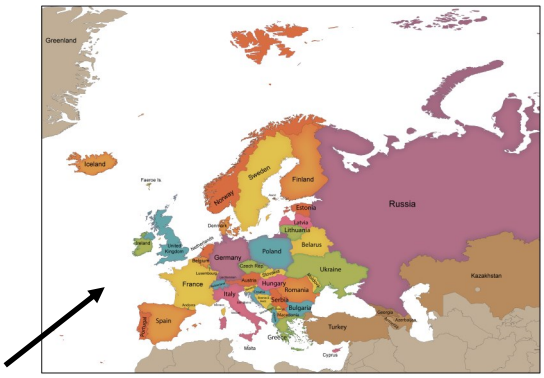
Street Map

show labeled streets and roads



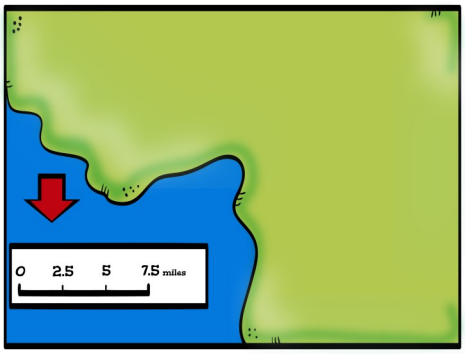
Map Title

tells you at a quick glance
what you are looking at



Data Frame

the representation of the information

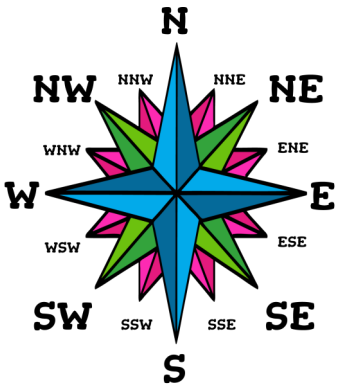


Scale

shows what distance on the map
represents a distance, such as
a mile, in real life

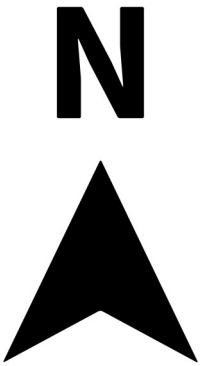
Legend

the key to the map showing what
the symbols on the map mean



Compass Rose

shows the four cardinal directions—north, south, east, and west



North Arrow

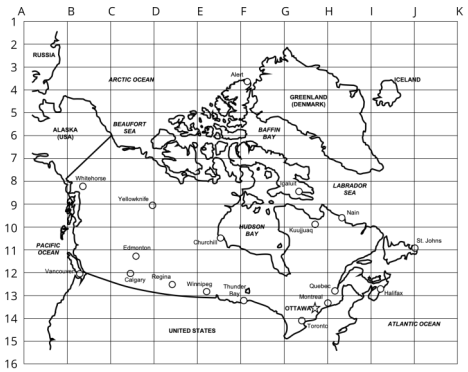
purpose is to help you align the map to north

Latitude

lines that go around the planet east and west

Longitude

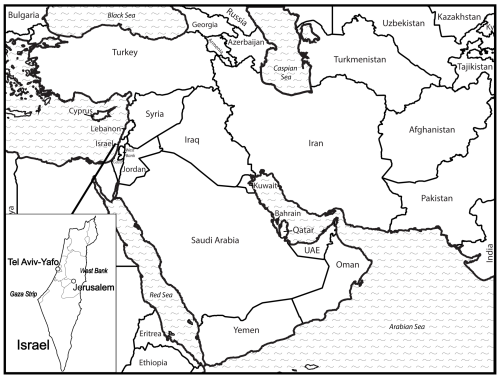
lines that go around the planet north and south



St. Johns is J11; Yellowknife D9

Map Index

a simple way to show the coordinates of locations on a specific map



Inset Map

used to show more detail about a specific area

_____


Oregon Country
1846
Louisiana Purchase
from France
1803
Mexican Cession
1848
United States
1783
Gadsen Purchase
from Mexico
1853
Texas Annexed
1845
Florida Purchase
from Spain
1821

_____

_____


H
L
L
H

_____


Cool
Temperate
Hot-Arid
Hot-Humid
Cool

_____

_____

_____

_____

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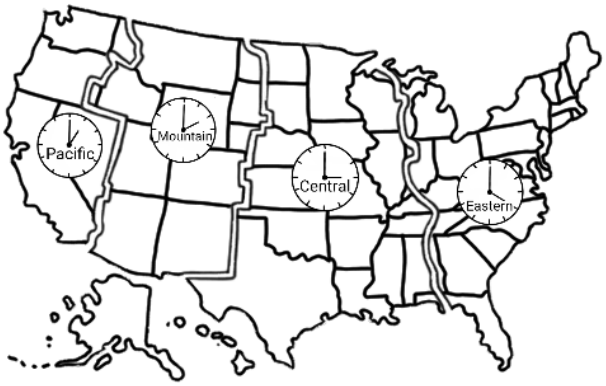
Pacific
Mountain
Central
Eastern

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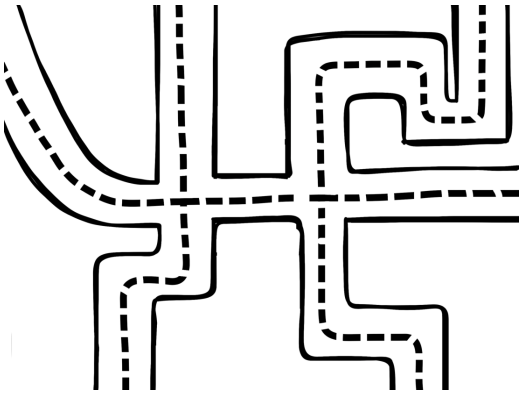

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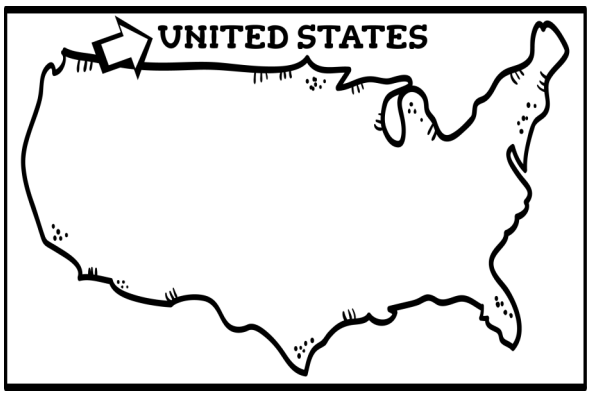
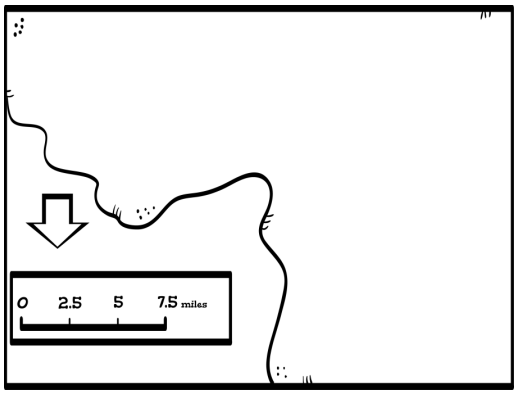
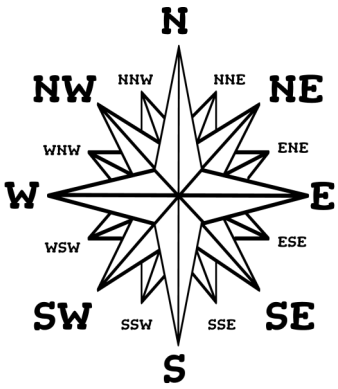

UNITED STATES


Greenland
Iceland
Sweden
Finland
Russia
Estonia
Latvia
Lithuania
Belarus
Poland
Germany
Ukraine
France
Hungary
Romania
Italy
Spain
Turkey
Kazakhstan


0 2.5 5 7.5 miles


MAP LEGEND
FOREST
WATER
HOTEL
POLICE STATION
POST OFFICE
SERVICE STATION
HOSPITAL



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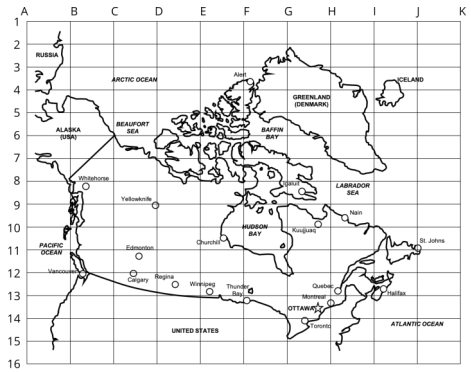
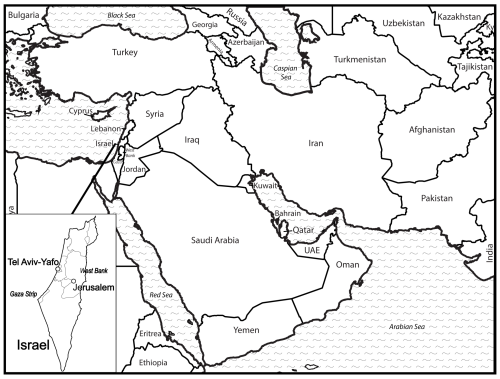

A B C D E F G H I J K
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
RUSSIA
ARCTIC OCEAN
ICELAND
GREENLAND (DENMARK)
ALASKA (USA)
BEAUFORT SEA
BAFFIN BAY
Alert
Whitehorse
Yellowknife
Iqaluit
LABRADOR SEA
Nain
HUDSON BAY
Kuujjuaq
PACIFIC OCEAN
Edmonton
Churchill
St. Johns
Vancouver
Calgary
Regina
Winnipeg
Thunder Bay
Quebec
Montreal
Halifax
OTTAWA
Toronto
UNITED STATES
ATLANTIC OCEAN


Bulgaria
Black Sea
Georgia
Russia
Azerbaijan
Uzbekistan
Kazakhstan
Turkey
Caspian Sea
Turkmenistan
Tajikistan
Cyprus
Syria
Lebanon
Israel
Iraq
Iran
Afghanistan
Jordan
Kuwait
Pakistan
Bahrain
Qatar
Saudi Arabia
UAE
Oman
India
Tel Aviv-Yafo
West Bank
Jerusalem
Gaza Strip
Red Sea
Yemen
Eritrea
Arabian Sea
Ethiopia
Israel