

YEAR 5 FEATURES OF MAPS, ATLASES, AND GLOBES



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Maps, atlases, and globes are tools that help us understand the world around us. They show us where places are located, help us find our way, and teach us about different countries and continents. Each of these tools has unique features that make them useful in different situations.

WHAT IS A MAP?

A map is a flat, two-dimensional picture of the world or a specific area. It shows different places, roads, rivers, mountains, and other features in a simplified way. Maps can be used to explore cities, countries, or even the entire world. They often include symbols, lines, and colours to represent various features.

- **Symbols:** Maps use small pictures or symbols to represent real objects, such as trees, buildings, or rivers. For example, a blue line on a map usually represents a river.
- **Scale:** The scale on a map shows how the distance on the map relates to the actual distance in the real world. For instance, one centimetre on the map may represent one kilometre in real life.
- **Compass Rose:** Most maps have a compass rose that shows directions such as North, South, East, and West. This helps you understand where things are located relative to one another.

WHAT IS AN ATLAS?

An atlas is a collection of maps, often organised by country or region. It can include maps of the world, continents, countries, cities, and even more detailed maps of specific areas. An atlas might also include extra information, such as facts about each country, its population, and important landmarks.

- **Variety of Maps:** An atlas includes many different types of maps, such as political maps, which show boundaries between countries, and physical maps, which show natural features like mountains and rivers.
- **Charts and Graphs:** Some atlases also include charts and graphs to show population numbers, climate, or other useful information about different areas.



- **Index:** Most atlases have an index at the back. This is a list of place names, so you can quickly find the map you need by looking up the place you are interested in.

WHAT IS A GLOBE?

A globe is a three-dimensional, spherical model of the Earth. Unlike a map, which is flat, a globe is round, just like the Earth. It shows the Earth's continents, oceans, and countries in their true shapes and sizes.

- **Accurate Representation:** A globe is often more accurate than a map because it represents the world in 3D, so there is no distortion in the shape of the continents or oceans.
- **Rotation:** Globes can be spun, which helps you understand the movement of the Earth. You can see how the Earth rotates, which causes day and night.
- **Latitude and Longitude:** Globes use lines of latitude and longitude to show exact locations. Latitude lines run from east to west and measure distances north and south of the Equator. Longitude lines run from north to south and measure distances east and west of the Prime Meridian.

WHEN SHOULD YOU USE EACH TOOL?

Each tool is best suited for different purposes:

- **Maps:** Maps are great when you need to focus on a specific area, such as a city or country. They are useful for planning a trip or navigating through unfamiliar places.
- **Atlases:** Atlases are helpful when you want to learn about many places at once. They give you a broad view of the world and are good for school projects or general exploration.
- **Globes:** Globes are excellent for understanding the Earth as a whole. They are helpful for learning about geography, the way continents fit together, and the size of countries and oceans.

CONCLUSION

Maps, atlases, and globes all help us understand the world in different ways. Whether you are planning a journey, learning about different countries, or simply exploring the Earth, these tools are essential for discovering the world around us. Each one has its own unique features, so it is important to choose the right one for the task at hand.

FIND OUT MORE...

[BBC Bitesize Mapping the world](#)

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. What is the difference between a map and a globe?
2. How does a scale on a map help you understand distances?
3. Why is a compass rose important on a map?
4. What kind of information can you find in an atlas that you might not find on a map?
5. How do lines of latitude and longitude help you find locations on a globe?



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