SOCIAL STUDIES | GRADE 5 | LESSON 1

HSEA HomeSchool Education Academy

Maps: Scales and Coordinates

How to use: Print first for the main practice. Then use the device to repeat activities and save progress.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Use a map scale to estimate real distances between two places
2. Locate features on a coordinate grid using column letters and row numbers
3. Identify common map symbols by reading the map key
4. Describe the difference between large-scale and small-scale maps

MINI LESSON

Maps shrink the real world onto a flat page. Two tools tell you exactly where something is and how big it really is: the map scale tells you how distance on paper compares to distance on Earth, and the coordinate grid lets you name any spot using a letter and a number.

Map Scale

- A scale shows how a small distance on the map matches a much bigger distance in the real world.
- Bar scales draw a small ruler labelled in kilometres or miles. You measure on the page, then read the matching real distance off the bar.
- Ratio scales look like 1:100,000 — meaning every 1 unit on the map equals 100,000 of the same units in real life.
- Word scales say it plainly: "1 cm equals 5 km" or "1 inch equals 2 miles".
- A large-scale map shows a small area in great detail (one neighbourhood). A small-scale map shows a huge area with less detail (a whole continent).

Coordinate Grids

- A coordinate grid is a network of squares laid over a map.
- Columns are labelled with letters (A, B, C, ...) across the top.
- Rows are labelled with numbers (1, 2, 3, ...) down the side.
- A coordinate names the column letter first, then the row number — for example C3 means column C, row 3.
- On a printed road atlas, the index says "Riverdale C3" and the grid square is where you look.

Map Keys and Symbols

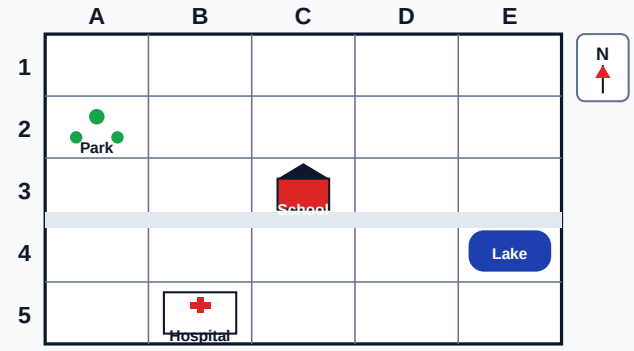
- The map key (also called the legend) lists every symbol used on the map and explains what each one means.
- A small triangle often stands for a mountain, wavy lines stand for water, and a tiny tree stands for a forest.
- Different colours can also be symbols — green for parks, blue for rivers and lakes, brown for high land.
- Always read the map key first so you know what every shape and colour represents.

! Tip: read coordinates as "letter, then number" — column first, then row. C3 is the cell where column C and row 3 cross.

VOCABULARY

scale	A tool on a map that compares map distance to real-world distance, shown as a bar, ratio, or words.
coordinate	A pair like C3 that names a column letter and row number to locate a square on a grid map.
grid	A network of equal squares laid over a map so every place can be named with a coordinate.
map key	A small box on a map that lists every symbol or colour used and explains what each one means. Also called the legend.
symbol	A small picture, shape, or colour that stands for a real feature on the map, such as a mountain or river.
large-scale map	A map that shows a small area in great detail, such as a single neighbourhood or town.
small-scale map	A map that shows a very large area with less detail, such as a country or continent.

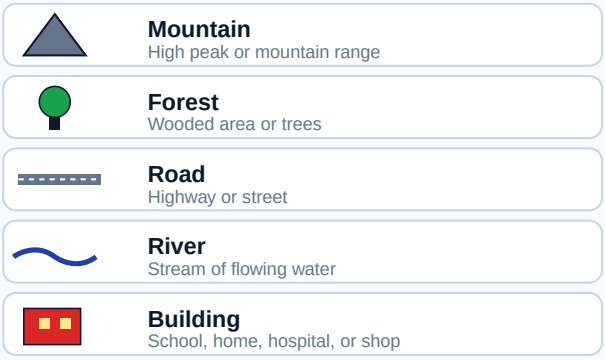
Map of Riverdale Town



Coordinates name a column letter and a row number.

Park = A2 - School = C3 - Lake = E4 - Hospital = B5

Common Map Symbols (Map Key)



Always check the map key to learn what every symbol means.

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GUIDED PRACTICE — WRITE YOUR RESPONSE

Read the prompt and use at least 5 of the vocabulary words below. Write at least 30 words.

Prompt

Write 2-3 sentences explaining what you have learned. Use at least 5 of the vocabulary words below.

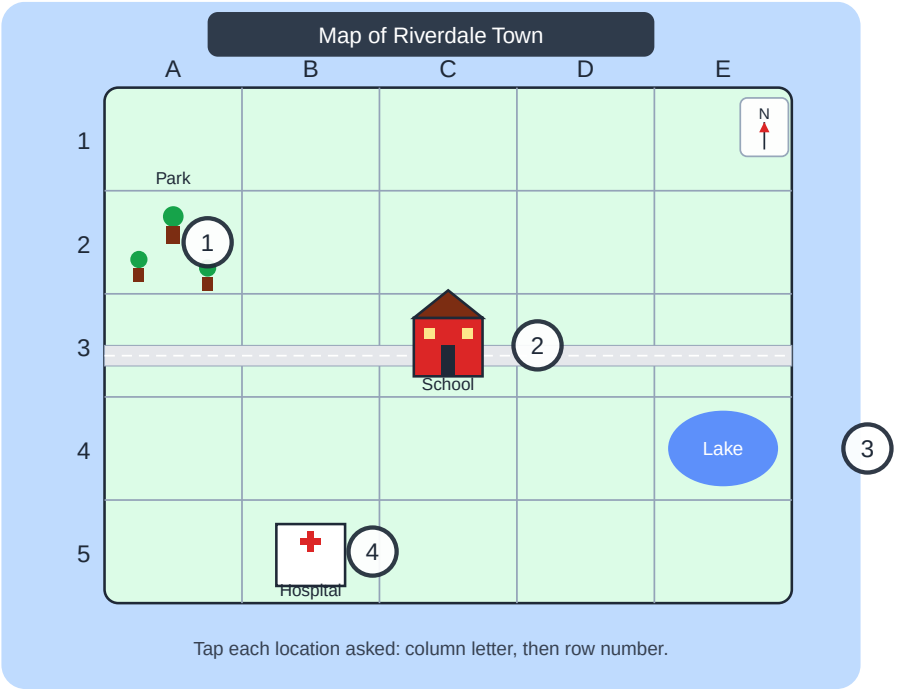
VOCABULARY — USE AT LEAST 5

scale · coordinate · grid · map key · legend · symbol · compass · distance

Write at least 30 words.

EXERCISES — LABEL THE DIAGRAM

Look at the numbered places on the diagram. Write the name of each one on the line below.



Tap each location asked: column letter, then row number.

1. .....

2. .....

3. .....

4. .....

"Flip the page upside down to see the answer key "

1. Park (A2) 2. School (C3) 3. Lake (E4) 4. Hospital (B5)

EXERCISES — FILL IN THE BLANKS

Match each map feature with the correct symbol shape from the map key. Write the symbol description on the line.

1. Mountain — _____ .
2. River — _____ .
3. Forest — _____ .
4. Road — _____ .
5. Building — _____ .
6. Lake — _____ .

"Flip the page upside down to see the answer key "

1. Small triangle 2. Wavy blue line 3. Green tree icon 4. Solid grey line 5. Filled rectangle 6. Blue rounded shape

PRACTICE — DICTATION / TYPING

Without looking, explain how to use a coordinate to find a place on a grid map.

A friend gives you the coordinate D2. Explain in your own words how you would find that square on the grid map.

Think about the column letter first, then the row number, and where they cross.

"Flip the page upside down to see the answer key "

column / row / letter / number / across / down / D / 2

EXERCISES — MATCH THE PAIRS

Match each map feature on the left with the correct symbol description on the right.

1. Mountain	**A.** Solid grey line
2. River	**B.** Filled rectangle
3. Forest	**C.** Blue rounded shape
4. Road	**D.** Small triangle
5. Building	**E.** Wavy blue line
6. Lake	**F.** Green tree icon

Write the matching letter next to each number (e.g. 1-B, 2-A, 3-C...).

1 — ____ 2 — ____ 3 — ____ 4 — ____ 5 — ____ 6 — ____

"Flip the page upside down to see the answer key "

1-D 2-E 3-F 4-A 5-B 6-C

EXERCISES — MULTIPLE CHOICE

Circle the best answer.

1. A map shows "1 cm equals 5 km". Two towns are 4 cm apart on the map. How far apart are they in real life?

- ◯ 5 km
- ◯ 20 km
- ◯ 9 km

2. On a coordinate grid, what does the coordinate B4 tell you?

- ◯ Row B, column 4
- ◯ Column B, row 4
- ◯ The fourth letter of the alphabet

3. Which type of map shows the smallest area in the greatest detail?

- ◯ A small-scale map
- ◯ A large-scale map
- ◯ A world map

4. What is the purpose of a map key?

- ◯ To unlock the map
- ◯ To explain what each symbol on the map means
- ◯ To show where north is

5. A scale of 1:100,000 means that one unit on the map equals how many of the same units in real life?

- ◯ 100
- ◯ 1,000
- ◯ 100,000

6. On a town map, the lake is at coordinate E4 and the school is at C3. Which is true?

- ◯ They are in the same column.
- ◯ They are in the same row.
- ◯ They are in different rows and different columns.

7. Which scale type uses a small ruler drawn on the map to measure distance?

- ◯ Bar scale
- ◯ Ratio scale
- ◯ Word scale

8. You want a map that shows the entire continent of Africa on one page. Which type of map is best?

- ◯ A large-scale map
- ◯ A small-scale map
- ◯ A street map of one city

"Flip the page upside down to see the answer key "

1.b 2.b 3.b 4.b 5.c 6.c 7.a 8.b

ASSESSMENT

PARENT / TEACHER CHECKLIST

- ☐ Can use a bar scale to estimate the real distance between two points on a map
- ☐ Can locate a feature on a coordinate grid given a column letter and row number
- ☐ Can identify at least four common map symbols by checking the map key
- ☐ Can explain the difference between a large-scale and a small-scale map