new bedford
whaling museum
ART. HISTORY. SCIENCE. CULTURE.

MAP SKILLS:

A Cartographer's POV

This lesson includes three sections:

1

INVESTIGATE (15 min.)
Click through the following slide deck to learn more about the purpose of maps and how they are used past and present.

2

INQUIRE (15 min.)
Using the provided handout, explore a 1851 whale chart. What information can you gather from this chart?

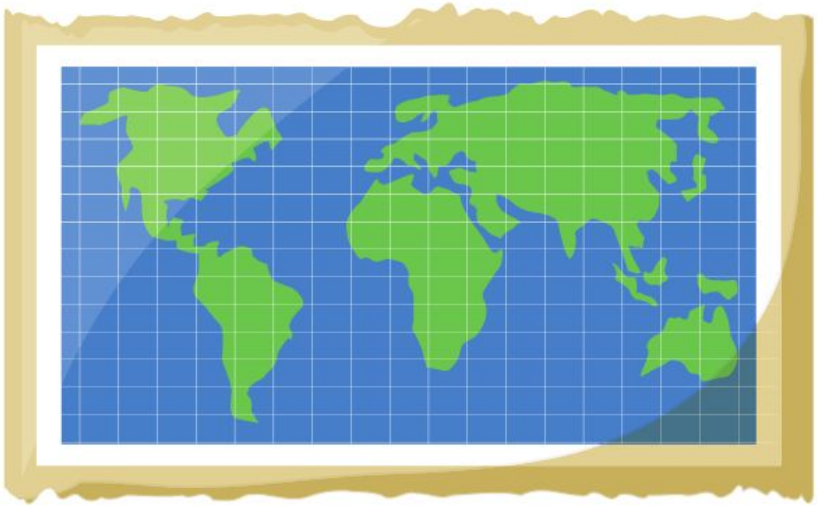
3

IMAGINE (30 min.)
Follow the steps in the Activity Guide to use coordinates to find items hidden in a treasure map.

INVESTIGATE

This is a **globe**.

This is a **map**.



How are they different? How are they similar?

What are maps used for?

A map has symbols, pictures, and icons that represent locations. Maps can help you go places.

Other maps help show patterns, data, or share stories. There are many different types of maps.

Who makes maps?

Map making is a way that people record and organize the world around them. People make maps for many different reasons.

Cartographers (kaar·**taa**·gruh·**fr**), map makers, are skilled researchers and artists.

Some early maps were made on clay tablets and cave walls. Many old maps show what people thought at a certain time and place.

This map includes images of creatures that look like sea monsters. What do you think these animals really are?

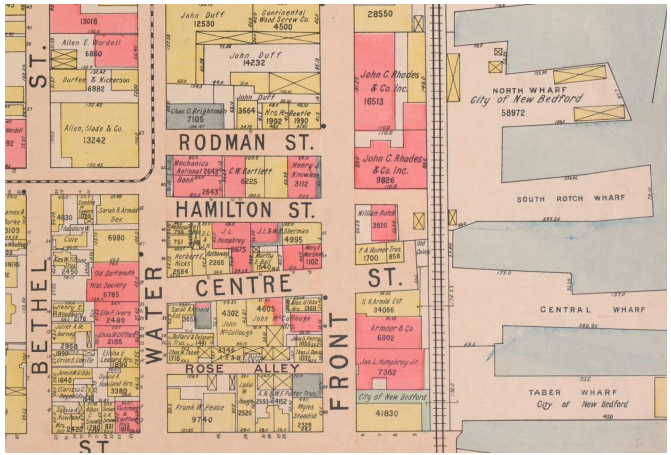
What do maps look like?

PERSPECTIVE:
A point of view

Maps usually show an area from a “bird’s eye” **perspective**. Pretend you are a bird and imagine looking down on the area below you. Now imagine drawing symbols for what you see.

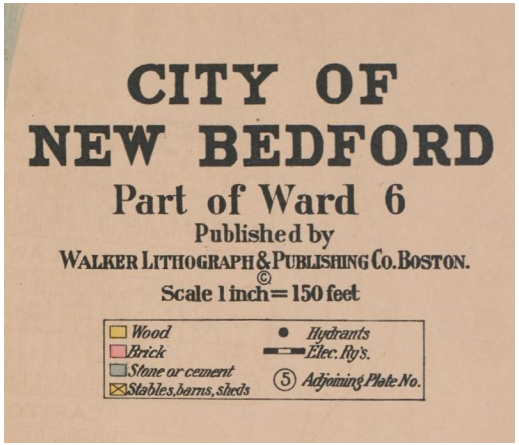
In a map of your town, you might see buildings, roads, trees, and bodies of water. A map could help a visitor get around the town and learn about the area.

This map from 1911 shows part of the city of New Bedford. Can you find the streets? The river? The railroad tracks?



A map usually shows direction according to a compass: **N**orth, **E**ast, **S**outh, **W**est.

One way to remember compass directions: **N**ever **E**at **S**oggy **W**affles!

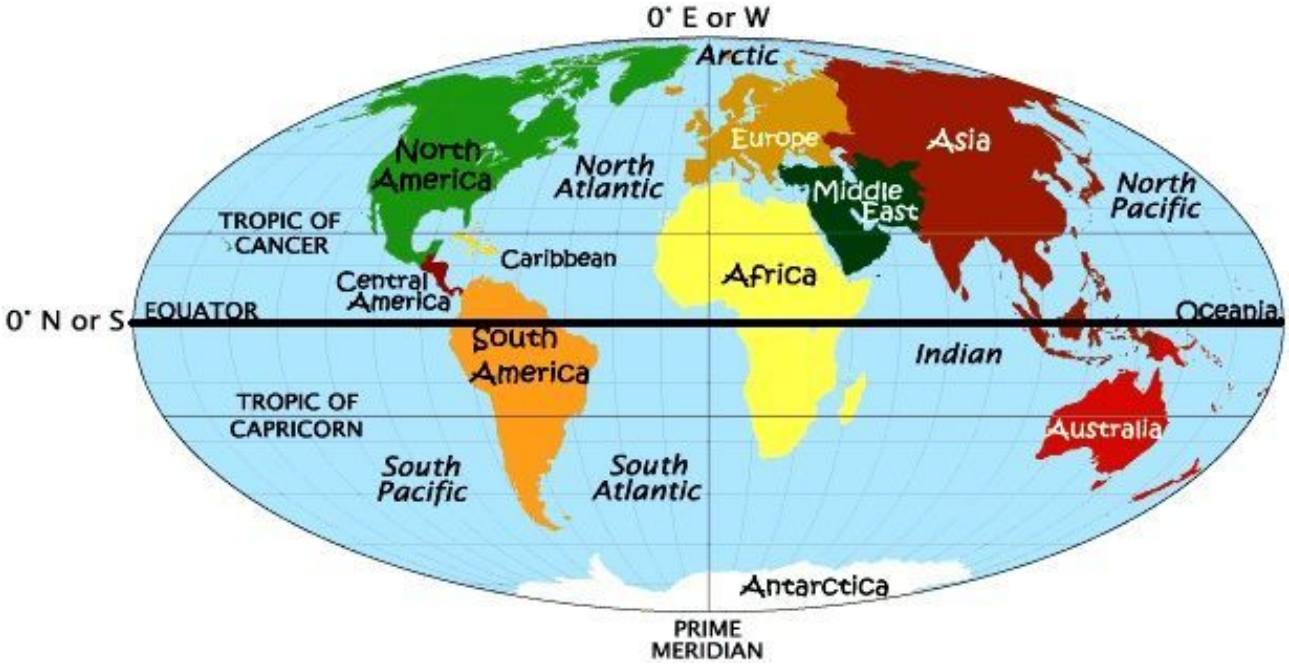


Maps have a legend or key to explain what the symbols or colors on the map mean.

Want to take a closer look?

Maps and globes also have an imaginary grid made of lines that run across (east to west) and down (north to south). On larger maps, the lines that run east to west are lines of **latitude**. Can you find the **equator** (0° latitude)? The lines that run north to south are lines of **longitude**. Can you find the **prime meridian** (0° longitude)?

On a map, a grid can help pinpoint a spot. We use **coordinates** (X,Y) to talk about a location. Get ready … you'll need this skill for our treasure map activity!



Reading a map takes special skills! Maps have several features.

Try to remember **DOGS TAILS**:

D = **DATE**: date the map was made
O = **ORIENTATION**: use the compass to find north
G = **GRID**: the lines across the map
S = **SCALE**: ratio of distance on the map to the ground

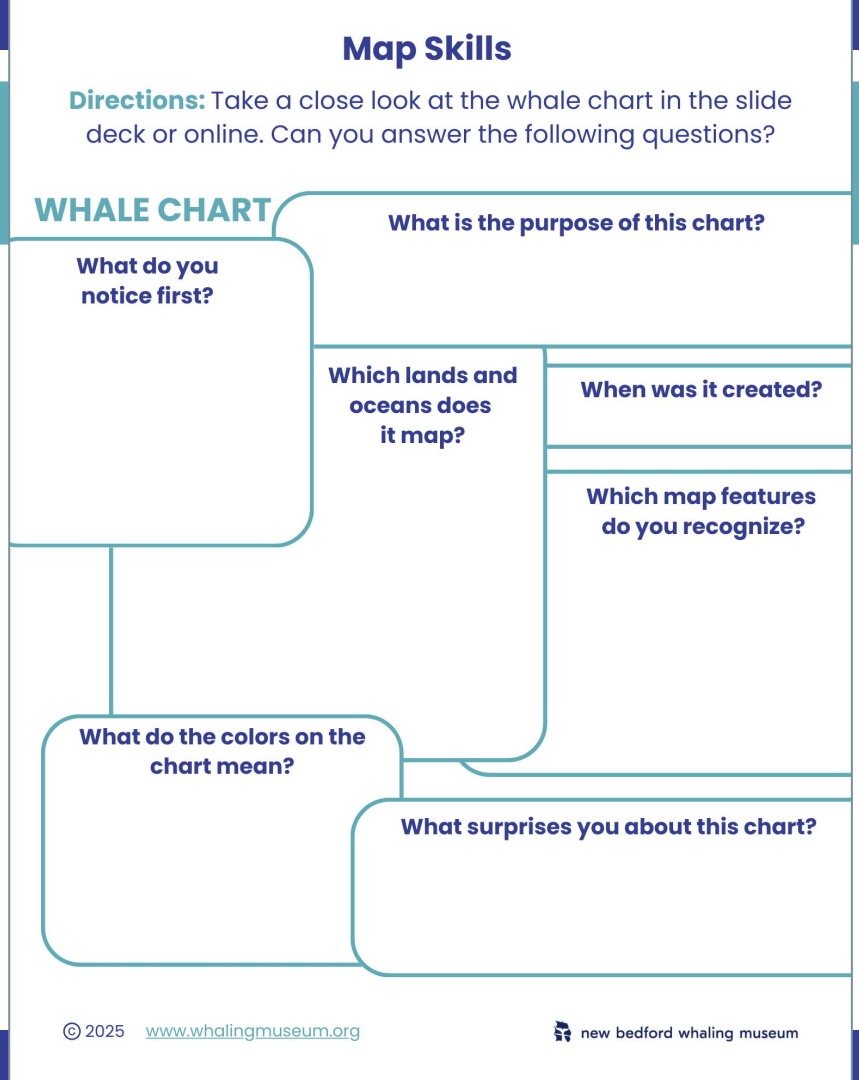
T = **TITLE**: name of the map
A = **AUTHOR**: name of cartographer
I = **INDEX**: list of places on the map
L = **LEGEND**: a key of symbols
S = **SITUATION**: the area in relation to another area

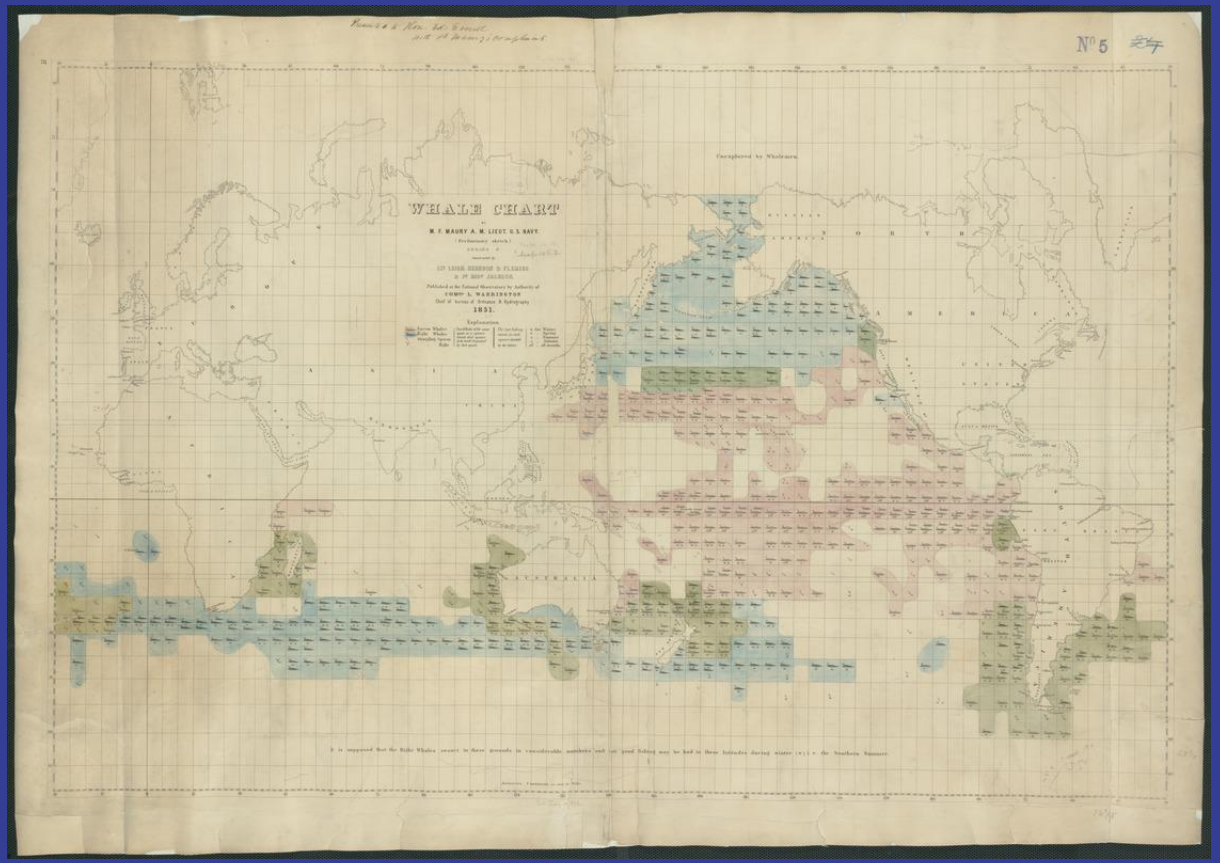
INQUIRE

Time to question!

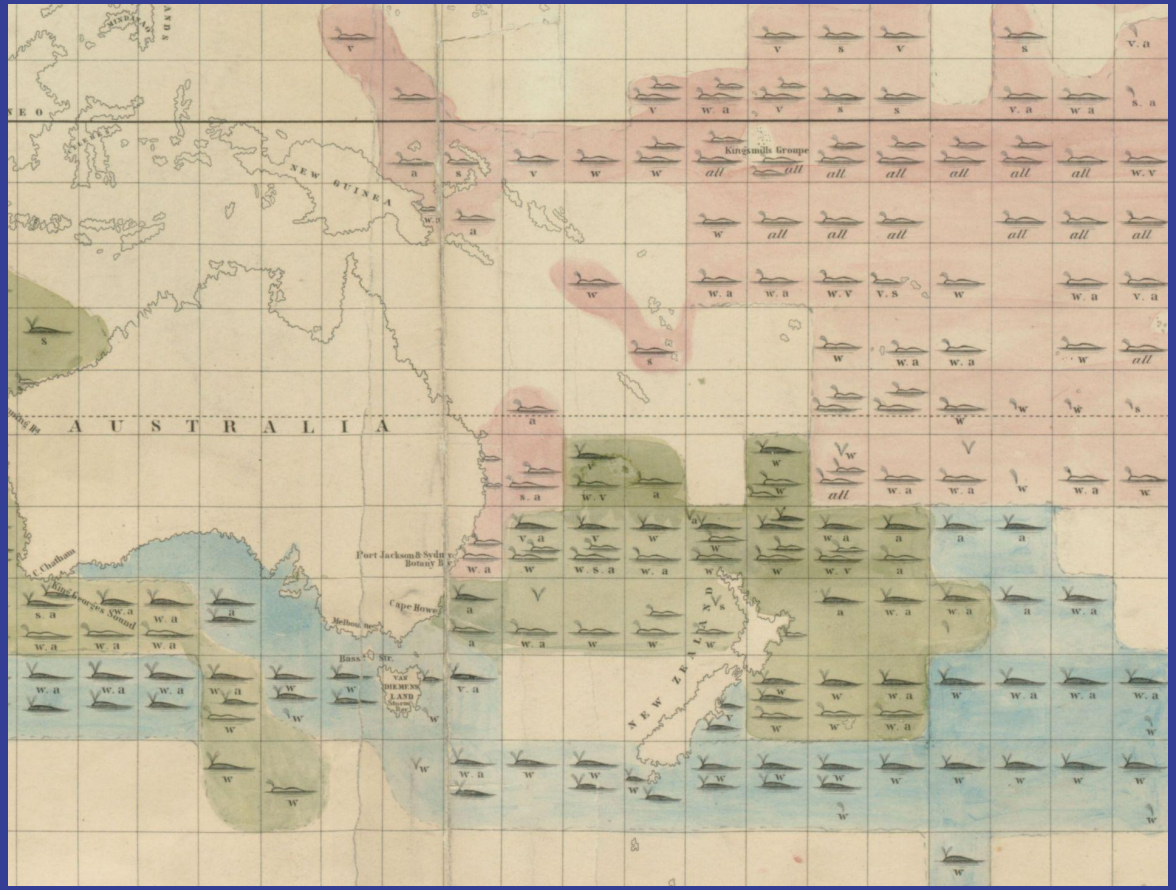
To put yourself in the shoes of a cartographer, zoom in and take a closer look at a chart.

Use the following handout to record your reflections and questions about the primary source shared on the next slide. What can you learn?





Click to zoom in on this 1851 whale chart and investigate it in detail.



US Navy Lieutenant Matthew Maury created this chart in 1851 based on information from whaling ships.

The grid squares have pictures of whales. These symbols show where whalers saw two types of whales in the oceans. The letters show what time of year the whales were seen.

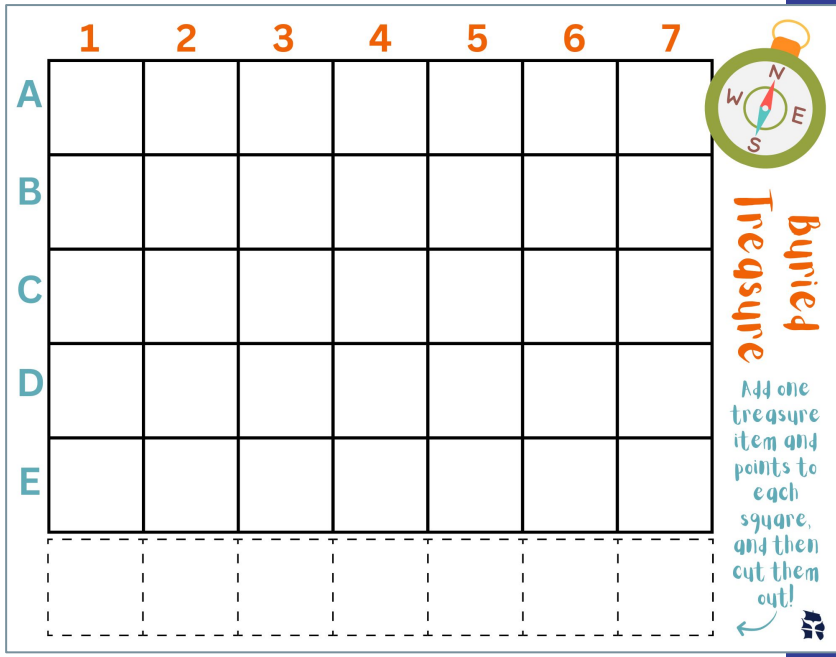
How could whalers use information on this chart to plan their hunting voyages?

IMAGINE

Time to create!

It's time to design a treasure map! Follow the Activity Guide's directions to create a game board that has "hidden" treasure for others to find. Who can earn the most points?

Bon voyage and fair winds on the Seven Seas!



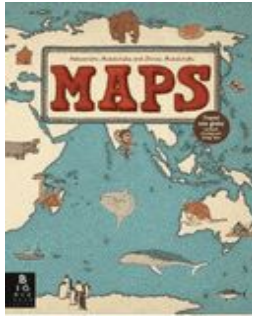
Additional resources

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC: see types of maps

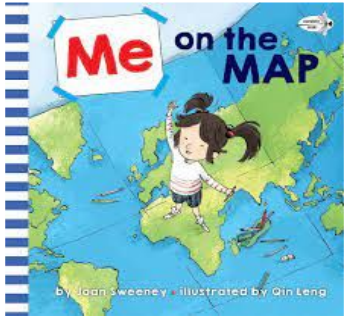
NAT GEO's MAP MAKER: an interactive activity

THE ART SCHOOL: draw a compass rose

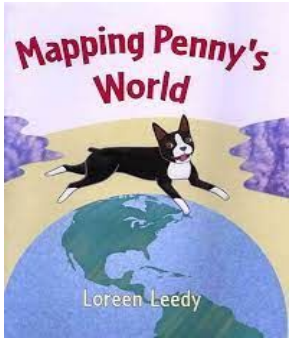
FOLLOW THE DIRECTION (NESW): interactive game



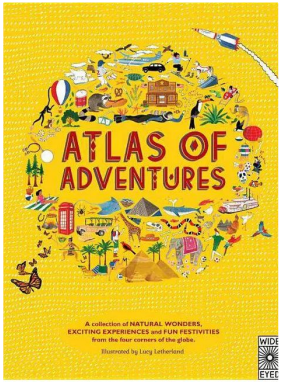
Maps
by Aleksandra Mizielinska



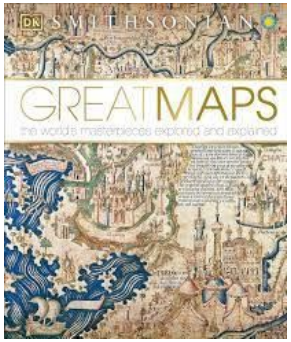
Me on the Map
by Joan Sweeney



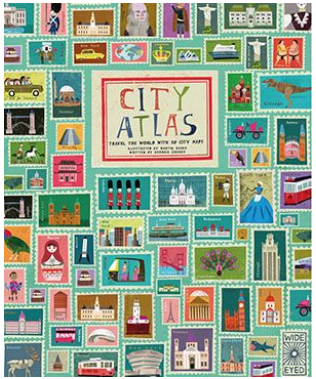
Mapping Penny's World
by Loreen Leedy



Atlas of Adventures
by Lucy Letherland



Great Maps
by Jerry Brotton



City Atlas
by Georgia Cherry

For more
classroom activities,
visit the
New Bedford Whaling
Museum website:

www.whalingmuseum.org

Media citations

Slide 5: *Maps and Directions* from Learning Junction; https://youtu.be/mtsx8V3mE8o?feature=shared

Slide 6: *Cartographer, Definition for Kids* from Justin Weinmann; https://youtu.be/HE6Q5Q6wYX4?feature=shared

Slide 7: British Library, https://imagesonline.bl.uk/asset/47307

Slides 8-9: Library of Congress, Atlas of the city of New Bedford, Massachusetts, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3764nm.gla00098/?sp=43&st=image https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3764nm.gla00098/?sp=19&st=image

Slides 14-15: Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center at the Boston Public Library, Whale Chart: https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:x633f952x