MAPS & GLOBES

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As civilizations grew, better maps were needed.

The oldest existing maps are from the ancient desert kingdom of Babylonia. These maps were etched on tablets of damp clay that soon baked rock hard in the midday sun.

Early Chinese mapmakers painted beautiful maps of their empire on pure silk cloth. People in every part of the world cleverly used local materials to make the maps they wanted and needed.

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Charts are maps used to sail the wide oceans.

The Polynesian Islanders sailed the vast Pacific Ocean using stick chart maps. These charts were woven with reeds and palm leaves that showed the ocean's currents and wave directions. Seashells were attached to each chart to indicate the larger islands.

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But ancient world maps were incredibly incomplete.

Until a few centuries ago, the earth was neither fully explored nor accurately mapped. As a result, these maps presented a world that looked like this... an incomplete and very incorrect world!
Maps and globes can take you anywhere—to the top of the tallest mountain on earth or the bottom of the deepest ocean. Maps tell you about the world: where various countries are located, where the jungles and deserts are, even how to find your way around your own hometown. If you take a fancy to any place on earth, you can go there today and still be home in time for dinner. So open a map, spin a globe. The wide world awaits you.