Cartography is the study of maps or more specifically map making. Today most people rely on smartphone GPS navigation systems, but the process of making maps is as old as cave painting! Over the centuries maps were refined to be as detailed and accurate as possible and more portable than a cave painting. We most often see paper maps of places to explore, like our museum campus map or ones of your favorite hiking trails. Maps teach us geography and history and can chart everything from whole galaxies to even our walk to school. What can maps show us that we can’t see on our own? Using your observation skills, create a map of your house, yard or a favorite walking route.

SUPPLIES
• Blank or graph paper
• Pencil
• Ruler (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS
Step 1: Decide what area you are going to chart and survey. Decide what size paper you will need and if you want to use a grid.

Step 2: Keep in mind the scale you will need to draw in order to fit your map on the page. Place major landmarks first to help with scaling correctly for distance.

Step 3: Fill in the details between and around the landmarks.

Step 4: If your map leads to a specific place, highlight the route with a solid or dotted line. Mark the destination with an “X” if you’d like (think: buried treasure map!). It’s okay if your map isn’t perfect, most maps are skewed to be able to fit on rectangular sheets of paper. There are 3 different styles of world maps that show the continents in different ways because it’s impossible to draw a sphere as a flat image. The important thing is for your map to help someone find their way!

To watch this process visit youtube.com/PeabodyEssexMuseum

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