

How do we use map symbols?

A map must be clear and easy to read. There is always a lot to put on a map and it can easily become crowded. **Symbols** are used to save space and to make it easier to see things. Symbols may be small drawings, lines, letters, shortened words or coloured areas. The symbols used on a map are explained in a **key**.

If you are drawing your own map, you can make up your own symbols. They should be as simple as

possible and look something like the feature they stand for. How would you show a postbox, a library or a football ground?

Sketch **A** and map **B** show the same street. The map has simplified the street scene. Only the main features of the street are shown and symbols are used to save space. The symbols are explained in the key.

A

B

Key

£ Bank	PO Post office	Hotel	Park
Bakery	Café	P Parking	Traffic lights

The **Ordnance Survey** (OS) is responsible for mapping Britain. The OS produces very accurate maps that have a lot of information on them.

There is an Ordnance Survey map of the Cambridge area on the inside back cover of this book. The symbols used on that map are also shown on the inside back cover.

Look at the photos in **C**. They show some of the symbols used on Ordnance Survey maps. Which symbols could you work out without the answers being given?

C

Activities

1 Look at map **D**. It is part of the Ordnance Survey map of the Cambridge area on the inside back cover. It has been enlarged to make it easier to read. The scale has changed so the 4 cm on the map equals 1 km on the ground.

- Make a copy of table **E** below.
- Draw the symbols from map **D** in the correct columns of your table.
- Say what each symbol shows. You will need to use the key on the inside back cover. Some have been done for you.



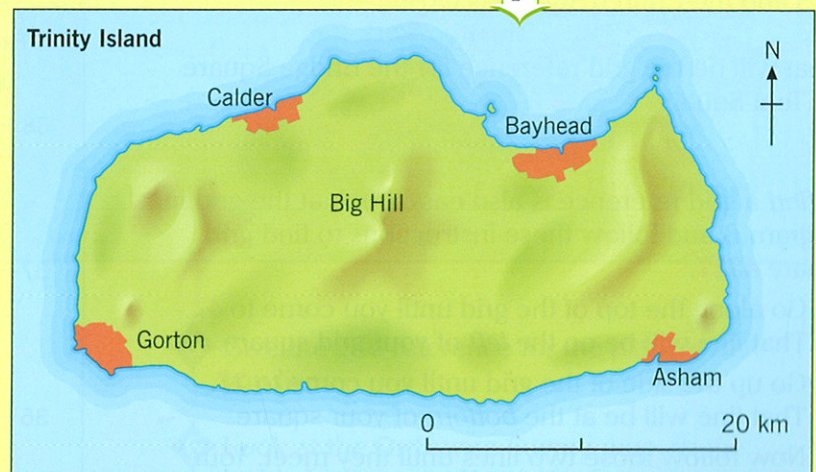
E

Drawings	Lines	Abbreviations (letters/shortened words)	Coloured areas
= Embankment	= Contour	Cemy = Cemetery	= Buildings

2 Make a larger copy of map **F**. It should be at least half a page in size. Using the Ordnance Survey symbols from the inside back cover, draw on the map the following information.

- ◆ There is a main road between Gorton and Bayhead, and a second class road between Bayhead and Asham. A minor road joins Asham and Gorton and goes on to Calder.
- ◆ A railway line runs from Asham to Gorton, to Calder and on to Bayhead. The station at Calder is closed but the others are open.
- ◆ Gorton has a church with a spire and a chapel. Bayhead has a church with a tower and a post office. Asham has a telephone box and a youth hostel.
- ◆ The spot height at Big Hill is 312 metres high. The land south of Big Hill is marshy.
- ◆ The River Bee rises to the north of Big Hill and flows into the sea at Calder. (Remember to use bridges.)
- ◆ There is a wood on the east coast.

F



- 3** Draw a map of an island of your own. Use at least **15** different symbols. Name your towns, villages and other main features. Give your map a title.

Summary

Symbols are simple drawings that show things on maps. All maps have a key to explain the symbols.