

From Streets to Continents

Name _____

Date _____

Fill in the gaps so that the text makes sense.

_____ is the relationship between a distance on the map and the corresponding distance on the ground. It is often written as a ratio. For example, at 1:10,000, one centimetre on paper represents 10,000 centimetres, or 100 metres, on the ground. Changing this ratio does not alter the real place; it changes the area shown and the detail that fits on the page.

The term _____ describes a map that represents a relatively small area in considerable detail. A town-centre plan may therefore show individual streets, buildings and footpaths. Its denominator is relatively small: 1:10,000 is larger as a fraction than 1:1,000,000. By contrast, the term _____ refers to one that covers a much wider area but leaves out many local features. A map of Europe may show countries and major cities, yet omit minor roads.

Mapmakers select information to suit the purpose. When the represented area grows while the page size stays fixed, roads may become simple lines and some settlements may disappear. Their absence does not prove that they do not exist. It shows only that, at this scale, including every feature would make the map difficult to read.