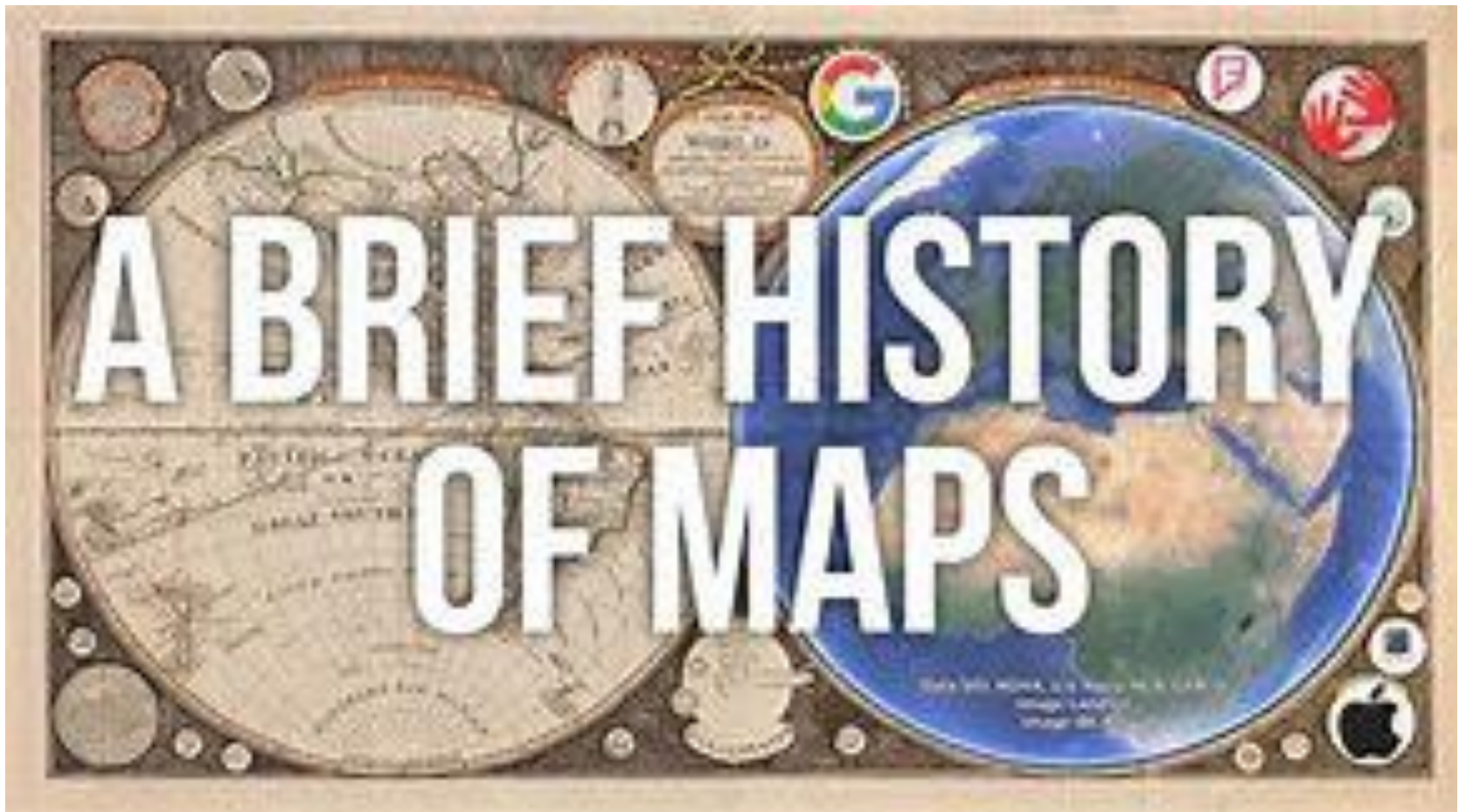


Day 1 – New Text, Monday 11th May 2020



This week we will be looking at a new text.

Can you think how maps have changed over thousands of years? What were they drawn on? Who used them? What was their purpose?

Day 1 – New Text.

Highlight the words you are unsure of.

From Ptolemy to GPS, the Brief History of Maps

We now have the whole world in our hands, but how did we get here? By [Clive Thompson](#)

One of the oldest surviving maps is, ironically, about the size and shape of an early iPhone: the Babylonian Map of the World. A clay tablet created around 700 to 500 B.C. in Mesopotamia, it depicts a circular Babylon at the centre, bisected by the Euphrates River and surrounded by the ocean.

Centuries later, the Romans drew an extensive map of their empire on a long scroll, but since the map was barely a foot high and dozens of feet wide, it couldn't be realistic. It was more of a statement, an attempt to make Rome's sprawl feel cohesive.

The first great attempt to make mapping realistic came in the second century A.D. with Claudius Ptolemy. He was an astronomer and astrologer obsessed with making accurate horoscopes, which required precisely placing someone's birth town on a world map. By the time he was done, he had devised a system of lines of latitude and longitude, and plotted some 10,000 locations—from Britain to Europe, Asia and North Africa. Ptolemy even invented ways to flatten the planet (like most Greeks and Romans, he knew the Earth was round) onto a two-dimensional map. What did he call his new technique?

“Geography.”