A new thing from American carmakers is a car that doesn’t need road maps. A special computer in the car “talks” to a satellite orbiting the earth. The computer and the satellite keep track of where the car is every minute. This information is displayed on a screen in the car. As you drive the car, its location is shown on a map on the screen. The new technology is called a Global Positioning System (GPS).

**Using Road Maps**

Even with this new technology, however, we will still need road maps. Road maps are useful for planning what route to take on a trip, finding the location of places that are new to us, and estimating how long it will take to drive to a particular place. Road maps can also give information about things to see and do.

Reading a road map requires many of the skills you have practiced in earlier lessons in this book. You need to know how to find direction and distance. Road maps have an index that uses a grid. Symbols are used on road maps to tell you such things as how large towns are, where you can stop to rest, and even points of interest along the way.

You will often use the index first when you read a road map. Find the name of the place you want to visit. The index will tell you the cell in the grid where the place is located.

**Using Your Skills**

**Practicing Map Skills**

Use the legend of Map 1-11: Road Map of Part of New York State to answer these questions.

1. What kind of highways are the ones numbered 81 and 90 which cross near the center of the map?

2. What can you expect to find at a place marked with this symbol? ▲
3. What do the numbers between two marks like these tell you?  

4. What is the difference in meaning between these two symbols? 

5. What could you expect to do at a place marked with this symbol?  

6. How many different kinds of highways are shown on the map?
Practicing Map Skills

Use Map 1-11, its legend, and the map index to answer these questions.

1. In which cell in the grid is each of the following located?
   a. Parish
   b. Cleveland
   c. Texas
   d. Chittenango Falls State Park

2. What could you expect to do near Fabius (F-4) in January?

3. Plan a trip from Mexico to Weedsport using interstate highway as much as possible. About how far will you travel?

4. Suppose that you average about 50 miles per hour on interstate highways. About how long will it take you to travel from the farthest point north shown on the map to the farthest point south?

Practicing Map Skills

Use a highway map of your own state to plan a vacation trip. Start at your hometown and plot out a three-day trip of places you would like to visit. What points of interest would you see? What towns would you go through? How many miles would you travel over which highways? Think about where you might stay overnight, stop for gasoline, and good places to stop for food, too.

Answers will vary.