

Storytelling with Mapping: KnightLab StoryMap

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Agenda

- Learn about StoryMap as a mode of conveying data and content
- Best practices and questions to consider before creating your StoryMap
- Steps for using Knight Lab's StoryMap
- Start building!

The handout and slides are available at <https://bit.ly/diti-fall2021-berkey>



What is a “story map”?

Telling a **story** using **maps!**

“You combine authoritative maps with narrative text, images, and multimedia content. They make it easy to harness the power of maps and geography to tell your story.”

- ESRI Story Maps Website



Example Projects Using Maps to Tell Stories

- “[Boston Parks and Playgrounds: Community Scan](#)”: uses a mix of textual, image, and geo-location data to tell a story about playgrounds in Boston’s neighborhoods.
- “[Mapping Shared Spaces: A Visual History of Boston’s Black and Jewish Communities](#)”: presents the story of migration of Boston religious communities by following the changing locations of places of worship.
- [Summer 2021 student work #1](#): students like you combined their own images with media files they found online.

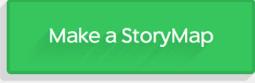


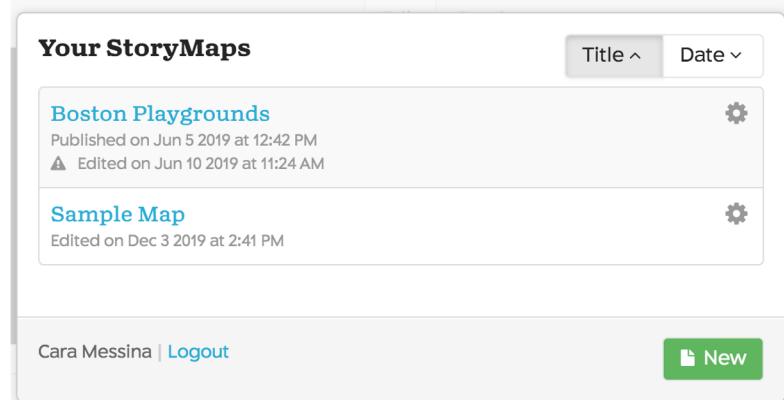
StoryMap best practices

- Think carefully about the **audience** you are trying to reach with your map. This will impact your language, the order of your points, and the media that you choose.
- Think also about the **tone of the map**: the default for StoryMap can be very upbeat and informal, and that may not match the content you are sharing (think, for example, about renaming the button that says "start exploring")
- **Test your map** after you have created it, to make sure that all the narrative points flow and that the language is clear and concise

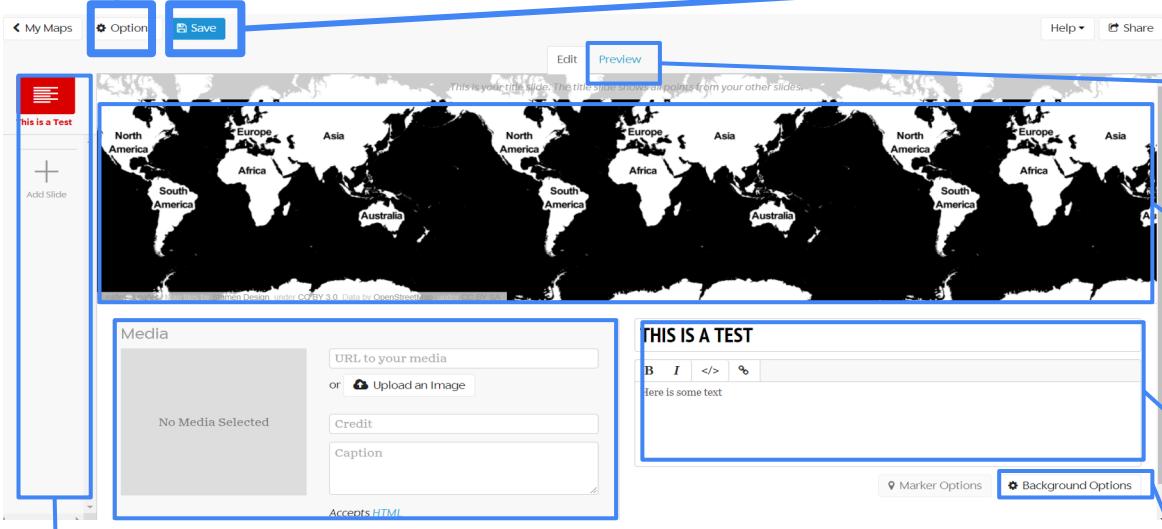


Create a StoryMap

- Go to <https://storymap.knightlab.com/>
- Click “Make a StoryMap” 
- Either create a new account or sign in through Google
- Once you’re signed in,
click “New Map” (once you have
created your map, it will be there
for you to work on)
- Name your project



Your StoryMap



Overall options
(like changing map layout)

SAVE OFTEN!

Preview your slides

Preview the
geographic points in all
of your slides

Title and content of
your text box

Check out and add new
slides here

Uploading photos
or other media!
Document what
you upload

Color or image for text box
background



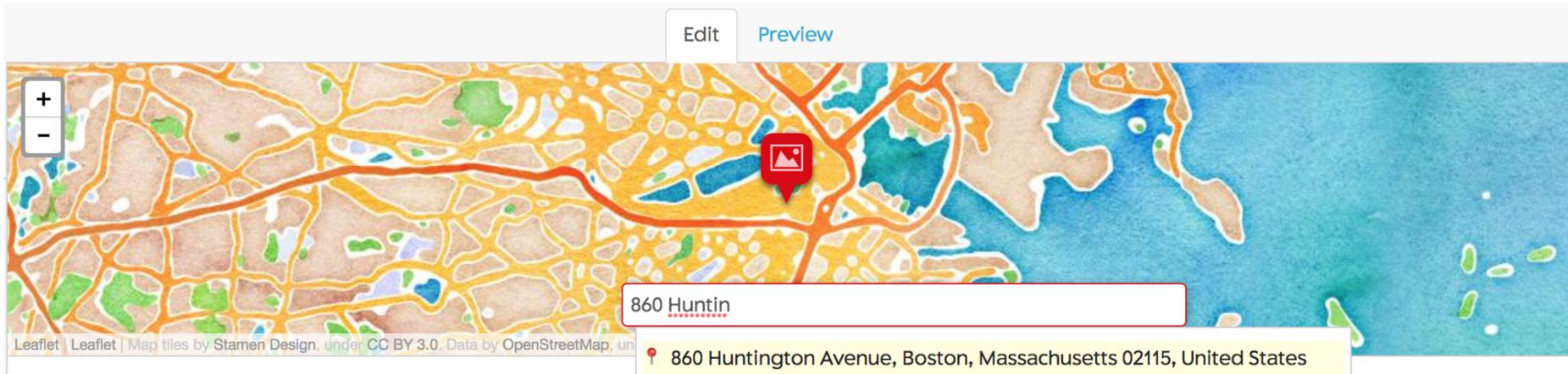
Slides, or map markers

Each slide is a different marker point on your map/image. Each slide contains:

- Title and text. The text box reads basic HTML.
- A background image/color.
- A map marker, which can be placed using Google Maps locations or by placing the marker manually.
- Media: images, videos, and sound files can be uploaded. Since only *one* media file can be uploaded per slide, you can use the text box's HTML to integrate an image or another media type.



Add A Location



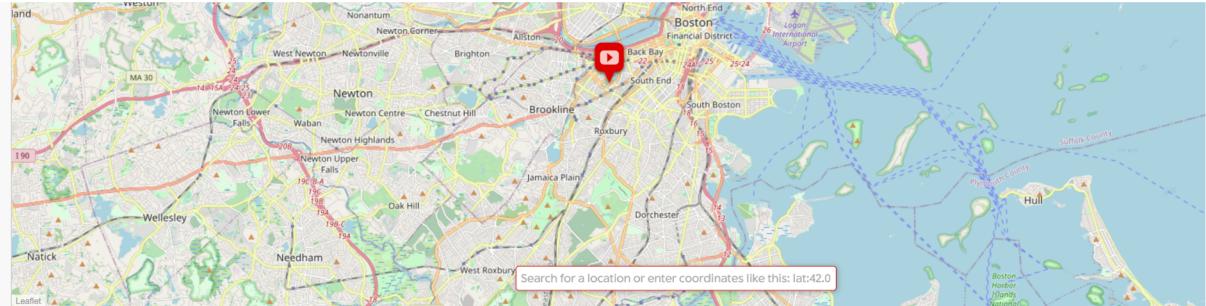
KnightLab StoryMap uses **Google Maps** to locate addresses

StoryMap, however, does **not** always recognize place names; you might need to know the **address** or location of particular structures

You can also **drag and drop the map markers** to the specific location



Add Media and Images to a Slide



Use “media” to upload files. You can upload an image or put a **URL** of an image OR a video (like a YouTube video). If you want to include your own video, you will first have to upload it to YouTube and copy that link.

If you have an image or a video in the “media” section, but want to include an image in the **text**, you can! The text box reads basic HTML.

1. Click the </> button (turn on HTML)
2. Get a URL of your image. Wikimedia Commons is a great source of images. Make sure to use the embed file code--don't forget to cite!
3. Use the HTML `` tag to insert the image.
4. Check the “Preview” to see the image



Adding to StoryMap

Once you're happy with the organization and order of the items in your spreadsheet, you can copy from these into StoryMap, following the directions above for adding images, locations, and so on.

This can help you stay organized and keep track of your resources. It's a quick way to storyboard your project, making sure that your flow between locations makes sense, your writing is consistent, and you have the right amount of research and info at each location.



StoryMap Demo

The image shows a StoryMap interface. On the left is a map overview of a city area with orange streets and green parks. Several gray callout bubbles with icons (video camera, location pin, etc.) are placed on the map. At the bottom left of the map is a small copyright notice: "StoryMapJS | Leaflet | Map tiles by Stamen Design, under CC BY 3.0. Data by OpenStreetMap, under CC BY SA". On the right is a blue-themed slide with a title and a food photograph. The title reads "EXPLORING LATIN AMERICAN CUISINE IN JAMAICA PLAIN" in large white capital letters. Below the title is a subtitle: "The project will walk you through the best Latina American restaurants in Jamaica Plain". At the bottom is a red button with the text "Leeeeets go!". Above the title is a photograph of various Latin American dishes like burritos, quesadillas, and bowls of salsa and rice, set on a wooden table with a red and white checkered cloth.

[Demo Map Link](#)



A Note on Save States

StoryMaps does not keep older versions of your project, so once you make and save changes, **you cannot retrieve a previous version.** You can also write over new content if you have your StoryMap open in multiple browser tabs or windows at once.

This is one reason why it is a good idea to plan out your StoryMap in a separate document: if you lose progress, you will have your content saved somewhere else.



Thank you!

If you have any questions, contact us at nulab.info@gmail.com

Schedule an appointment with us! <https://calendly.com/diti-nu>

Slides and handout available at: <https://bit.ly/diti-fall2021-berkey>



Moved to a handout



Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Optional: Spreadsheet Template

Make a copy of the StoryMap template below and use it to fill in the different sites you want to map, images you want to include, and so on.

Important: make a copy, don't edit the main template!!

(Go to File > Make a copy)

StoryMap Spreadsheet Template

–Template based on the StoryMap Spreadsheet Template created by Molly Brown, Reference and Outreach Archivist, Northeastern University Library.



Spreadsheet data collection

| fx | http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20158126 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|-------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Slide # | Site Name | Site Location | Image URL/File Location | Image Credit | Image Caption | Headline | Historical Profile/First Person Narrative | Citation(s) | Additional Media | Additional Media Caption & Credit | |
| 2 | Title Slide | n/a | n/a | http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20158126 | Freedom House Records, Courtesy of Northeastern University Archives and Special Collections | Walking the Emerald Necklace | | This is an introduction to the project that will continue on. Two men tend community garden in the Back Bay Fens. A public water building can be seen on the left. The Back Bay Fens (also called The Fens, or Fens) is a freshwater marsh and lagoon area within Boston's larger Emerald Necklace park system. | | | | |
| 3 | Site 1 | Back Bay Fens Community Gardens | 42.344888, -71.093221 | http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20157723 | Freedom House Records, Courtesy of Northeastern University Archives and Special Collections | Community garden in Back Bay Fens. | Back Bay Community Gardens | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

1. The slide number can serve as the order in which your sites appear on your map and the site name can be used to label sites on your map

2. The site location is used to identify a point on your map where the site is physically located (address or coordinates)

3. The image URL/File location is useful in keeping track of images of sites. Always credit your images to indicate their origin. Also include a caption describing your image

4. The headline can serve as the official title or label of your site. Including a narrative provides more context as to why your site is important.

5. Don't forget to cite your sources! Also, you may want to include additional media related to your site (e.g. newspaper clippings, additional photos, etc.)

