


Create a story using ArcGIS StoryMaps

Imagine that you are working at Yellowstone National Park, and your first task is to promote the scenic beauty of the park's largest water body, Yellowstone Lake. You want to highlight a few places around the lake and its beauty throughout the year. You will use the ArcGIS StoryMaps story builder to create a story that includes a map so the public can learn about the natural beauty of this portion of the park.



Note: The course data contains image files (photos) for the story. If you are unable to use the ZIP file, you can download (save or copy) the images one at a time using your internet web browser from the ArcGIS Online group [Yellowstone Lake Story Photos](#) .

Estimated completion time in minutes: 25

To complete exercises, you need the following:

- ArcGIS Online Organizational Account
 - User role or [equivalent](#)

① Download the data

To complete the exercise, you must [download the data](#). If you have already downloaded and installed the data, continue to the next step.

Unable to find the data you downloaded?

After you have downloaded the data ZIP file, extract it to the C:\EsriTraining folder. The unzipped folder will have the same name as the ZIP file.

If you unzipped the data to a location other than C:\EsriTraining, browse to that location and locate the folder. You can also try searching for the folder in one of the following ways:

- Start > Search Programs And Files (Windows 7)
- Start > File Explorer (Windows 8, 10 or 11)

② Explore your content

You have gathered photos, drafted text, and decided to use a map to highlight locations around Yellowstone Lake. Before crafting your story, you will review your content inventory.

You will begin by reviewing the photos.

- a Open File Explorer and browse to the location on your computer where the course data is stored (for example, **C:\EsriTraining\TellingStoriesWithMaps\YellowstoneLake**).

[View result →](#)



Fall.jpg



FishingBridge.jpg



Spring.jpg



Summer.jpg



WestThumbGeysersBasin.jpg



Winter.jpg



YellowstoneLake_pano.jpg

Step 2a: Explore your content.



Note: If you are not using the course data, go to the ArcGIS Online item [Yellowstone Lake Story Photos](#).

You see all the images that you will add to your story.

The following graphic provides a preview of the narrative text for your story.

- b Click the following graphic to enlarge and view the preview text.

Section 1:
Yellowstone Lake is the largest body of water in Yellowstone National Park. It is a beautiful lake with great scenic views that is virtually untouched by humans. It is the largest lake at high elevation, above 7000 ft/2134 m, in North America. There is endless scenic beauty regardless of the season.

Section 2:
As the quiet of winter fades, springtime around Yellowstone Lake is a time of awakening. As the roads and trails begin to open to the public, wildlife also become more active. As a thunderstorm rolls over the lake, it is truly a season of new beginnings.

Section 3:
Summer provides long daylight hours to explore the lake and surrounding areas. The beautiful blue skies and warm temperatures make for the best conditions to see the colorful geothermal features. A sunny warm summer day gives way to stark contrasts of the deep blue water and the colorful shorelines.

Section 4:
With still some mild weather hanging on from summer, fall brings beautiful colors. As the activities of summer start winding down, wildlife can be seen and heard preparing for what's ahead. It is not uncommon to see the results of an early snowfall in the higher elevations against the golden grasses found around the lake's edge.

Section 5:
While travel and accommodations are limited in winter, it is a pristine time of the year to visit. The sheer calm and silence of the area is refreshing. The West Thumb Geyser Basin produces a warmth among the stillness of the long, cold winter months.

Section 6:
Since March 1, 1972, Yellowstone National Park has been a destination for millions of people to enjoy. Yellowstone Lake, with a surface area of 131 square miles, leaves a large footprint in the park. Many visitors enjoy the serene settings the lake provides. In addition to many scenic views above the surface, underwater geysers, hot springs, and deep canyons are also found along the bottom, making Yellowstone Lake truly a "one-of-a-kind".

Credits:
These maps use either Esri data or data that you have permission to use. To learn more about Yellowstone National Park, click here.

[Click to enlarge](#) 

Text sections will be provided in exercise steps for you to copy and paste into your story.

c Click to enlarge the following map image.



[Click to enlarge](#) 

The preceding graphic is a scanned image of a Yellowstone Lake brochure map. You will use it as a reference later for locations that you will add to an express map.

d Close the text and brochure map browser tabs.

3 Open the ArcGIS StoryMaps story builder

It is time to start building your story with the components that you have gathered. You will open the ArcGIS StoryMaps home page in a new web browser window.

a Right-click the storymaps.arcgis.com  link and choose Open Link In New Window.

b Click Sign In To ArcGIS StoryMaps, and then sign in with your ArcGIS Online username and password.



Note: If you are taking this course in school, your teacher may have provided you with a username and password to use. If you see a page with the word Stories near the top, then you are already signed in.

When signed in and on the StoryMaps home page, you will start a new story from scratch.

- c In the upper-right corner, click New Story and choose Start From Scratch to begin creating a story.

The story builder appears, showing your cover page.

④ Configure the cover

Every story has a cover with a title, optional subtitle, and an image or video. You will use an image from the Yellowstone Lake images as your cover photo.

- a Add the following title to your story: **Yellowstone Lake_<your initials>**
- b Add a subtitle to your story, such as **The beauty of Yellowstone Lake.**
- c If necessary, add your name as a byline under the subtitle.



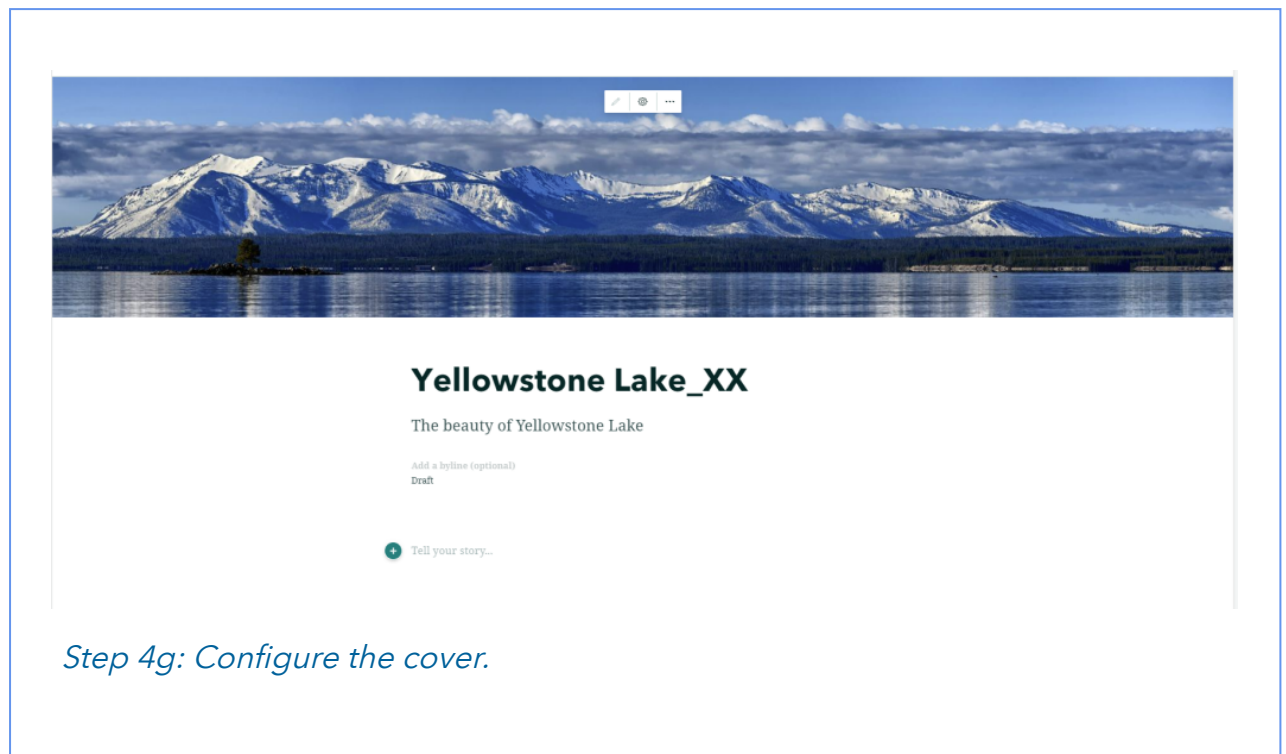
Note: You may see Add A Byline (Optional) or the student account name that you used to sign in.

You can upload an image or video file from your computer directly into your story. The image or video file that you upload will automatically be hosted with your story in ArcGIS Online. You will upload an image from your content inventory.

- d Near the upper-right corner of the story builder, click Add Cover Image Or Video.
- e In the Add An Image Or Video window, browse to the **..\TellingStoriesWithMaps\YellowstoneLake** folder.
- f Select YellowstoneLake_pano.jpg and click Open.

- ⑨ At the bottom of the Add An Image Or Video window, click Add.

[View result →](#)



The image is added to your story.



Note: Your story is automatically saved to ArcGIS Online as you work.

⑤ Add an introduction

You can now start authoring the content in your story. Using content blocks, you can add content such as images, text, and maps to your story.

- ① Scroll to the area below the byline.

You will copy and paste the text provided below.


- ② Copy the following Section 1 text.

Section 1

Yellowstone Lake is the largest body of water in Yellowstone National Park. It is a beautiful lake with great scenic views that is virtually untouched by humans. It is the largest lake at high

elevation, above 7000 ft/2134 m, in North America. There is endless scenic beauty regardless of the season.

Hint: You can use Ctrl+C or highlight the text, right-click, and choose Copy.


- c Below the byline, click the Add Content Block button  to view the list of available components.
- d Choose Text, and then paste the copied text as a paragraph.

[View result →](#)

Yellowstone Lake_XX

The beauty of Yellowstone Lake

Add a byline (optional)
Draft



Yellowstone Lake is the largest body of water in Yellowstone National Park. It is a beautiful lake with great scenic views that is virtually untouched by humans. It is the largest lake at high elevation, above 7000 ft/2134 m, in North America. There is endless scenic beauty regardless of the season.

Step 5d: Add an introduction.




Note: If the text looks messy or too narrow after you paste it into your story, try editing the way the text continues to the next line. Click the beginning of a text line, and then press Backspace to bring the text up to the line above. Then adjust spacing with the spacebar as needed.

You now have introductory text in your story. Next, you will add a map to help readers visualize places around the lake.

⑥ Add a map

You will create a map for your story that identifies points of interest within the Yellowstone Lake area. An express map allows you to place points on a map. To

help you identify and map these locations, you will reference the scanned brochure image that you previously viewed from your content inventory.

- a Below the text that you inserted, point to the left margin, click the Add Content Block button , and choose Map.

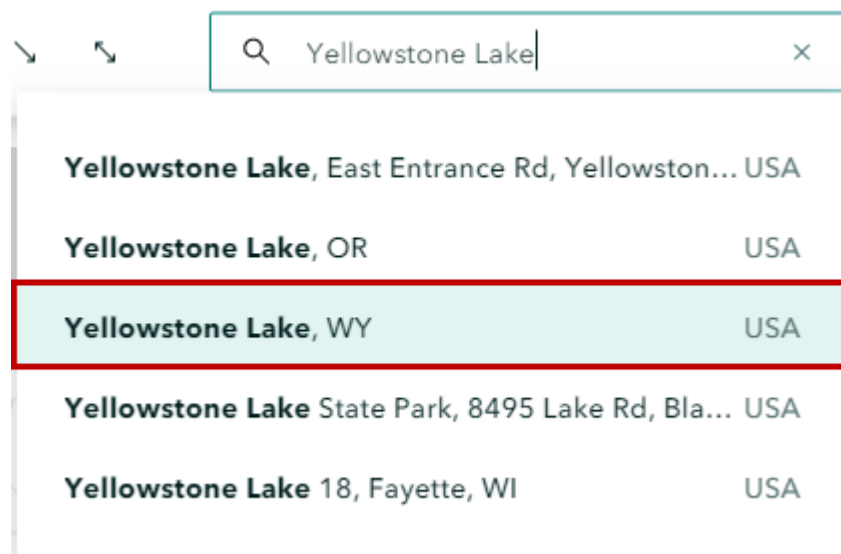
On the Add A Map page, you have the option to add an existing web map hosted in ArcGIS Online or to create a new express map. You will create a new express map to illustrate locations of interest that you have identified in the Yellowstone Lake area.

- b In the top-right corner, click New Express Map.



Note: If the Meet Express Maps window appears, click Skip.

- c In the top-right corner, in the Search By Location field, type **Yellowstone Lake**, and then from the list of choices, choose Yellowstone Lake, WY, as indicated in the following graphic.



The map is now centered on Yellowstone Lake.

- d On the map, in the pop-up window, click Add To Map.


You can customize the express map using the side panel on the left.

- e At the top of the side panel, click the Options button .

You are presented with several options for map configuration as well as different basemaps to choose from.

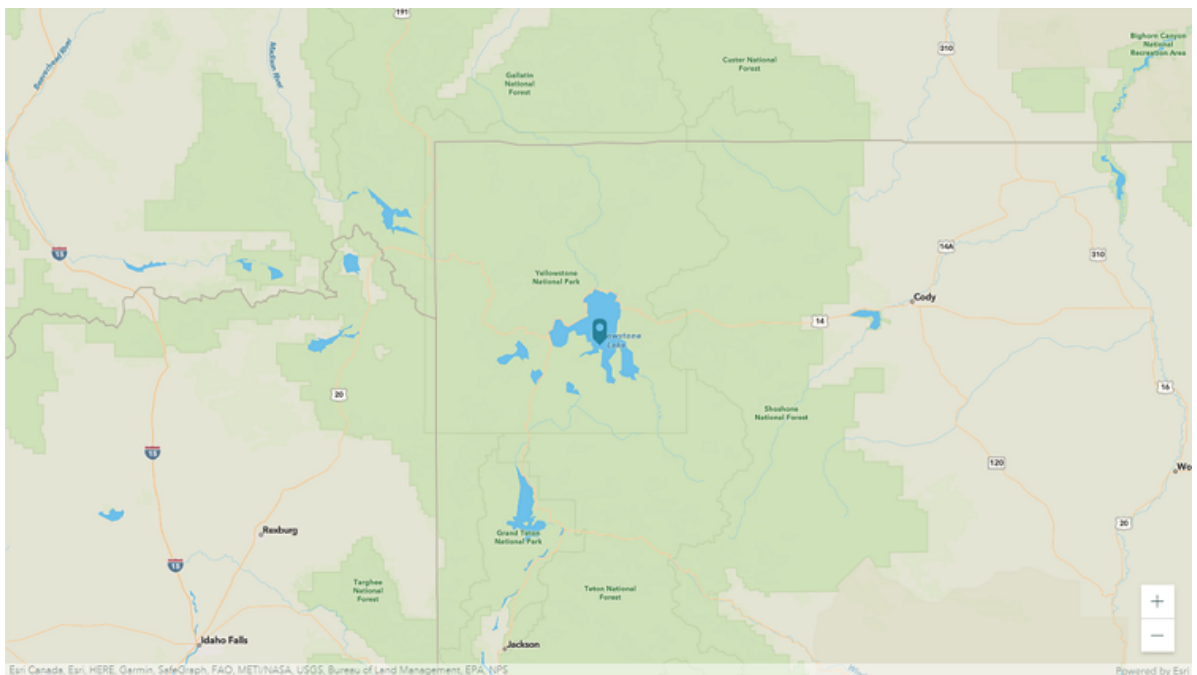
- f On your own, experiment with the different toggle buttons under Map Configuration.

[More information](#)

Some options, such as Allow Map Navigation and Legend, will provide additional options when enabled. Point to the Information icon  to learn more about any options of interest to you.

- g If necessary, under Map Configuration, turn off Allow Map Navigation, Legend, and Overview Map.
- h Under Select Basemap, click the current basemap to open a basemap gallery.
- i Locate the icon for the Community basemap and click it to change the basemap.

[View result](#) →



Step 6i: Add a map.

Hint: Point to the basemap icons to see their names.

- j Click away from the Change Basemap menu to close it.

(k) At the top of the side panel, click the Layers button .

The Yellowstone Lake location information was automatically added to the point that you added using the Search By Location field.

(l) Click the Yellowstone Lake map image below and note the following locations, which you will add to your express map:

- West Thumb Geyser Basin (along the shoreline near Grant Village)
- Fishing Bridge (northern or top-most part of the lake)



[Click to enlarge](#) 

(m) Arrange your windows so that you can refer to the scanned brochure map, if necessary.

(n) In the express map, click the Zoom In button  to zoom in to the Yellowstone Lake area.

(o) In the express map toolbar above your map, activate the Add A Point tool .

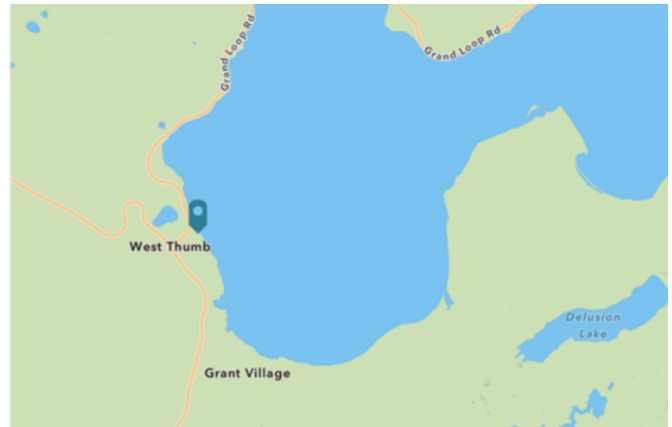
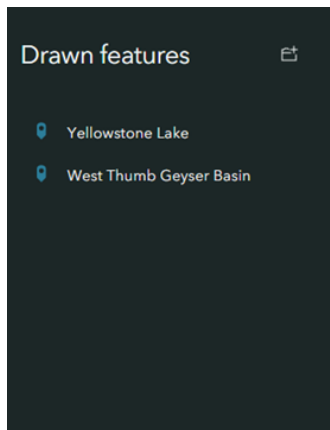
(p) Add a point for the West Thumb Geyser Basin near the West Thumb area along the shore of the lake.

(q) In the side panel, for Name, type **West Thumb Geyser Basin**.

(r) Click Add Image and browse to the
..\TellingStoriesWithMaps\YellowstoneLake folder.

(s) Select WestThumbGeyserBasin.jpg, and then click Open.

- t At the bottom of the side panel, click Done.



Step 6t: Add a map.

[View result →](#)

- u Referencing the scanned brochure map and using the skills that you have just learned, add another point and image for the Fishing Bridge area in your express map.

Hint: The image file for Fishing Bridge is FishingBridge.jpg.

You should now see three points in your map.

- v In the bottom-right corner, click Place Map to place the map in the story.
- w If necessary, close the scanned brochure map window.

The express map is located directly under the narrative text. The map component needs a caption to describe what the map represents.

- x Below the map, add the following caption for the map: **Yellowstone Lake locations of interest**
- y Leave ArcGIS StoryMaps open for the next exercise.

Your story now includes an express map. In the next exercise, you will add images to showcase the natural beauty of the lake throughout the year.