**Preface**

A thesis paper is one way to convey an interpretation of a literary text. A map is another mode of interpretation. In this series of activities (pick and choose or do them all), we will develop an understanding of the relationship between man and place as conveyed through DY maps for *Go Down, Moses*. DY maps can help us think about the texts in ways we have not before.

Students will then apply their understandings of mapping by giving shape to their interpretive experience with a visual map that communicates their understanding of space in another paired text by another author. This is an experiential learning project in which students are asked to explore, ask questions, try out new ways of thinking, and take risks. Student projects will be graded on creativity, thoughtfulness and attention to detail as it is reflected in Learning Narratives discussing what students learned from this project.

(Tip: You can do the following exercises with any Faulkner text.)

Text box somewhere: Great activities for critical thinking! (Student comment from recent course)

**Activities**

**Activity 1: What is a map?**

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| Explore (Whenever a student is asked to use a DY tool.) | |
| **Walkthrough**  Read: [Railton and Reiger “Faulkner Mapping|Mapping Faulkner”](http://faulkner.iath.virginia.edu/media/resources/DISPLAYS/FaulknerMapsHP.html) | **Tip: Click on the images of the various maps in this article to enlarge the maps for closer exploration. Clicking on maps icon under “Faulkner’s Yoknapatawpha’s & Ours” will take you to an interactive feature that allows you to compare Faulkner’s two maps to each other and with DY’s map.** |

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| Respond (Whenever a student is asked to respond to something) | |
| **Questions**   * What are salient features of a map? (Consider topographical features of the landscape, roads, buildings, etc. * Consider the “audience” and purpose of a map? What might the rhetorical purpose of the map be? * What are the most useful features of a map for you as a reader? | **Tip: It is fun and useful to have students explore maps of their local regions that can be found online. For example, teaching in New York, I like to explore** [**this map with students of New York state**](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Old_New_York_Frontier/Introduction) **during the revolution and consider how different this is from a current map of the state and what might that mean rhetorically by considering audience and purpose of this map.** |

**Activity 2: Mapping as an Interpretive Experience**

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| Study | |
| **Instructions**  Read Faulkner’s *Go Down* Moses. Based on your reading, choose one of the “stories” within the novel and draw a preliminary and rudimentary map of the story. |  |

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| Explore (Whenever a student is asked to use a DY tool.) | |
| **Walkthrough**  Explore the DY site for *Go Down, Moses,* paying careful attention to where places, events, and characters appear on the map (default option).   * Click on buttons on right-hand side to see how the map changes when showing events locations, major or secondary characters, or all locations. * Click on a specific “story” within the novel, at which point the map changes to reflect only locations in that section. Compare these different maps. | **Walkthrough video** |

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| Respond (Whenever a student is asked to respond to something) | |
| **Questions**  Discuss how this map “interprets” Faulkner’s story.   * Consider the rhetorical significance of having the Courthouse in Jefferson at the center of the map. It is the geographic, thematic, and symbolic center of Faulkner’s novels as well as the civic and legal center of the community. Thus, it is the center of his map. What are the implications of this for the text students are studying? * Why do you think there are only four locations mapped for “Was” compared to 12 more granular spaces mapped for “The Bear.” What choices might these differences convey? How are these choices interpretive? How would different choices change the reading experience of the map? * Compare the maps you drew to the DY map. What choices did you make that are very different from those of the DY editors? Why did you make these choices? How are your choices an interpretive experience? | [Picture of the generic DY map] |

**Activity 3: Re-Mapping as an Interpretive Experience**

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| Study (Whenever a student is asked to read or watch it’s a ‘study’ task. | |
| **Instructions**  Read Faulkner’s *Go Down* Moses. Focusing on “The Bear” (or any other story within the novel). Students will re-map the story utilizing a new unifying principle or point of view. For example, students should map the story from a specific character’s point of view. |  |

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| Explore Digital Yoknapatawpha Character and Location Networks | |
| **Walkthrough**  Explore Location-Character Graphs to see where characters appear most often  **Characters and Locations in Force Directed Graph**   * From the DY banner, choose Visualizations * Then Location-Characters * Then Force Directed * For text, choose Go Down Moses (hint: this is also the name of a story so to get to the novel, choose the name not in quotation marks) * For name, choose any character who you want to investigate, or you can choose attributes about various characters (for example, you could look at just women in or choose any other defining characteristic about the characters to explore)   While this graph may be confusing at first, you can click on a specific location (green circles) and see which characters appear (or don’t appear) there (as demonstrated in the visualization to the right for the hunting camp in the Big Bottom; only one woman is physically there (denoted by solid lines; dotted lines denote connections but are not physically there). You can also drag locations around to manipulate the map visually.  **Characters and Locations in BiPartite Graph**   * From the DY banner, choose Visualizations * Then Location-Characters * Then Bipartite * For text, choose Go Down Moses (hint: this is also the name of a story so to get to the novel, choose the name not in quotation marks) * For name, choose any character who you want to investigate, or you can choose attributes about various characters (for example, you could look at just women in or choose any other defining characteristic about the characters to explore)   This bipartite graph offers the same information as the Force-Directed Graph in a different visualization. You can click on a specific location on the right side of the bar to enlarge and see which characters from your search appear there or you can click on characters on the left side to see an enhanced picture of where they appear in the text. | **Walkthrough video?**  A screenshot of a computer  Description automatically generated  Can we crop this picture? |

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| Respond: Class Presentation and/or Learning Narrative | |
| **Questions**  Present how this map “re-interprets” Faulkner’s story. Questions for consideration in your presentation and/or Learning Narrative:   * What is revealed in this map that you didn’t realize before creating your map? What ah-ha moments happened for you? * How does your map differ from the *DY* map? How does your map demonstrate a focused *interpretation* with a centralized organizing principle or point of view? * ~~What questions did this investigation of the text raise for you? How does your map attempt to respond to these questions? In other words, how does your map provoke higher level thinking?~~ * What does this map demonstrate about your understanding of Yoknapatawpha or the Big Bottom? How does the map complicate or clarify your understanding of the plot of the novel/story? * ~~How did the mapping process affect your understanding of interpretation? For example, did you have to make choices for characters, events, and locations? What is the effect of those interpretive choices? How would another choice have affected your map?~~ * What was the response to your map? How did others’ “read” or respond to it? * ~~After creating this map and presenting it, discussing it, and answering questions about it, what would you do differently? What worked and what didn’t work? How will you employ these understandings moving forward?~~ |  |

**Activity 4: Applying Interpretive Mapping to a New Text**

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| Study (Whenever a student is asked to read or watch it’s a ‘study’ task. | |
| **Instructions**  Utilizing a paired text or novel, apply the skills learned from DY’s mapping process to this text.  **The Map:**  You may want to consider looking at the topography for the location(s) of the novel for inspiration. You can see that topography here using [Google Maps topography layer](https://www.google.com/maps/@42.7032773,-74.9455107,13z/data=!5m1!1e4). You may use other resources as well but you must turn in a Works Consulted list with your project.  Remember, however, as one can see in Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying* (as discussed in Railton and Reiger’s article explored in Lesson 1), an author may be only loosely following the map and geography of Cooperstown. Your job is to create a map that creates a visual representation of the text as you experience or imagine it so your map may differ significantly from these maps.  Then, you will need to plot out the story (chronologically or otherwise) to create a visual story on the map, creating custom markers and descriptions. Here are some ways of getting started:   * What is the rhetorical function or the organizing principle of your map? Whose perspective are you trying to convey? For example, would characters’ maps be different? * As discussed in Lesson 2, the Courthouse in Jefferson has rhetorical significance. It is the geographic, thematic, and symbolic center of Faulkner’s novels as well as the civic and legal center of the community. Thus, he places it at the center of his map. What will you place at the center of your map? How does your understanding of the novel then radiate from this center? What does this center symbolize or convey thematically? |  |

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| Explore Digital Yoknapatawpha Data Description Instructions and Faulkner’s Maps | |
| **Walkthrough**  Working individually or in teams, plot out the story you have chosen or been assigned in terms of characters, locations, and events. Your map must be accompanied by a definition of each of these. Please consult the [Data Description Instructions for DY](https://faulkner.drupal.shanti.virginia.edu/content/instructions-0) but your group must define them for yourselves as you are employing them.   * **Characters**: Your map must contain a minimum of 10 characters. You may wish to differentiate between primary and secondary characters in order to make your choices as was done in DY. How did you choose to represent these characters? Where did you locate them? * **Events**: Your map must contain a minimum of 10 events. How are you going to represent them on the map? * **Locations**: Your map must contain a minimum of 10 events. How are you going to represent them on the map?   Your maps may be in any form you decide will work best for you (consider [Faulkner’s original maps](http://faulkner.iath.virginia.edu/media/resources/DISPLAYS/FaulknerMapsHP.html) as a possibility on one end of the spectrum and a digital reproduction of some sort on the other end of the spectrum as was done in *DY*). | **Walkthrough video** |

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| Respond: Class Presentation and/or Learning Narrative | |
| **Questions**  Present how this map “interprets” the text. Questions for consideration in your presentation and/or Learning Narrative:   * Your map was designed to illustrate your “reading experience.” Now looking back at what you created, how does it demonstrate a focused *interpretation* with a centralized organizing principle or point of view? * What questions did this investigation raise for you? How does your map attempt to respond to these questions? In other words, how does your map provoke higher level thinking? * What does this map demonstrate about your understanding of the location of the text? How does the map complicate or clarify your understanding of the plot of the novel? * How did the mapping process affect your understanding of interpretation? For example, did you have to make choices for characters, events, and locations? What is the effect of those interpretive choices? How would another choice have affected your map? * What was the response to your map? How did others “read” or respond to it? What did you learn about your project from hearing others response to it? * ~~After creating this map and presenting it, discussing it, and answering questions about it, what would you do differently? What worked and what didn’t work? How will you employ these understandings moving forward?~~ |  |

**Resources**

* Faulkner Maps and Interactive Comparative Tool
* DY Map of *Go Down, Moses*
* Force-Directed Character and Location Graph
* Bipartite Character and Location Graph
* Data Description Instructions for DY

**For Teachers**

Pilot Classroom: Advanced Studies in Literature: William Faulkner and James Fenimore Cooper

Learning Goals:

* Learning Goal 1: **Understand how language shapes and influences understandings of place and space and, more specifically, how authors have created literary spaces that represent and respond to physical, cultural, historical and social contexts of Mississippi and New York**
* Learning Goal 2: **Develop the skills to shape complex questions and evaluate competing points of view about a text and explore understandings orally, visually, digitally, and in writing**
* Learning Goal 3: **Synthesize close readings and create multimodal texts that demonstrate understandings of audience, purpose, and context**
* **Learning Goal 4: Apply digital humanities research and conceptual skills for problem solving**

Common Core:

* Common Core 1
* Common Core 2
* Common Core 3

Student Samples:

Original Lesson Plan:

**About**

*Note:*About section that includes all extra information

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Notes: In an era of discussions of artificial intelligence complicating the literature classroom, these series of assignments helped students develop critical thinking and interpretive skills without writing a traditional literary essay. The maps students created of Cooper’s Templeton were thoughtful and creative and very, very different. Some were craftier, one challenged my understanding of a map, and all demonstrated high level critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, and deep understandings of the text. While this series of lessons was used in an advanced literature course, I also use many of these activities in introductory literature courses as well. These activities require students to do very close readings of a text and offer them opportunities to find location-specific contextual clues within particular passages.