

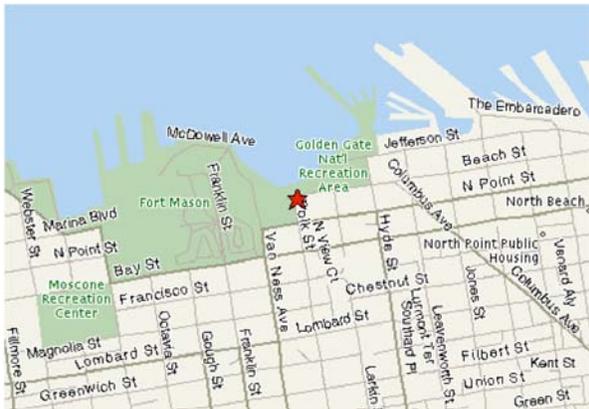
Capturing the Best Location View

Google Earth provides both obvious and not so obvious opportunities beyond those provided by paper-based maps. By exploring some of the less obvious features, significant enhancements can be made to a Google Lit Trip that bring a whole new experience to following the travels of literary characters.

Consider the various impacts of the various views of San Francisco's Aquatic Park below. (from the Google Lit Trip for *By the Great Horn Spoon*, by Sid Fleischman)

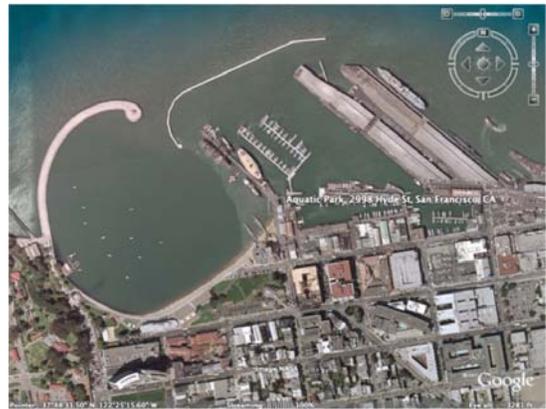
Paper-Based Maps

Paper-based maps can provide an "intellectual" orientation to a location, but offer nothing in the way of being able to "picture" the location.



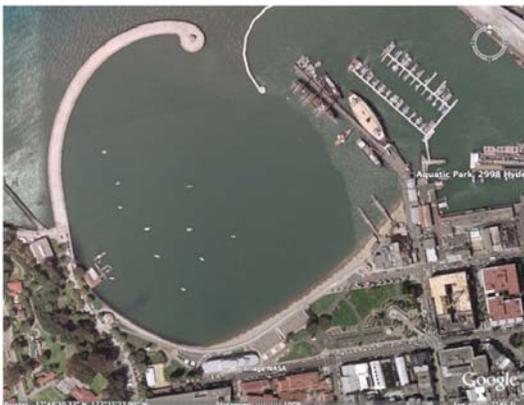
Google Earth View

The Google Earth (default) view makes a world of difference in a student's mind as it shows a realistic view of the location, *at least as it appeared when photographed for Google Earth.*



Zoom

The ability to zoom in on a location in Google Earth adds a significant element of "focus" for students by narrowing the view to "only" the view that is important in the story.



Tilt

Tilting the view in Google Earth adds a sense of foreground and distance as well a way to see the location in relationship to its geographical context. An additional and very significant change is that tilting changes the perspective from a "God's-eye view" to a more familiar "person's eye-view."



Consider Including A Pop Up Graphic

By including a Pop Up Graphic of the location from the actual time frame of the story. The graphic below shows the San Francisco harbor as it actually looked in 1850 when characters from *By the Great Horn Spoon* arrived on their way to the gold mines during the Gold Rush.

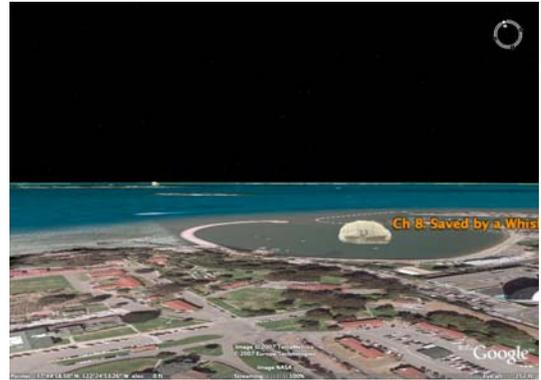
image source:

Le Voyages en Papier: <http://www.antique-prints.de/>



Rotate

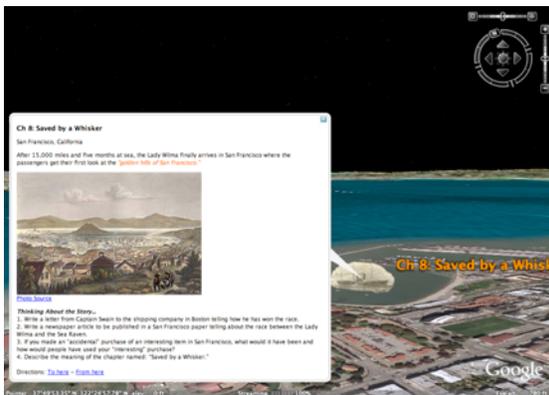
Using the Rotation feature in conjunction with the Tilt and Zoom features, the Google Earth view can closely approximate the same view as in the pop up graphic you've selected.



"Then" and "Now"

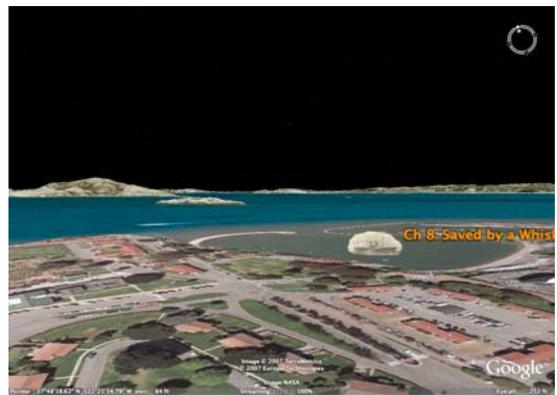
Thus, showing and hiding the pop up description allows a great "Then" and "Now" comparison so students "see" the historical changes in the geography of the location.

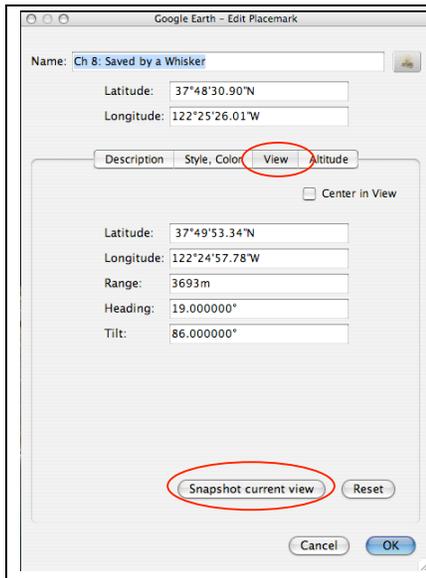
Several examples of this can be seen in the *By the Great Horn Spoon* Lit Trip. After downloading the .kmz file, check out the place markers for Ch. 1: The Stoaways, Ch. 4: The Pig Hunt, Ch. 7: The End of the Race, Ch. 8: Saved by a Whisker, and Ch. 11: Jamoka Jack.



The Final Touch!

The final touch (sort of) is to use Google Earth's built-in TERRAIN feature that appears in the LAYERS section of the side bar. Notice how the islands in the San Francisco Bay and even the hill in the foreground take on a 3D appearance. (Unfortunately, this feature is controlled on the "local" computer, so it does not "travel" with exported .kmz files so it is a good idea to suggest this in the pop-up just in case the user does not have the TERRAIN feature checked.





Snap Current View

Once you've zoomed, tilted, and rotated the view in Google Earth, open the Edit Placemark window, click on the VIEW tab and then click on the SNAPSHOT CURRENT VIEW tab.

Now, clicking on the placemaker will always take you to this exact view of the location.

By fine-tuning the view of each location on a Lit Trip, viewers can be brought "into" the setting alongside of the characters they are following. Compare the fine-tuned view at the end of these examples with not just the paper map but also with the Google Earth default view. The difference, and the student reaction, is amazing!