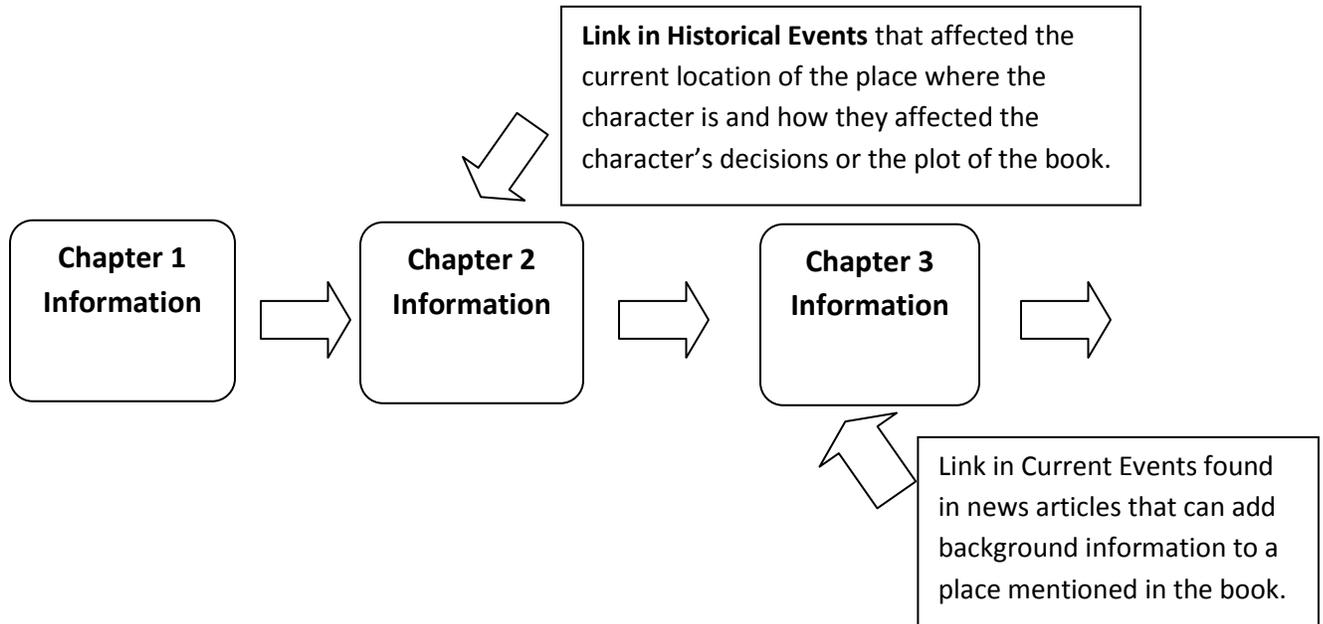# Notes on How to do a Google Lit Trip

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1. **Determine what books, short stories, biographies, or poems you would like to use.** Have a list of approved books, stories and poems that students can choose from before the project beings. The best ones involve travel by the main character. I suggest starting out by having the entire class do the same book. After you feel comfortable with the process, you might consider have students do different books. This way you can have students look at broad themes across books.

2. **Determine what literary themes and concepts you want the students to understand.** On a basic level Google Lit Trips can be used to create an interactive book report that relates the facts of the book to where they took place. You could have students discuss:
   a. **Literary Concepts:** plot, character development, point of view, structure, figurative speech, conflict and of course the big question – "why are we reading this?"
   b. **Geographic Concepts:** spatial relationship between people, places, and events; geographical origins of the character and how their upbringing affects their actions; or how the character feels about being in a particular place
   c. **Social Studies Concepts:** historical events that affected the characters decisions; current events that affected influenced the author

3. **Read and Discuss the Book:** Have students read the book and discuss it on a regular basis. As part of my class, I have book discussion each week where we address some common literary ideas such as character, plot, metaphors, and historical significance. Not only do we discuss the concepts in class, but students are required to choose one of our discussion questions and post a response to our project wiki. Each response is typically 7-10 sentences in length and contains at least one quote and citation that supports the student's reasoning. Students end the post with a question to stimulate a threaded discussion from other students reading different books on the same theme.

4. **Outline the Book as You Go:** Have students plot out what is going on in a concept map, similar to what I've drawn below as you discuss the book. Each node in the concept map can represent one chapter of the book. The student's notes will be used later to create text for their Lit Trip. I typically have students take notes on the plot and in a separate paragraph have them write about themes and historical significance. You can also use such maps to show how historical events and other factors affected the character's decisions. These can be come links to outside paper, websites, podcasts and videos that can be linked to your Lit Trip.

a. A free online tool to concept map with is Gliffy (http://www.gliffy.com).

Link in Historical Events that affected the current location of the place where the character is and how they affected the character's decisions or the plot of the book.

Chapter 1 Information	Chapter 2 Information	Chapter 3 Information

Link in Current Events found in news articles that can add background information to a place mentioned in the book.

5. **Learn to Use the Software:** Plan 3-5 days in the computer lab where you can teach the students how to navigate around Google Earth, create basic placemarks, add text and images, work with tables to outline their information, and embed other applications, such as videos. I start this process only after students have read a good portion of the book and have a number of chapters outlined. I suggest spreading out these technology lessons over 3-5 weeks so that students have time to practice. Encourage students to start creating placemarks with the information from their outlines to practice the techniques you are teaching them. I have created some screencasts that show how to use the software and you can find other videos and documents on how to use Earth at the links below:
   a. **My Screencast Tutorials –** http://teensandtechnology.wikispaces.com/Tutorials
   b. **Google Earth Video Tutorials -** http://www.youtube.com/GoogleEarthVideoHelp
   c. **Google Earth Document Tutorials -** http://earth.google.com/userguide/v4/tutorials/index.html
   d. **KML Document Tutorials (advanced)** - http://code.google.com/apis/kml/documentation/kml_tut.html

6. **Storyboard the Book:** Have students collect images, podcasts and videos that they plan to use to make points about aspects of the book's plot, character development, or events that affected the character and organize them in a storyboard (see attached form). You can use the attached form or try the free storyboard software at the link below:
   a. Story Board Tools - http://www.newfreedownloads.com/Multimedia-Graphics/Image-Editors/Storyboard-Tools.html

7. **Conduct a Peer Review:** After the storyboard had been created and before students put the final layer together, have students to a peer review. I typically have students create the storyboard and then pass it on to at least two different students so they can make their comments.

8. **Leave Sufficient Time for Construction of the Layer:** Make sure to leave at least 3-4 weeks at the end of the project so that students can construct their final layer, do a final peer review, and have time to make changes to their layers. I typically assign all of this as homework. Google Earth is free and can be downloaded at home by students so there is no need to use class time for the construction of final layer.