



Google Lit Trips
GoogleLitTrips.com

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The Basics of Viewing a Google Lit Trip

Installing Google Earth and Downloading GoogleLitTrips

1. Install the free version of Google Earth. Google Earth, is available at <http://earth.google.com/download-earth.html>
2. Once Google Earth is installed, then download Lit Trips of your choice from the Google Lit Trip site at: <http://www.GoogleLitTrip.com>

Downloaded Google Lit Trips will appear on your computer's desktop or other location where your downloads appear as .kmz or kml files.

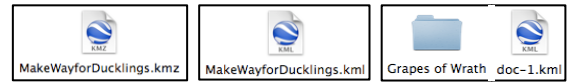


Fig. 1: Downloaded file formats

The .kmz format and the .kml format work exactly the same as far as the user is concerned.

Opening A Google Lit Trip File

Regardless of the file format, double clicking on the blue globe icon should open Google Earth and bring the Lit Trip into the Temporary Places section of Google Earth's Side Bar.

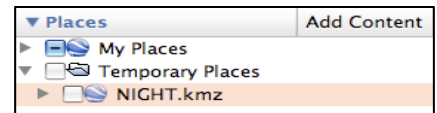


Fig. 2: Temporary Places

Viewing the Entire Contents of a Lit Trip

To avoid "flooding" the Google Earth Viewer (globe) with content, Google Earth places a blank check box next to everything.

1. Check the box next to any resource you wish to appear in the Google Earth Viewer.

Google Earth files are structured like typical folder files.

This means that you may need to "open a folder" to see its contents. In Figure 2 above, taken from a Macintosh, the triangle pointing to the right is the Macs standard indication of a closed folder. Clicking on the triangle causes the folder contents to be revealed. "Open folders" are indicated by a triangle pointing down. PCs use a "+" to indicate a closed file and a "-" to indicate that there is no more content in the folder.



Fig. 3: "Folders" structure

Options for Enriching Google Earth Viewing

the Layers section (see Fig. 4) provides many built-in resources that can dramatically enhance the viewing of a Google Lit Trip. Unfortunately, Google Lit Trips developers do not have a way of pre-selecting or de-selecting these resources as a part of developing their files. A good way to take advantage of these features is to:

1. Deselect all layers by clicking the checkbox next to the Primary Database layer. This ensures that you won't have extraneous data appearing as you view a GoogleLitTrip.

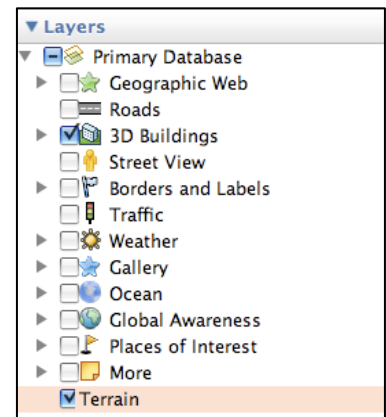


Fig. 4: Options in the Layers area



- Click the checkbox next to the Terrain layer to show simulated 3D views of the terrain rather than a flat 2D view. (see figure 5 for a comparison)
- Determine whether the GoogleLitTrip would benefit from the appearance of 3D buildings or not. For example, stories set in relatively contemporary times such as *Make Way for Ducklings*, set in 20th century Boston (see Fig. 6) are enhanced by the appearance of 3D buildings, while stories set in the distant past such as *By the Great Horn Spoon*, where some scenes are set in 1850's Boston, are not.
- Similarly, turning the Borders and Labels layer on or off allows the display of various levels of government borders and for the display of city names. The appropriateness of displaying this information should be determined by the time frame of the GoogleLitTrip you are viewing.

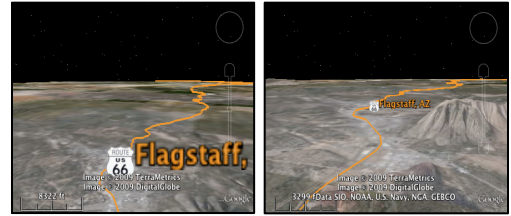


Fig. 5: Scene from *The Grapes of Wrath*. Left without Terrain layer selected; Right with Terrain layer selected.

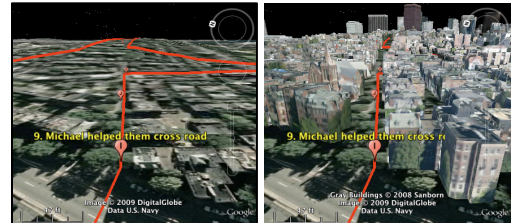


Fig. 6: Scene from *Make Way for Ducklings*. Left without 3D Buildings layer selected; Right with 3D Buildings layer selected.

Navigating a GoogleLitTrip

Though it is common to view Google Earth resources by "flying" a tour, I tend to discourage this method for several reasons.

The most significant reason is that this automates a fly over of the entire GoogleLitTrip file rather than allowing users to control when to move to the next place mark and how long to stay there. Also, automatically flying a file also eliminates the possibility of users taking appropriate "side trips" at their own discretion as they move through a GoogleLitTrip.

By manually controlling the use of a GoogleLitTrip, users can coordinate their interaction with the GoogleLitTrip with such needs as matching the pacing of a reading schedule for longer works.

Therefore, I generally offer the following tips for manually viewing a GoogleLitTrip:

Notice that each item typically has (from left to right) a checkbox, an icon, a title, which may be black or blue, and below the title, a bit of the pop-up description showing.

- FLY First:** Double clicking the icon "flies" you to that location, orients the view, tilt, and zoom pre-programmed into the marker. This is the view the developer wants you to see before you see the contents of the pop-up window.
- Then SHOW POP-UP:** Once you are looking at the pre-determined view of a location, THEN click on the title if it is blue. Blue text indicates that there is actual content in the pop-up window. This will cause the place marker description window to appear.

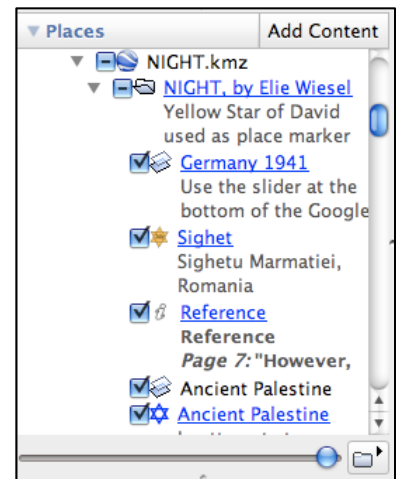


Fig. 7: The checkbox, icon, title and pop-up excerpt.



“Special” Place Marks

Not all place marks indicate locations in Google Earth. The icon for Germany 1941 and for Ancient Palestine in Fig. 7 indicates the presence of an image overlay. When image overlay markers are selected, a transparency slider appears as is also visible at the bottom of Fig. 7.



Fig. 8: Images show how transparency slider affect overlay visibility when slid from left to right

Sliding the transparency slider from right to left causes the image to “fade.” (see Fig. 8) This is useful for comparison and for removing the overlay to make the terrain below visible when viewing the place marks in that area.

Final Note

The first time GoogleLitTrip files are opened, they appear in Temporary Places. When you quit Google Earth, you will be asked whether you want the items in Temporary Places to be saved to your My Places. If you say yes, then that Google Lit Trip will be stored in Google Earth and be there when you reopen Google Earth. If you do not save it to My Places, the file can be saved on your hard drive, but must be reopened if you wish to revisit the file.