



Google Lit Trips  
GoogleLitTrips.com

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## The Basics of Viewing a Google Lit Trip

### Installing Google Earth Downloading GoogleLitTrips

1. Install the free version of Google Earth. Google Earth, is available at [earth.google.com](http://earth.google.com)

### Downloading GoogleLitTrips

#### Method One: (better for people who want to browse the collection of available Lit Trips)

1. Click on one of the grade level links at the top of every page.
2. On the Grade Level Table of Contents page, find and click on the title of a Lit Trip you'd like to download.
3. Click on the Download Link in the upper right corner of the page.
4. This will take you to a very short pre-download survey. The survey information is essential for seeking funding in order to keep the Google Lit Trips resources free to teachers and students. Your personal contact information will never be shared with anyone.
5. When you click the submit button, you'll see a Thank You message and a direct link to a page where you can download your desired Google Lit Trip.

#### Method Two: (faster if you already know which Google Lit Trips you want to download)

1. Click the Downloads etc link at the top of every page on the GoogleLitTrips.com website to see three lists of all of the available Lit Trips by approximate grade level.
2. Find the Lit Trip you're interested in downloading and then click on its grade level column heading link.
3. Complete Steps 4 & 5 above to download the file.

### Opening A Google Lit Trip File

1. Find the downloaded file. (Fig. 1)
2. Double click the blue globe icon to open Google Earth and bring the Lit Trip into the Temporary Places section at the bottom of Google Earth's Side Bar. (Fig. 2)

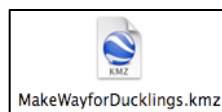


Fig. 1: Google Lit Trip File

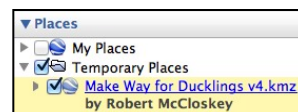


Fig. 2: Temporary Places

### Viewing the Entire Contents of a Lit Trip

To avoid "flooding" the Google Earth Viewer 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 or empty file and a "-" to indicate that there is no content in the folder.

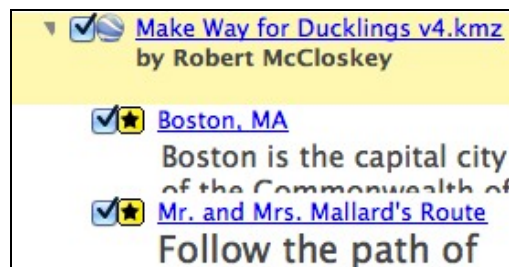


Fig. 3: "Folders" structure



## 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. However, 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.
2. 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.
3. 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.
4. Keep in mind however, that there is a wealth of information in Google Earth's Layers and that this information is constantly being updated. The Google Lit Trips experience can be dramatically enhanced and personalized by taking advantage of the myriad of possibilities for "adding value" to the overall experience by exploring the Layers resources for information associated with your interests while using a Google Lit Trip.

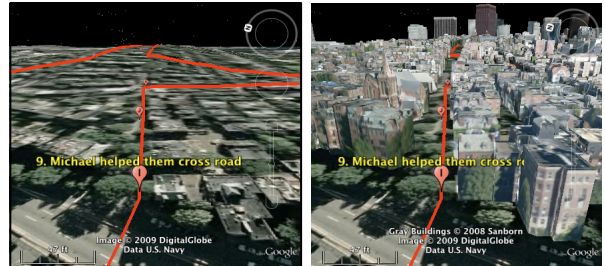


Fig. 4: Scene from *Make Way for Ducklings*. Left without 3D Buildings layer selected; Right with 3D Buildings layer selected.

## 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 Google Lit Trip file rather than allowing users to control when to move to the next place mark and how long to stay there. Automatically flying a file also eliminates the possibility of users taking appropriate "side trips" at their own discretion as they move through a Google Lit Trip.

By manually controlling the use of a GoogleLitTrip, users can coordinate their interaction with the Google Lit Trip 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.

1. **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.
2. **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 title text indicates that there is actual content in the pop-up window. This will cause the place marker description window to appear.



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### “Special” Place Marks

Not all place marks indicate locations in Google Earth. The icons for Germany 1941 and for Ancient Palestine in Fig. 5 indicates the presence of an image overlay.

The transparency level of the overlay can be controlled with the Transparency Slider that appears between the Places section of the left hand column and the Layers section of the left hand column.

1. Clicking the Transparency icon (Fig. 5 blue) reveals the transparency slider. This allows you to see the overlay as opaque giving the best detail of the overlay or in various degrees of transparency allowing both the overlay and the Google Earth surface to be seen allowing for "then and now" comparisons, or to make the overlay invisible allowing you to see the best detail of the Google Earth surface.

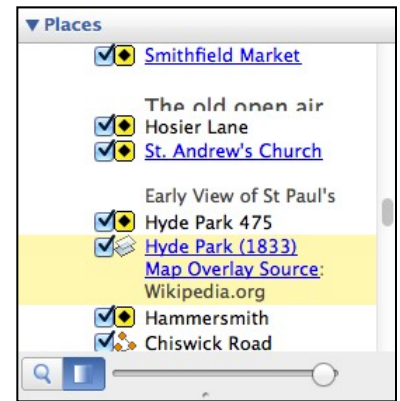


Fig. 5: Overlay icons look like two sheets of paper, one above the other.

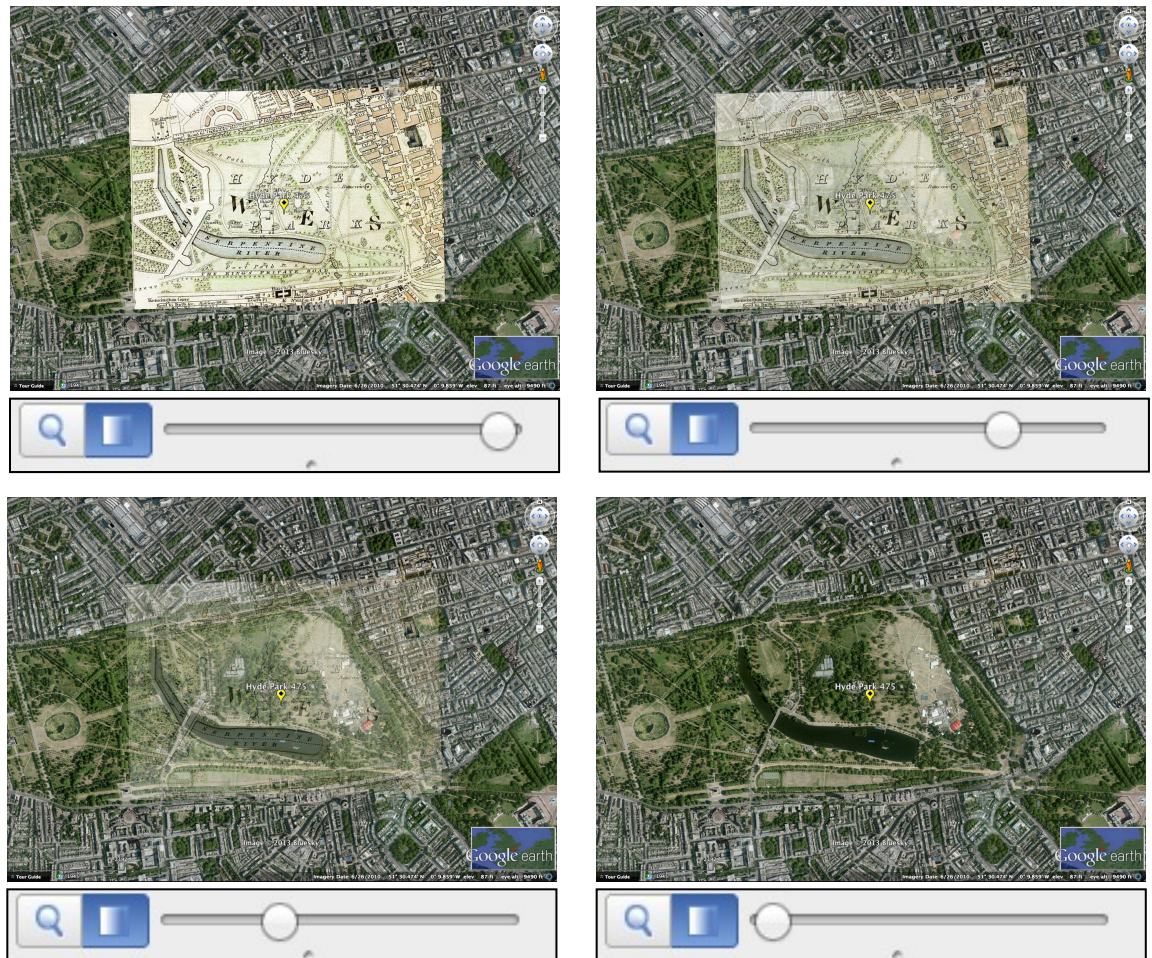


Fig. 6: The Transparency slider causes overlay images to fade from opaque to transparency as it is moved from right to left.

## **“Special” Folders**

Occasionally you will find a folder at the end of a Google Lit Trip with a name like “errata,” or “Ignore.” (as in the famous line from the *Wizard of Oz*, “Ignore the man behind the curtain!”). Whatever it is called, it is simply a folder that contains items that are necessary for the Lit Trip to exist, but not necessary for the user to “visit.” The most common items found in these folders are the path lines marking the journey of the book. They need to show while taking a Google Lit Trips, but they don’t need to clutter up the list of place marks, overlays, and folders. Though curiosity might have you want to take a peek at these items, there really is “nothing to see” there. But, then again, we have no secrets so go ahead and take a look if you’d like.

## **Final Note**

The first time Google Lit Trip 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.