

## What this is

The *Innovative Instructor* is an article series (<https://ctei.jhu.edu/ii>) and a blog (<https://ii.library.jhu.edu>) related to teaching excellence at Johns Hopkins

## Article categories

### Best Practice

How to use technologies and apply innovative instructional methods

### Pedagogy

Hopkins professors share successful strategies for teaching excellence

### Technology

Information about emerging technologies, who is using them, and why you should know

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<https://ctei.jhu.edu/ii>

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## About the CTEI

The Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation partners with faculty, postdocs, and graduate students to extend instructional impact by connecting innovative teaching strategies and instructional technologies

CENTER for  
TEACHING  
EXCELLENCE &  
INNOVATION



## ArcGIS StoryMaps

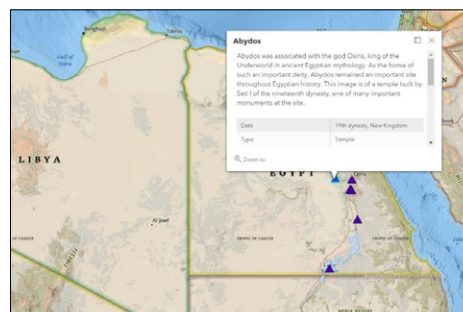
Lena Denis, Librarian, JHU Data Services

## What it is

ArcGIS StoryMaps is an immersive, interactive web-based presentation tool that gives you the power to share your research in narrative form at a single URL you can share with as few or as many people as you would like. As the name implies, the format was originally developed for showcasing web-created maps, and it does so effectively, but even if you don't have any maps in your presentation at all, StoryMaps provides a visually appealing media-rich format for displaying images, video, and embedded graphics of all kinds. ArcGIS StoryMaps is a paid, licensed platform, but the Sheridan Libraries' Data Services department mediates free access for all Hopkins affiliates.

## Who produced it

ArcGIS StoryMaps is one platform within the suite of applications that comprise ArcGIS Online, a proprietary series of web-based GIS (Geographic Information Systems) products owned by Esri (Environmental Systems Research Institute). Esri has created and maintained GIS software since 1969, and its products are widely used throughout universities, governments, non-profits, and the commercial sector today. Esri's products facilitate creating maps and analyzing geographic data of all kinds. However, ArcGIS StoryMaps does not require any GIS or cartographic knowledge, as it is meant to be a presentation platform that integrates extant maps and data with narrative text and graphics.



Example of a pop-over a map that can appear in a StoryMap



## ArcGIS StoryMaps

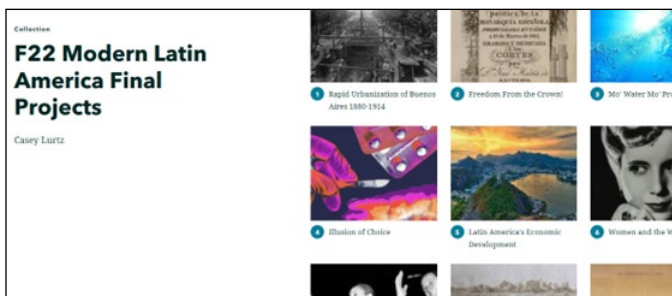
## Why it matters

ArcGIS StoryMaps is a valuable tool for instruction and research sharing because it can replace traditional presentation formats such as PowerPoint or Google Slides, in terms of representing narrative and graphics in an appealing way, while also going much further. It integrates embedded interactive and audiovisual content seamlessly, and it provides navigational capabilities through web maps and other forms of data. Additionally, the application has several benefits characteristic of web-based platforms.

1. ArcGIS StoryMaps does not have the system interoperability issues that slides-based presentations often do.
2. Sending the URL that points to a StoryMap is the only necessary step for sharing the presentation.
3. StoryMaps can be found in web search results, if public sharing is enabled.
4. StoryMaps can be viewed from a browser on any web-connected device, including mobile phones, making it much easier to access than traditional presentation formats.

## How it can be used

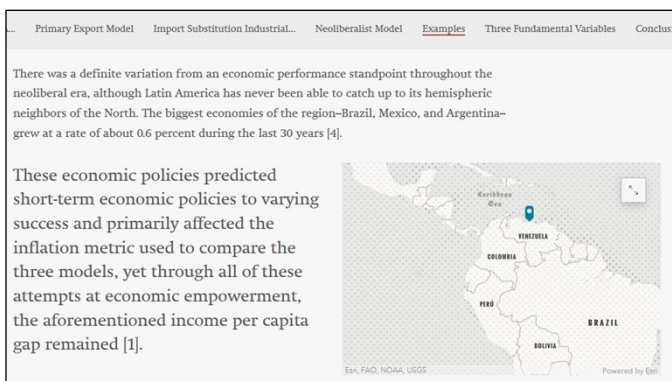
Practically any content you need to present visually can be turned into an ArcGIS StoryMap. You can share your research, your teaching materials, public-facing presentations, and even personal experiences like a travel journal. Many people use the StoryMaps format in lieu of slides for their presentations, and some people have even used it as an online portfolio of their work. The format is adaptable and works well for a variety of media and image-heavy use cases.



Home page for Modern Latin America class final projects. Each image and title links to a student project.



StoryMaps allow for immersive cover images at the beginning of presentations, such as in this title image for Jaime Martinez's project, "Latin America's Economic Development."



This screenshot shows the variety of text-based visuals and narrative aids such as locator maps available in StoryMaps, also from Martinez's presentation.



This screenshot shows a timeline feature, complete with illustrations, available in StoryMaps. This example comes from Esperanza Woei's final project, "Silencing the Aztecs & their Descendants."

Professor Casey Lurtz, in the History department, has been using ArcGIS StoryMaps and Collections – the name for a group of StoryMaps consolidated under one link – in her Mapping Mexico and Modern Latin America classes for several years. She described her classes' first iterations of StoryMaps use in an interview for the 2021 Hub article "Embracing the Change," (<https://hub.jhu.edu/2021/06/21/krieger-virtual-in-person-hybrid/>) which also includes images and links to how they were configured. Professor Lurtz developed a formula that she has continued with each class, in which students create final presentations in StoryMaps that combine interactive map layers they make along with embedded content and images that enrich the data and the narrative text. She then combines them in a Collection, which can be viewed and shared at a single URL, such as this one that links out to her fall 2022 Modern Latin America class's projects: <https://arcg.is/1y1mX00>. StoryMaps features allow her students to display and explain their findings in a variety of creative ways. Examples can be found on the left of this page.

## How to get started

- If you want to jump in and start playing with the platform, you can go straight to <https://storymaps.arcgis.com>
  - NOTE: you will be prompted to sign in and you MUST log in through a Hopkins account to get the free institutional access we provide! For step-by-step instructions and screenshots to sign in to any ArcGIS products including StoryMaps, see our GIS software FAQs: <https://guides.library.jhu.edu/gis/faq>
- If you would like a longer introduction to learning how to use StoryMaps with materials from our past StoryMaps workshops, see: <https://github.com/jhu-data-services/storymaps-workshop-files>
- Feel free to email Data Services, [dataservices@jhu.edu](mailto:dataservices@jhu.edu), if you have further questions about ArcGIS StoryMaps. We answer inquiries within 2 business days.

In addition to maintaining institutional access to GIS software, the Data Services department of the Sheridan Libraries provides consultations and workshops on a wide variety of topics around data management, access, sharing, and visualizations. See our website for more information:

<https://dataservices.library.jhu.edu>

## Author's Background

Lena Denis

Librarian, JHU Data Services



Lena Denis (she/her) is the Geospatial Data, GIS, and Maps Librarian in the Data Services department of the Sheridan Libraries. She stewards the Libraries' Map Collection as well as providing consultations and workshops for maps and GIS topics.