

Nineteenth-Century Slave Narratives: Building a Digital Story Map

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Artifact type: Assignment

Developed for: Upper-level “general education” undergraduate course

Audience: Upper-level students across majors

Time required: Two weeks

Method and tool: Digital mapping with ArcGIS

Description:

Creating a digital story map allows students to use words and visual images to tell a story about one enslaved African-American living in the United States within the institution of chattel slavery. This project is the culmination of a semester-long course during which we read autobiographies written by Harriet Jacobs, Henry Bibb, Frederick Douglass, Solomon Northup, and other enslaved African Americans who wrote passionate narratives designed to tell the truth about slavery and thereby persuade their readers to support the abolition of slavery.

Students decide how to “reframe” these stories for our 21st-century audience. What will their audience already know about slavery? What misconceptions might they have? Putting each story “on the map” brings these historical figures into the 21st-century by locating them (and their families) in one particular geographical region, tracing the routes they followed when they tried to escape, were sold away from their families, or tried to build a life in the North.

Supporting materials:

Assignments and assessment rubrics

Nineteenth-Century Slave Narratives - Building a Digital Story Map

Building a Digital Story Map is the final project for our course on antebellum slavery in the United States. This project pulls together an understanding of the realities of chattel slavery and the skills we've been practicing -- how to think like a historian and how to write about slavery by using and analyzing key quotes from primary sources. Twenty-First-Century Digital Story Maps add a visual element to the stories that the nineteenth-century slave narratives tell. For our final project, we will create a Digital Story Map that focuses on one story about the lives of Henry and Malinda Bibb.

Our Reading Responses have all focused on the realities of escape. The Digital Story Map will also focus on escape, comparing the experiences of Henry Bibb and his wife Malinda. Although both were born into slavery and both wanted freedom, only Henry did escape to live in the North. Our maps will work to tell this story and to explain why Malinda remained in slavery. The "why" part of the story is your argument, one that you have been thinking about all semester, as we've compared the chances of escape for various people in each of the slave narratives.

The Final Project has Four Parts:

1. **Mining-the-Chapters Paper (25 points) - Due Monday, April 23rd.**
 2. **Creating a Base Map (15 points) - We'll do this work together on Monday, April 23rd.**
 3. **In-Class Workshops - One Digital Story Map Panel (10 points) - Due Monday, April 30th (Collin, Mason, Tatiana, Olivia) and Wednesday, May 2nd (Jordan, Eric, Brittany, Elle, Evan).**
 4. **The Final Digital Story Map (100 points) - Due Wednesday, May 9th at 2:00 p.m.**
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1. Mining-the-Chapters Paper (25 points)

The first step in creating a Digital Story Map is mining a primary source for all of its information regarding location, the realities of slavery in that location, and (if applicable) the chances of escape. We read slave narratives to find out when and where a person was enslaved, what his/her life was like at that location, what routes s/he used while attempting to escape, whether those attempts succeeded or failed, as well as when and where s/he finally settled in the United States. You will be assigned two chapters from the narrative to mine for this data. Consider the information we'll need to create a map and provide that information in your paper.

Assigned Chapters: Collin (Chapters 1-2), Mason (Chapters 3-4), Tatiana (Chapters 5-6), Elle (Chapters 7-8), Jordan (Chapters 9-10), Eric (Chapters 11-12), Brittany (Chapters 13-14), Olivia (Chapters 15-16), Evan (Chapters 18-19). Note: I have intentionally skipped Chapter 17 and the end of the book.

Suggested Format: 1. Start with a brief summary of the chapter and then move to specifics about time, place, and significant events. 2. Quote the passages that indicate the location and time of key events. 3. Analyze these quotes if the information isn't clear. If Bibb says "I was in Detroit, raising money to free my family," that information is fairly straightforward. If he isn't

sure of his own location or his descriptions don't match any clear location, then it's your job to write about those complications. 4. Remember to separate each significant point into its own paragraph.

Here is an example of a paragraph for this paper:

In Chapter Seventeen, Henry Bibb publishes some letters that he exchanged with his former owner William Gatewood and then moves on to descriptions of his work as an abolitionist speaker. He is speaking, along with several other abolitionists, at meetings held in 1844 and 1845. Bibb describes his first public speech as follows: "The first time that I ever spoke before a public audience, was to give a narration of my own sufferings and adventures, connected with slavery. I commenced in the village of Adrian, State of Michigan, May, 1844" (178). While this first speaking engagement is clearly given a time and place, his next description is less clear. Bibb seems to be describing a speaking tour that started in Adrian, Michigan and continued "from Michigan to the State of Ohio, where I traveled over some of the Southern counties of that State" (178). Bibb describes the abolitionist lectures as unpopular, with many people being hostile to their message. He describes traveling from one meeting to the next as follows: "We appointed a series of meetings along on the Ohio River, in sight of the State of Virginia; and in several places we had Virginians over to hear us upon the subject. I recollect our having appointed a meeting in the city of Steubenville, which is situated on the bank of the river Ohio (179). These pages have two specific towns and one river -- Adrian, Michigan and Steubenville, Ohio and the Ohio River. To create a map of these travels, we need to find locations for each town, then we may be able to draw a line from Adrian to Steubenville that suggests which "southern counties" of Ohio were "in sight of the State of Virginia." This line should give a fairly clear idea of where Bibb's speaking tour took place.

Late Paper Policy: Because we are using these papers to create a base map during our class meeting, this paper is due at the start of class and can't be turned in late.

Format Requirements:

Use a 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced lines, and one-inch margins. Don't use a plastic cover or a separate title page, but do put your name, my name, the date, the course number, and the assignment title in the upper left-hand corner of only the first page of the paper. This heading is single-spaced.

Feel free to print on both sides of the paper. All multiple-page papers must be stapled. All quotes must be cited, and all sources must be documented. You may use MLA, APA, or Chicago-Style citation systems to cite your quotes and document your sources.

Mining the Chapters Paper - Grading Rubric (25 Points)				
Content	0-4	5 - 6 - 7	8 - 9 - 10	
10 points	Errors of fact are made throughout the paper. What is written doesn't reflect a careful reading of the	The observations made are largely accurate but sometimes vague. The information	The paper provides a clear summary of each chapter, using specific	

	assigned materials.	provided is less clear and lacking specifics.	details regarding time, place, and the key events.	
Quotes & Analysis 10 points	0-4 Few quotes are used to provide needed information re: time, place, and key events. The quotes do not reflect a careful reading of the assigned materials.	5 - 6 - 7 Quotes are consistently used, but sometimes lack the brief summary needed to lead into the quote or the thoughtful analysis needed to understand the quote.	8 - 9 - 10 Quotes are well chosen, reflecting a careful reading of the assigned chapters. Quotes are smoothly integrated into sentences and thoughtfully analyzed.	
Grammar, Mechanics, and Format 5 points	0-2 Vague, confusing, and wordy prose OR spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors distract from the content.	3-4 Spelling, punctuation, and grammar rules are generally followed, but some consistent errors are evident.	5 Paper is free of distracting spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.	

2. Creating a Base Map (15 points)

We'll be working together to create a base map that covers the entirety of Henry Bibb's narrative. Come to class on Monday, April 23rd with your Mining-the-Chapters paper, your book and your laptop. During class, we will "translate" the written information into points on the map.

3. In-Class Workshops - One Digital Story Map Panel (10 points)

On Monday, April 30th and Wednesday, May 2nd we will each be presenting one panel of our Digital Story Maps. These presentation days are similar to writing workshops, during which we'll share our work with the rest of the class and ask for suggestions on how to improve our work-in-progress.

4. The Digital Story Map (100 points)

A Digital Story Map is like a PowerPoint presentation with a split screen. On the right side of the screen is the base map and on the left side of the screen is a combination of images and text that tell a story. We are creating what is called a "text heavy" map. On the left side of the panel, we will be writing the same kind of paper we've been writing all semester, arguing

about the possibilities of escape and the institution of chattel slavery. Our Digital Story Maps will explain why Henry Bibb did escape from slavery, while his wife Malinda and their daughter Mary Frances did not. How you chose to explain their different fates will determine what you write, what images you chose to include, and what parts of the map you highlight on the right side of the panel.

Daily Coursework	
Wednesday April 18	Hands on workshop - Introduction to ArcGIS
Friday April 20	Practice Creating a Base Map - We'll use Chapter 17 in Bibb's narrative to learn how to place points, draw lines or use shapes, and add a map layer.
Monday April 23	Create a Base Map - We'll be using our Mining-the-Chapters papers to create a map that covers Bibb's entire book. Due today, Mining-the-Chapters paper.
Wednesday April 25	Make-up Census Workshop - If you are writing the optional Census Analysis paper OR you would like to include a screenshot of a census record in your map, come to this class.
Friday April 27	Hands on workshop - Story Map Panels - We'll be using the story map template on the ArcGIS platform to start building our story map, writing text on the left side and adding relevant images to this text and learning how to line up the base map on the right side. Two places to look for images are Getty Images and the Library of Congress at these links: https://www.gettyimages.com/photos/slavery?sort=mostpopular&mediatype=photography&phrase=slavery http://www.loc.gov/pictures/
Monday April 30	One-Panel Workshop – Digital Story Maps
Wednesday May 2	One-Panel Workshop – Digital Story Maps

Suggestions for Panel-by-Panel Structure: The panels of a story map are similar to the paragraphs in a written paper. **The first panel** (the introduction) gives the title, author, and publication date of the book. It provides brief summary for those unfamiliar with the narrative, and it ends with a thesis. **The following panels** move through the story in a logical order (like

well-structured body paragraphs) providing a clear focus for each separate panel with text and images that explain, clarify and support the thesis. **The last panel** is a Works Cited page that gives credit to all of the sources used for both images and text.

Format Requirements: The Digital Story Map must consist of 5-to-7 panels. It should have a title on the first panel and a final panel that lists all sources used to create the story map. Use a 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced lines for written text.

Turning in the Final Digital Story Map: To turn in your final project, you will share your Story Map in our group folder at ArcGIS.

Help is available: We are using in-class workshops to build these Story Maps. Ask me and your classmates questions as they come up during your work. You can also schedule a time to meet with me. My office hours and instructions for scheduling an appointment are listed on the syllabus. Help with digital projects is also available at the SNC Tech Bar. You can make an appointment to meet with a tutor, just as you would get help with a paper at the SNC Writing Center. Here is the link for the webpage. <https://www.snc.edu/its/services/techbar.html>

Digital Story Map - Grading Rubric (100 Points)				
Content	0-4	5 - 6 - 7	8 - 9 - 10	
10 points	Errors of fact are made throughout the paper. What is written doesn't reflect a careful reading of the assigned narrative.	The observations made are largely accurate but sometimes vague. The information provided is less clear and lacking specifics.	The paper demonstrates a clear understanding of the realities of slavery in the antebellum period, using the relevant course vocabulary and specific details from the narrative.	
Audience	0-4	5 - 6 - 7	8 - 9 - 10	
10 points	Little consideration is given to the unfamiliar reader. The title, author, year of publication are not included in the introduction. Little or no information about	The information that an unfamiliar reader needs is inconsistently provided, with some key information about the narrative	The writer clearly anticipates an audience who has not read the book, thoughtfully providing title,	

	people or events is provided.	missing from the story map.	author and year of publication early in the paper and consistently providing brief context to identify characters or significant plot points from the narrative.	
Thesis & Structure 10 points	0-4 The argument is missing, unclear, or unrelated to the assigned topic. The paper is a summary rather than an argument.	5 - 6 - 7 The thesis is on topic, but it lacks a clear focus and/or is less well articulated. The key elements of the argument are only clear at the end of the story map.	8 - 9 - 10 A clear, focused and persuasive argument is stated in the first panel. This thesis provides a clear structure for the panels that follow.	
Quotes & Analysis 10 points	0-4 Few quotes are used. The quotes do not reflect a careful reading of the assigned materials.	5 - 6 - 7 Quotes are consistently used, but sometimes lack the brief summary needed to lead into the quote or the thoughtful analysis needed to understand the quote.	8 - 9 - 10 Quotes are well chosen, reflecting a careful reading of the assigned narrative. Quotes are smoothly integrated into sentences and thoughtfully analyzed.	
Grammar & Mechanics 10 points	0-4 Vague, confusing, and wordy prose OR spelling, punctuation, and grammatical	5 - 6 - 7 Spelling, punctuation, and grammar rules are generally	8 - 9 - 10 Paper is free of distracting spelling, punctuation,	

	errors distract from the content.	followed, but some consistent errors are evident.	and grammatical errors.	
Images - Accurate and Appropriate 10 points	0-4 The images are identified inaccurately and/or are inappropriate in content or time period.	5 - 6 - 7 Some of the images are appropriate representations of chattel slavery and antebellum culture, but others are not. There are errors of fact in the image labels.	8 - 9 - 10 The images are historically appropriate, drawn from the nineteenth century or specifically reinterpreting aspects of antebellum culture. The images are accurately labeled.	
Images - Number and Credit 10 points	0-4 No images are included with the text. Images are used without crediting a source.	5 - 6 - 7 Fewer than two images are included with the text. The citations are missing and/or incorrect.	8 - 9 - 10 Two or more images are included with the text. Each image has a credit listed at the bottom of the panel.	
Map 15 points	0-5 The map position isn't relevant to the story. The information on the map is inaccurate.	6 - 7 - 8 - 9 Some panels are relevant to the story, but others are not. Most of the map points are accurate, but there are some errors in time or location.	10 - 13 - 15 The map moves with the text, focusing on the parts of the map that are relevant to the story being told. All the information on the map is accurate.	

<p>Format & Citations</p> <p>15 points</p>	<p>0-5</p> <p>The base map is missing, the panels are incomplete, and/or the last panel doesn't list all the relevant sources. The text is missing citations for the quotes used in the story map.</p>	<p>6 - 7 - 8 - 9</p> <p>Some panels have both map and all needed citations, but others do not. There may be too few or too many panels. The base map may be missing from some of the panels.</p>	<p>10 - 13 - 15</p> <p>The base map is present in every story panel and each source is listed on the last panel. There are 5 to 7 panels in the story map. Every quote is followed by a parenthetical citation.</p>	