



## My Summer Vacation

Create a Travel Journal using Discovery Education *unitedstreaming* & Google Earth

### Social Studies

#### Elementary School Geography Lesson plan

In this unit, grouped student will explore the geography of the United States. Students will create travel journals (or logs/blogs) supported with Google Earth location 'fly-bys' to discuss the five US places visited, including comparing and contrasting the physical characteristics of each region.

#### Standards:

- Students will be able to describe the human and physical characteristics of modern world regions, such as distribution of natural resources and modifications to the environment, by constructing, interpreting, and using appropriate maps, graphs, charts, and data.

#### Learning Objectives: The student will be able to,

- Identify and discuss the major geographic regions of the United States;
- Identify key features and vocabulary for each major geographic region of the United States;
- Present and compare group findings to determine if the class has similar definitions for each region.

#### Technology components:

- Discovery Education *unitedstreaming* account (<http://www.unitedstreaming.com>\*)
- Google Earth software (free download from <http://earth.google.com>)
- Computer with LCD projector and Internet connection
- Access to the Internet for teacher and student-based research
- Presentation software such as PowerPoint
- Graphic Organizing software such as Inspiration

#### Introduction:

- Using graphic organizing software such as Inspiration, have the students brainstorm ideas of places around the United States they've visited or would like to visit.
- Display the *unitedstreaming* image "A Map of North America" in front of the class and ask the students to group the locations according to geographic region.

#### Prior Knowledge:

- Discuss with the students key elements of biomes discussed in previous classes.

\*Visit [unitedstreaming.com](http://unitedstreaming.com) to see if your school has an account or to sign up for a 30 day free trial





### Present New Content:

- The teacher will use PowerPoint to introduce the major geographic regions by showing images and video segments of the US.
  - *Suggested unitedstreaming content:*
    - Map, United States and California.. IRC (2005).
    - American Geography Close-Ups: Maps, Regions, Resources, and Climate. Discovery Channel School (2005).
    - A Strategy for Studying Geography: Examining Physical Environment and People
- Have the students complete a KWL graphic organizer of the regions and have students brainstorm questions they'd like to know about each region. This will help guide the students as they complete their journals.
- Using Google Earth to present the SummerVacation.kmz file of what a completed project could look like.

### Independent Learning Experience:

- Divide the students into equal groups. Each group will create travel journals or logs/blogs/multimedia presentations discussing the five locations (one in each region) that they visited (or would like to have visited) on their summer vacation.
- Students will present a 10 minute overview of their Summer Vacation logs to the class with a discussion of each place they went. They will compare and contrast some of the physical characteristics of each region.
- Assign one region to each group, telling them they are to keep track of the key terms/characteristics that each group used describing the geography of their region. At the end of the unit, groups will create resource sheets about that region for the class for future reference.

### Cross-Curricular Lesson Extension:

- Add a math component by having the student use the Google Earth measure tool to include the total distance of their trip and discuss how long the trip would take to complete if they drove around the country.

### Additional research websites:

- Library of Congress: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/rrhtml/regdef.html>
- Students can also search for primary source information through a Google Search using the following keywords: "United States Geography"\*

### Feedback:

- Teacher circulates around the room providing ongoing feedback to small groups.





- Students should submit a rough draft of their 5 locations with key ideas behind each location half way through the project. Teacher will provide comments and guidance on next steps for each group.

**Assessment:**

- Use a scoring rubric provided to the students, in advance, evaluate each travel log and presentation.

**Transfer:**

- Provide students with a list of historical sites they can choose to visit and have each group use downloaded *unitedstreaming* videos and articles to research one of these sites. Present to the class critical information about the place and its historical significance.

**Citations:**

All About American Geography: The Pacific Region of the United States, Part Two: Mountains, Deserts, Valleys, and Agriculture. United Learning (2005).

All About American Geography: All About American Geography: The Southeastern Region of the United States, Part Two: Coastal Plains, Piedmont, and Mountains. United Learning (2004).

Understanding Places: Geography Basics. Rainbow Educational Media (1995).

*\*Selected clips from "All About American Geography" series presented by United Learning.*



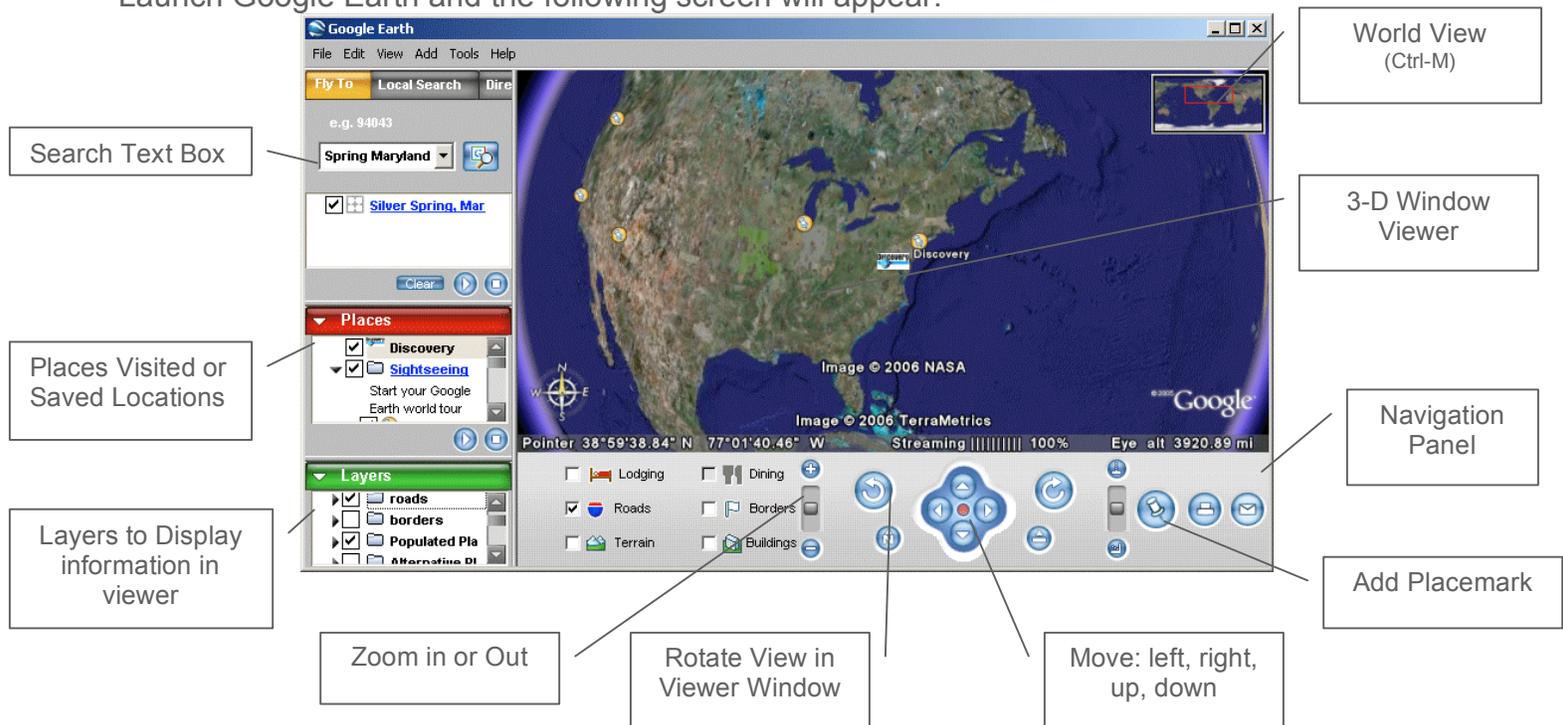


## Google Earth

Google Earth allows educators to add elements of satellite photography, world geography, locations, and images to their instructional lessons.

### Google Earth Viewer

Launch Google Earth and the following screen will appear:



### Fly To a Location

To have Google Earth 'fly-by' a location, type the city, state, or country into the Search Text Box. Google Earth will locate the position and the viewer window will 'fly' to the location.

- Click and hold in the viewer window to move around the location
- Use Google Earth's Zoom, Rotate, and Move tools from the menu bar to navigate and explore the location

### World View

Press Ctrl-M to open the world view map in the top right hand corner of the Viewer Window.

- Double-click on any location in the World Viewer to jump to that location
- Use Google Earth's Zoom, Rotate, and Move tools from the menu bar to navigate and explore the location



## Making a Placemark:

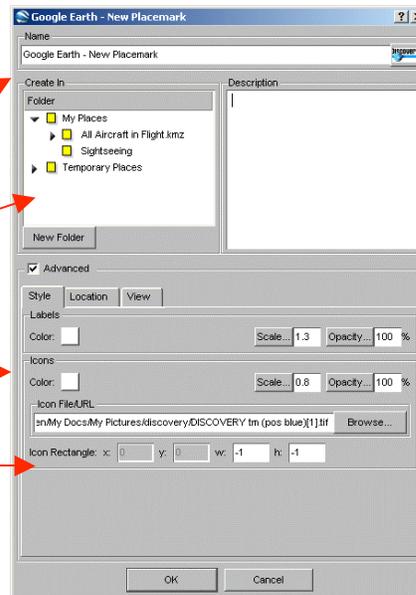
1. Position the viewer in the location where you want to add a Placemark.
2. Click on the 'Add Placemark' pushpin icon  in the navigation panel.
3. The New Placemark dialog appears and a New Placemark icon is centered in the viewer inside a flashing yellow square.

- Position the Placemark by clicking and holding and moving to the exact location you want it.



- In the New Placemark dialogue box, edit the following properties:

- Name for the Placemark
- Destination folder, existing folder or create a new one
- Color of Label or Placemark icon
- Image to represent the Placemark



4. Select a folder to hold the Placemark or create a new one.
5. Click the OK button to apply the information you entered.
6. Once created, editing can be completed by 'right' clicking on the Placemark icon and selecting 'edit...'



### Inserting a *unitedstreaming* video segment inside a Placemark:

1. Log into *unitedstreaming* and search or browse the video segment.
2. Right click on the download icon  and select 'copy shortcut'
3. Open up the Placemark by right-clicking on it and click EDIT
4. Paste Shortcut Location inside the Description text box.  
Anything that is put inside this box will appear when the Placemark is opened.
5. When visiting the Placemark, double click on the image/icon to open and view images or video segments.

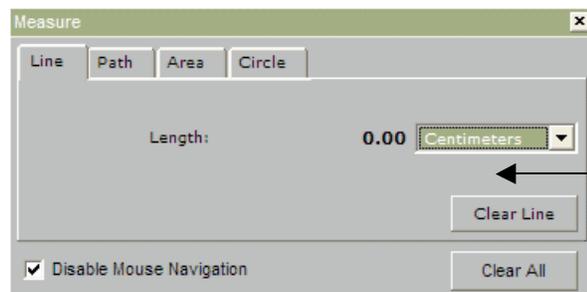
### Inserting Funk and Wagnall articles inside a Placemark:

You can copy and paste any of the Funk and Wagnall text found inside *unitedstreaming* that accompanies many of the videos into the Description text box.

### Measuring

Use the Measure window in the Tools menu to measure length, area, and circumference as follows:

1. Position the imagery you want to measure within the 3D viewer and make sure you are viewing the earth from top-down (type U) and with terrain turned off for best accuracy.
2. From the Tools menu, select Measure. The Measure dialog box appears.



Consider moving the dialog box to a region of your screen that doesn't obstruct the 3D viewer.

3. Choose the type of shape you want to use to measure:
  - Line allows you to measure from point to point
  - Path allows you to create multiple stops on a journey or trip to measure the total distance



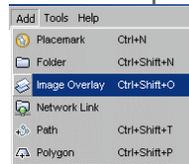
4. Choose the unit of measure for length; perimeter, area, radius, or circumference, as applicable.
5. Click in the 3D viewer to set the beginning point for your shape:
  - For a line: click on the beginning point and the ending point, the distance will appear in the Measure dialogue box.
  - For a Path: click once for the beginning point, indicated by a red dot, click along points of your path and a yellow line connects each point as you move the mouse. Each additional click adds a new line to the path. The total units for the shape are defined in the Measure dialog.
6. Click 'Clear' to reset the measure tool. To close, click on the 'x' on the top right corner of the dialogue box.

### Creating an Image Overlay

An image overlay is a picture that you can add over the Google Earth satellite view.

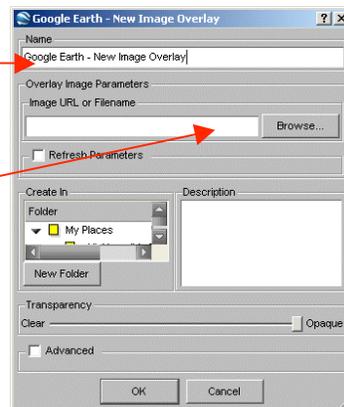
1. Position the viewer in the location where you want to place the overlay image file.

2. Select Image Overlay from the Add menu.



3. The New Image Overlay dialog appears. Edit the following properties:

- Provide a descriptive name in the Name field.
- Browse to locate the icon or image on your computer
- At this point, the image appears in the 3D viewer, with green anchor points. Click and drag these points to position the image.



4. Position the image in the viewer to your preferences and click OK to complete the creation.