StoryMaps in the Social Sciences!

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Handout

1. What is a StoryMap and why use them?

- [StoryMaps](#) are a service offered by ESRI (the makers of ArcGIS).

- They are permanent webpages that combine conventional web maps with multimedia content and text – all working together to tell a story in a way that is visually appealing.

- They are extremely easy to make, and lend themselves well to conveying spatial research in a visually appealing manner. This is especially great if your research will be disseminated amongst a wide audience.

- They are spatially geared alternatives to powerpoint, presenting 2D and 3D spatial data in an intuitive and directed manner. You control the content (in other words, you're telling the story!), and the audience controls the pace, scrolling down at their own speed.

- It is free! (if you are an Oxford Uni student or member of staff).

Some examples of our favourite StoryMaps include:

[Keeng Kumu: Indigenous Cartographer](#)

[Mapping Mount Everest](#)

[The Global Lives of Indian Cotton](#)

[Abergavenny Castle: A Tale of Conquest, Betrayal, and Resilience](#)

2. What do you need to get started?

'Tier 1' requirements: Very little is required to tell a great story
- An institutional ArcGIS Online Account + Required Permissions. Contact Dr. John Pouncett at john.pouncett@arch.ox.ac.uk and tell him your plans.
- A story to tell! (Data, results, etc).
- Digital media that you have permission to use (Pictures, video, diagrams, etc.).

'Tier 2' requirements: More options for customisation
In addition to Tier 1 requirements…
- ArcGIS Pro and basic GIS skills, to upload shapefiles, custom basemaps, 3D imagery.
  - This is a good introductory course offered by ESRI: https://www.esri.com/training/catalog/57630435851d31e02a43f007/getting-started-with-arcgis-pro/
  - Workflow: Create content in ArcGIS Pro, then upload it to ArcGIS Online. Storymaps can only use spatial data hosted on ArcGIS Online.

- Tier 2 is not "better" than Tier 1, it just provides more options for customisation.

Types of media you can use:

- Images (.jpg, .png, .gif, .svg): 20mb max.

- Videos (mpeg., or, Embedded video from streaming service): 50mb max.

- Try to minimise the size of your images so that everything loads quickly.

3. Making a StoryMap

- Go to https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories
- Sign in to your Arcgis online account

- Click "New Story" and choose one of the options.

- Start with writing your title, uploading a cover image, and setting your theme.

- Ensure you hit 'publish' **frequently** to save your story as you're going along

- Privacy settings: when you're still working on your story you can keep settings to private, but when you're ready for it to go out to the world, select public. To do this, click on the arrow button next to the publish button.

4. Uploading an image with text (basic)

- As you hover your cursor over the storymap page a plus sign appears. Select the plus sign wherever you want to insert the image.

- Select the image option

- Choose your image

- You can change the size of the image and its location by hovering over the image and pressing the tooltip options

- Text can be added anywhere, and you can adjust the size by selecting it and pressing on the tooltip options

5. Holy Trinity

Map tours, Sidecars, and Swipe

In our opinion, these options are what makes storymaps so special! Try them all, and see which combination is best for your narrative. Below is an explanation of how to use them.

6. Map tours

Guided tours are directed tours, and can be either map-based (map displayed prominently) or media-based (Media displayed prominently)

Explorer tours do not present sites in any particular order, and can be

- Select the plus button

- Select map tour

- Select Map Tour and type

- Choose your basemap

- Place your point on the map and tick custom zoom level

- Add text to annotate your point if appropriate

7. Side cars

- Select the plus button

- Select side car

- Choose between floating or docked (perhaps try both and decide which looks best yourself)

- Upload your image

- Resize as above

- Add text

8. Swipe
- Obtain imagery showing the same scene, or create two web maps with complementary layers

- Select the plus button

- Select swipe

- Upload images OR insert the two web maps into both panels

9.Remainder of the unholy tools

1. Buttons: used for embedding links.

2. Separators: simply used for dividing paragraphs if you feel the need.

3. Map: you can use this to produce an express map, which is a way of quickly producing a map with some annotations and shape files. You can include annotations on the left hand side. As the audience scrolls over the annotations they have a little pop up which tells them where they are.

4. Image gallery: this is a new feature. It lets you upload all of your pictures at once as a mosaic.

5. Videos: you can link a youtube video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xzKm7o0Py2s Or you can upload your own video which gives you a bit more control.

6. Audio: very simple, upload an audio file.

7. Embed: a way of incorporating web apps from other providers.

10. Tier two uploading custom rasters for basemaps, and shapefiles

In ArcGIS Pro, for both rasters and basemaps, right click on layer in the Contents pane. Select sharing-> Share as web layer.

For vectors, make sure the following options are selected:

For rasters, make sure the following options are selected:
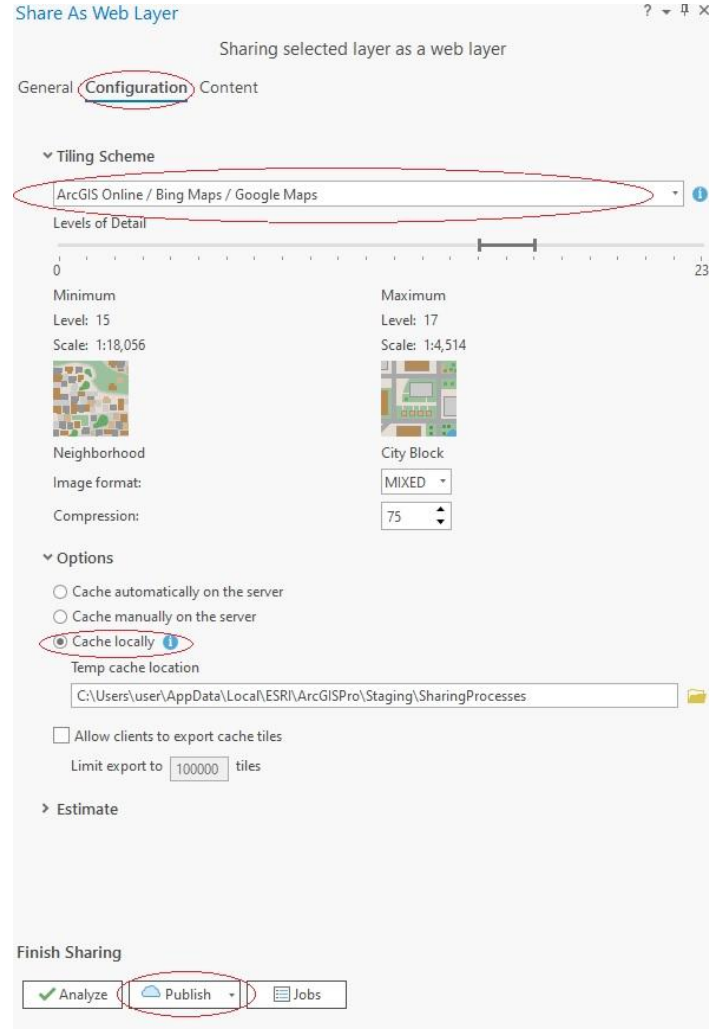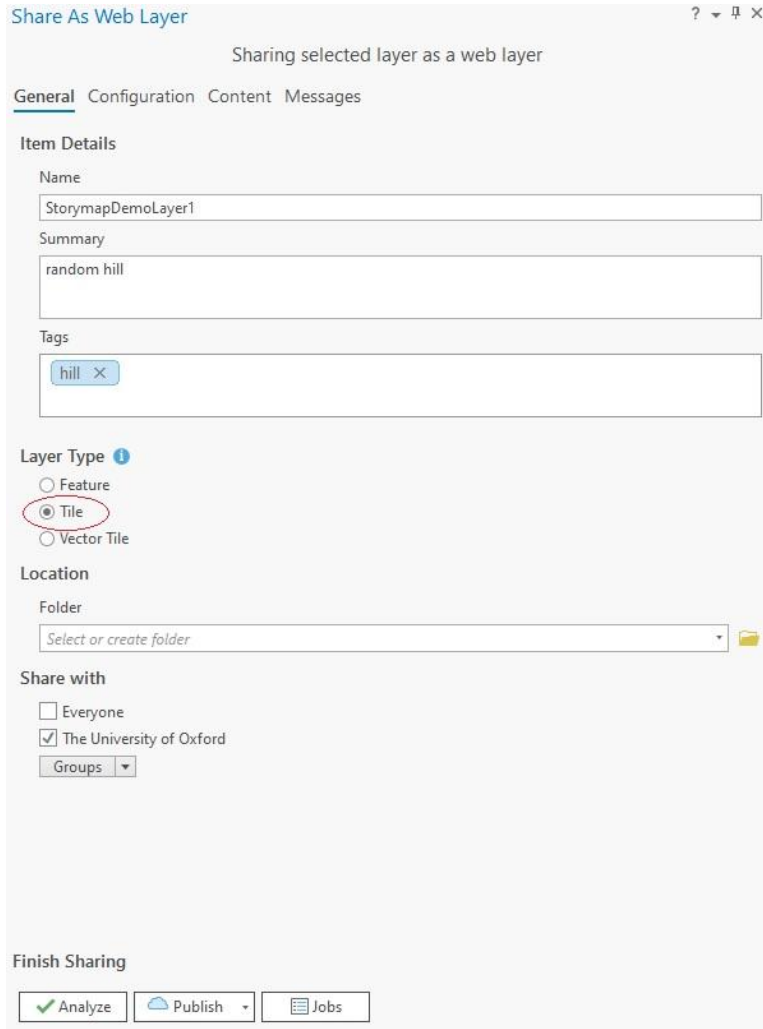
This will save the files as layers in ArcGIS Online. Make a new map in ArcGIS Online and add the desired layers, and save it. This should make it available in StoryMaps.

11. Limitations of StoryMaps

- Layout and picture sizes cannot be easily customized.

- Collaboration is slightly problematic, but contact John Pouncett for more options.

- Hosting and access once you leave the organization.

12. Some considerations and helpful tips

- Write a narrative *before* making the map! Let a compelling story guide the placement of media, and not the other way around. (This is a general rule, and doesn't apply to all situations).

- Remember to keep file sizes small.

- Check the usage agreements of datasets.

- Break up the narrative with different types of media to keep things from becoming monotonous.

- You are not limited to the default themes. You can add your own fonts, colours via the theme editor.

- There is an attribution section at the bottom, and a logo section at the top left.

- Save, or "publish", often. You can make it private until you are ready to share it with the world.

- See the official [ESRI StoryMaps](#) tips and tricks.

Thank you for listening! We hope that you found our talk useful. :)

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at megan.kirkpatrick@arch.ox.ac.uk and jonathan.lim@arch.ox.ac.uk