**21 media-rich, interactive map activities for deeper learning**

**1:Text**

This is the easiest feature to add to a MyMap, but it’s probably the most useful. Students can gather facts or other data and add it to the text field in a pin (see right). Plus, they can change the title, too.

**2: Images**

When you click the little camera icon (see right) when editing a pin, it brings up the image and video menu. From there, you can add images from your device, using the webcam, from your Google Drive, and even Google Images.

**Learn more: [How to get and use free images the RIGHT way in class](https://ditchthattextbook.com/how-to-get-and-use-free-images-the-right-way-in-class/)**

**3: Sketches with Paper**

Paper is my favorite iPad app. It’s free, and it’s like a digital sketch pad with all these drawing tools. It’s great for drawing pictures, but it also lets you create great flowcharts and sketchnotes. These can be included in a map to add depth to a pin. Save your sketches as an image file on the iPad when you’re done. Then upload them to your Google Drive. Click the camera icon to add an image and use the Google Drive tab to pull those sketches in.

**4:YouTube Video**

You can add a YouTube video directly on a pin. When someone clicks on that pin, he/she can watch the video directly from the pin without jumping off to YouTube in another window. Click the camera icon and then use the “More” tab to find YouTube options. You can add more than one video by clicking the “+” button in the bottom right of the video you just added.

**5: Screencast Video**

Don’t just rely on what you can find on YouTube. Let students create their own videos with a screencast tool like [Screencastify](http://screencastify.com/). Screencasting lets you take video of what’s on your computer screen (with audio and your voice if you want). Once it’s complete, upload it to YouTube and add it to your pin. (Or if YouTube isn’t an option for students, upload it to Google Drive and provide a link to the video in the pin instead.)

**6: Video, image or web story with Adobe Spark**

[Adobe Spark](https://spark.adobe.com/) is a web tool that lets you create beautiful text/image visuals, eye-catching webpages and animated videos. When you’re done with any of these, they can be included in a map by uploading the image, adding the video to YouTube and then to your map, or providing a link to what you’ve created.

**Learn more: [15 ways to create unforgettable multimedia with Adobe Spark](https://ditchthattextbook.com/13-ways-to-create-unforgettable-multimedia-with-adobe-spark/)**

**7: Flipgrid Video**

Students can record a Flipgrid video and share a link to their video inside the map. Or you can create a link to a Flipgrid topic at a specific location on the map and students can record videos sharing something that they learned about that place.

**Learn more: [Flipgrid for ALL! 50+ ways to use Flipgrid in your class](https://ditchthattextbook.com/catch-the-flipgrid-fever-15-ways-to-use-flipgrid-in-your-class/)**

**8: Custom Website**

Want to really get deep? Students can create their own websites using Google Sites or Microsoft Sway (or you can create a website for them to view). These free websites can include multiple pages and subpages, visually appealing themes and lots of content. Provide a link to student websites (or individual pages on a site) in a map.

**Learn more:  [20 Google Sites tips and tricks](https://ditchthattextbook.com/20-google-sites-tips-and-tricks/)**

**9: Infographic**

Infographics are super popular because they present a ton of information in a fun, stimulating way. Students can create these infographics with the text, icons and visual elements provided. Plus, they can upload their own pictures or Creative Commons pictures they find (that they already have the rights to use) to these infographics. When finished, a link or a copy of the infographic image can be uploaded to a pin on a map.

**Learn more: [Creating eye-popping infographics with Google Drawings](https://ditchthattextbook.com/creating-eye-popping-infographics-with-google-drawings/)**

**10: Padlet Wall or Wakelet Collection**

[Padlet](http://padlet.com/) makes collaborative information gathering easy. Plus, it lets you organize and arrange that information as if it’s on a digital bulletin board. Wakelet's new column layout lets users create a similar Padlet style collection. Students can gather lots of links to various informational sites, videos, blog posts, articles, etc., on a Padlet board. Then, they can share the link to them in a pin on the map.

**Learn more: [20 ways to use Wakelet in your class](https://ditchthattextbook.com/wakelet/) and**

**[20 useful ways to use Padlet in class now](https://ditchthattextbook.com/20-useful-ways-to-use-padlet-in-class-now/)**

**11: An interactive activity**

Nearpod has tons of virtual field trips embedded in their interactive activities. Search through [hundreds of lesson](https://nearpod.com/t/search?q=virtual%20field%20trip)s like, [January 6, 2021: Storming the  US Capitol](https://nearpod.com/t/social-studies/8th/january-6-2021-storming-of-the-capitol-L78804639), and link it to a pin on the map.

**12: Digital resources from PBS LearningMedia**

[PBS LearningMedia](http://pbslearningmedia.com/) hosts more than 100,000 digital learning resources, including videos, multimedia activities and more. Chances are there’s a good resource to help students dig deeper there. Have students add a link to one of their videos or resources to a pin on a map.

**13: Google document, slide presentation or drawing**

A MyMaps map can be a great jumping-off point to viewing files in Google Docs, Slides, Drawings and more. If students have already created those files in Google, they might as well share them in a related MyMaps map! Use the blue “Share” button in the Google files to generate a link that you can share in a pin on a map.

**14: Survey**

This is another easy way to make a map interactive. Create a survey using Google Forms and add a link to it in a pin on the map. Also, consider clicking the “See summary charts and text responses” option in the settings button (looks like a gear) when you’re done creating the survey. That lets everyone see what everyone else has voted for and written while taking the survey.

**Learn more: [25 practical ways to use Google Forms in class, school](https://ditchthattextbook.com/20-practical-ways-to-use-google-forms-in-class-school/)**

**15: Wikipedia article (or other encyclopedic article)**

[Wikipedia](http://wikipedia.org/) is a dirty word to some teachers, but with being a collaborative site with millions of eyes on it, [the community keeps it as accurate as most encyclopedias](https://ditchthattextbook.com/2012/02/11/untitled/). Linking to a Wikipedia article is an easy way to put an additional layer of basic facts about a topic at the fingertips of students.

**16: Historic newspapers (Google News Archive)**

Google has archived [centuries of newspapers from around the world](https://news.google.com/newspapers). Looking back at how newspapers have covered history through the centuries can give a unique perspective. Links to individual newspaper articles ([like this one from 1845 that describes a fire that destroyed $6,000,000 in property](https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=R4LAE1HziJcC&dat=18450815&printsec=frontpage&hl=en)) can be added to a pin on a map.

**17: Views from the street**

[Google Maps Street View](http://maps.google.com/) lets viewers see what life is like on the streets and sidewalks of cities all around the world. From MyMaps, it’s pretty easy to access. If you add a pin by searching a location in the search bar at the top, that pin will automatically have a “View in Google Maps” link. Click that link, then drag the yellow “peg man” in the bottom right corner of the screen onto the map in that location. If there are images of that location, you’ll be able to see it from the street in 360-degree panoramic glory. (Note: If you’re using an iPad, other tablet or smartphone, you’ll want to download and use the “Street View” app to make this work.)

**Learn more: [Google Maps walking tours with Street View and Screencastify](https://ditchthattextbook.com/google-maps-walking-tours-with-street-view-and-screencastify/)**

**18: Twitter account or hashtag**

See what’s happening up to the moment by including a Twitter account or hashtag in a pin. If there’s a leader, a celebrity or any other important person connected to a location, include a link to that person’s Twitter profile to see what he/she is up to.

**Learn more: [A beginner’s guide to Twitter for educators](https://ditchthattextbook.com/a-beginners-guide-to-twitter-for-educators/)**

**19: Layers**

This is a great feature of MyMaps for organizing alike content. By organizing pins in layers, you’ll be able to see a list of pins in each layer. Plus, by unchecking a layer in the list, you can turn all of those pins on and off. If there are a few (or several) major categories for the pins you’re creating, you may want to organize them in layers. (Use the “Add layer” button and then drag pins to the corresponding layer.)

**20: Driving, biking or walking routes (with destinations)**

Want to see how long it will take to travel from one pin to another? Click the button at the top with three circles connected by lines. This will let you create walking, biking or driving routes. You can also generate step-by-step directions and even see you how far apart they are.

**21: Lines and Shapes**

Use the same button for routes, but choose “Add line or shape”. Draw a line to see how far it is from one location to another. Or draw a shape to display the area in square miles and the perimeter in miles.