Making a StoryMap

This guide is meant to help you with making an ArcGIS StoryMap. In a StoryMap you can tell a story with maps, images, videos and text. The story is interactive, which means that the viewer has the possibility to scroll through the story themselves and interact with the maps and other media. For example, the viewer can zoom in on the maps and click on locations to get more information.

There are a lot of functionalities within a StoryMap, the most important ones will be covered, step by step. In the guide you will find two icons to help you understand what you need to do: ► is used to indicate an action you have to take. An explanation is indicated with ●.

►Go to https://www.arcgis.com/index.html and log into your account.
►In the upper menu, navigate to 'Content'. On the left side of the page, under the blue menu, click 'Create'.
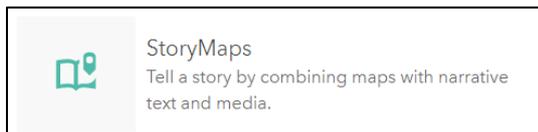►Under 'Create apps', click 'StoryMaps.

Figure 1 - Creating a StoryMap

● A new tab will open, what you see now is the StoryMaps builder. You don't need to use programming, you can configure everything using the settings. You can make your StoryMap using 'templates', so you can easily combine media (maps, images, videos) and text.

● Before you start building your StoryMap, it is good to think about what message you want to convey. Ask yourself who is going to view your StoryMap (the target audience) and what they should learn from it (the goal). If you have received an assignment from your teacher, take a good look at which parts you must include in your StoryMap, do not forget these.

► You always start with a cover image or video. This is also the place for the title and subtitle. Your name will be automatically added from your account information, but you can change this if you want. Select a photo or video and add it as a background.
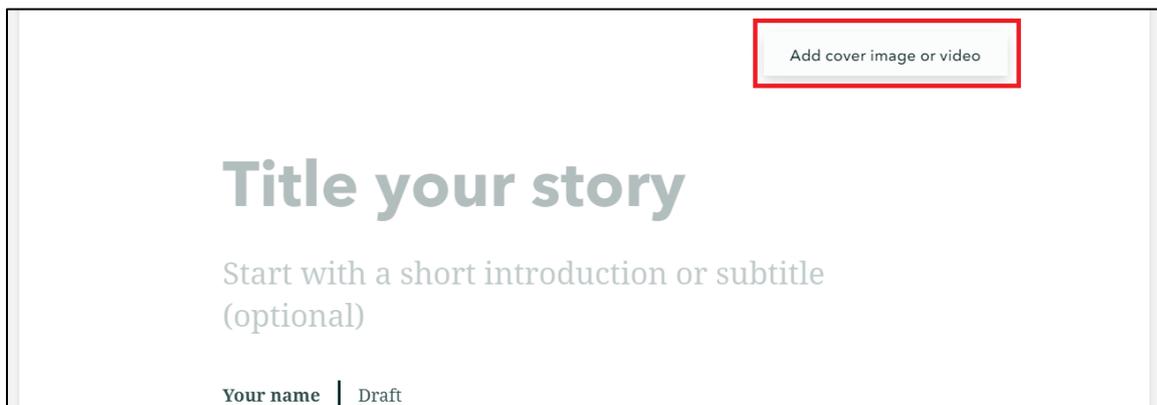

Figure 2 - adding a photo or video to the cover

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► It is possible to change the design of the cover. To do this, click on 'Design' in the upper menu. Here you can change the cover to be a full page or side-by-side. There are also some more design options (navigation, theme and logo) if you scroll down in this section.

● The StoryMap will be saved automatically. It will only be visible for you to see and edit. When you are ready, you can publish the story so others can also view it. How to do this will be covered further on in the guide.

► After adding the cover (title and image/video), scroll down and click on the plus sign (+). This is where you can add sections to the StoryMap. As you can see (figure 2), there are a lot of components you can add. They will all be covered in this guide.
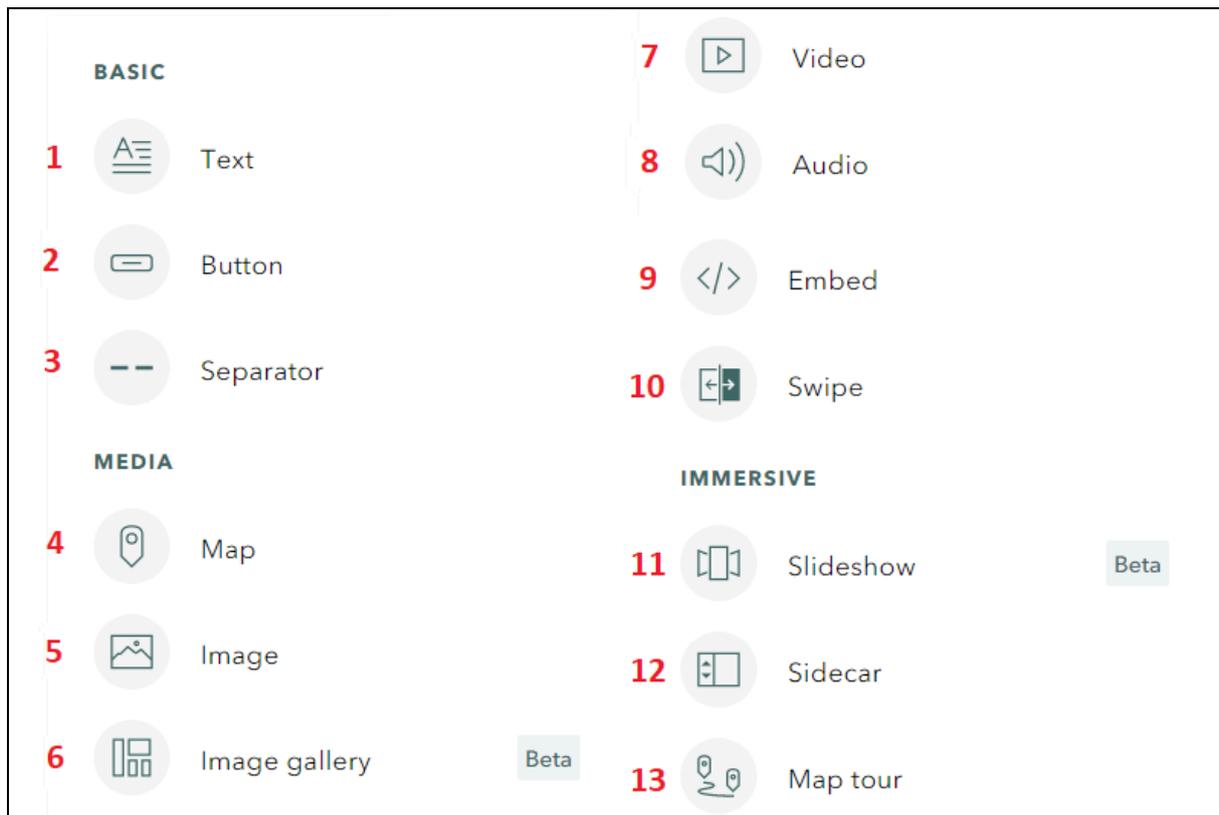

Figure 3 - add a new section to the StoryMap

1 Text
● Here you can add text. You can make headings, a list or a quote by selecting the text. You can also add hyperlinks and change the text colour.

2 Button
● By adding a button, you can activate the readers even more to click on a hyperlink. Add your call to action in the button and fill in the URL.

3 Separator
● Use a separator to create a visual distinction (a line) between two sections.

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4 Map

● Of course it is also possible to add a map to the StoryMap. There are multiple options when you want to add a map; add a map from your ArcGIS Online Content, add map from someone else or add an express map.

1. Add a map that you made yourself.
►Go to 'My Maps' and there you will see the web maps from your own ArcGIS Online Content (how you make such a map will not be covered in this guide). Click on the map you want to add.
►Zoom into the right location. Go to the settings and check the options. It is up to you if you want the viewer to be able to navigate in the map or if you want the search box or legend to show.
►Click on 'Place map' to add the map to your StoryMap.

2. Add a map saved within your organisation or a public map from the Living Atlas.
►Click on 'My organisation' to browse the maps within your organisation.
►If you click on 'Living Atlas' you can browse trough the maps made by other organisations. The maps are approved by Esri, so they are of good quality.
►Click on a category or search to find a specific map.
►Click on the map you want to add.
►Zoom into the right location. Go to the settings and check the options. It is up to you if you want the viewer to navigate in the map or if you want the search box or legend to show.
►Click on 'Place map' to add the map to your StoryMap.

3. Add an express map.
● With an express map you can add information (like points, lines, polygons, arrows and text) to a basemap. You can also add information, like a title, description and/or image to a point. The viewer of the StoryMap can click on the point and they will see the information you added.
►In the upper-right-corner, click on '+ New express map'. You will see an empty basemap. You can change this basemap in the settings (the gear on the left). Zoom in to the area you want to show.
►Draw on the map itself using the tools in the upper menu. When adding a line, arrow or polygon, double click to finish the object.
►Click on the layers icon on the left to see all the features you have drawn. Then, click on an object you have drawn and add a name, description and image (optional). You can also change the style (the colour) of the feature.
►When you are content with the map, click on 'Done' to add the map to your StoryMap.

5 Image

● You can add an image from your computer or use the URL from an online image. Using the buttons, you can change the size and add alternative text.
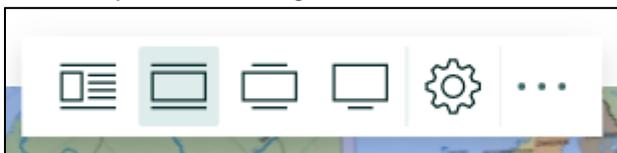

Figure 4 - change the size of an image

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6 Image gallery
● Add multiple images using the image gallery. After uploading the images, you have the option to change the size of the gallery, add extra images and to reorder them.

7 Video
● The process of adding a video is the same as adding an image. Upload the video or use a hyperlink (from YouTube for example).

8 Audio
● Audio can add another dimension to the StoryMap. For example, you add animal noises or someone explaining what is seen on the map. You can upload an audio file for your computer or provide a link or iframe code (from Spotify, SoundCloud and more). Viewers of the StoryMap can listen to the audio without leaving the StoryMap.
► Go to the options of the added audio and select 'Allow readers to directly interact with the embed' to make it easier to listen to the audio.

9 Embed
● You can embed an entire web page into your StoryMap. The website will be displayed inside the StoryMap. You will get the most current version of the site and viewers can also navigate on the website, so it is not a static screenshot. This can be useful, for example, for the current weather forecast of a certain location, in a story about weather and climate.

10 Swipe
● With the Swipe tool, you can easily compare two maps or two images with each other. They will be shown side by side and you can swipe between them. Use two different web maps (from your content or from the Living Atlas) with information of the same location. For example, maps of the same phenomenon in different times, or different phenomena that are connected. For the images it is also important that they are of the same place, but you should be able to see some differences between the two.
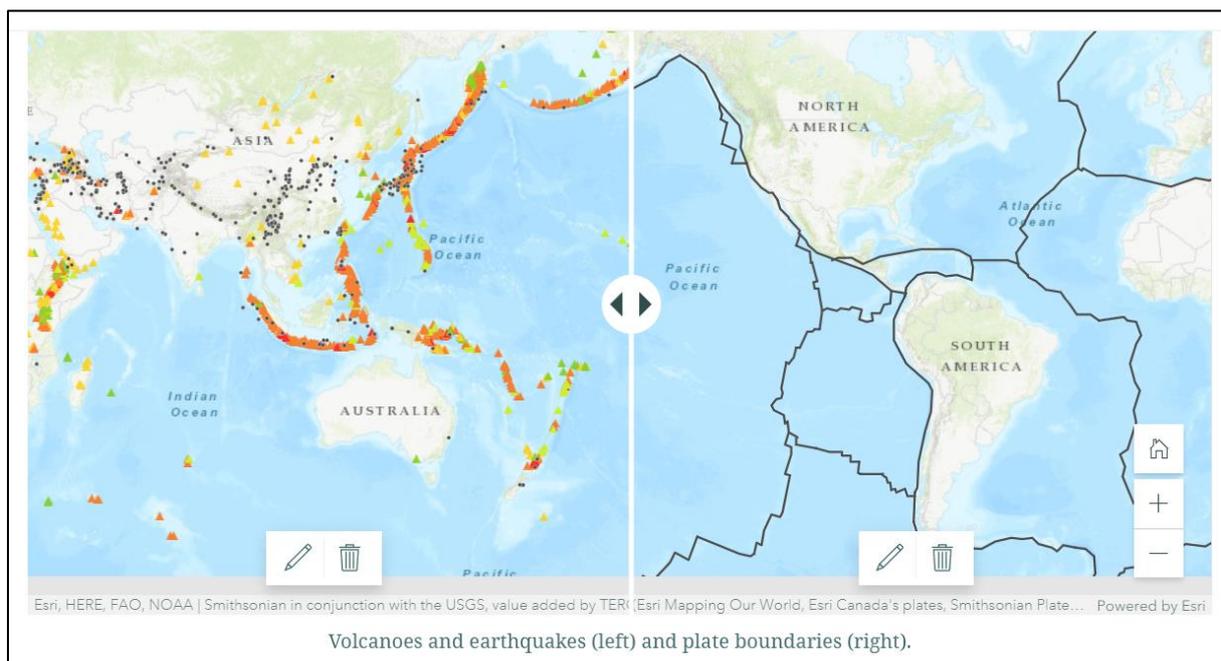

Volcanoes and earthquakes (left) and plate boundaries (right).

Figure 5 - adding a Swipe

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11 Slideshow

● Instead of scrolling down your StoryMap, in a Slideshow the viewer needs to click right and left to see the content. There are multiple slides that look a bit like a presentation. In the slides you can add different media (maps, images, videos) that will be shown full screen. There is some place to add short text for context.

►In the slideshow-builder, click on 'Add media'. Choose if you want an image/video or a map. This works the same as adding stand-alone media.

►Add some text. You can also change the position on the page and the colour to make it fit with your media.

►Add a new slide or duplicate your existing one to easily use the same media but change the text. You can duplicate the slide by clicking the three dots next to the slide-number at the bottom.
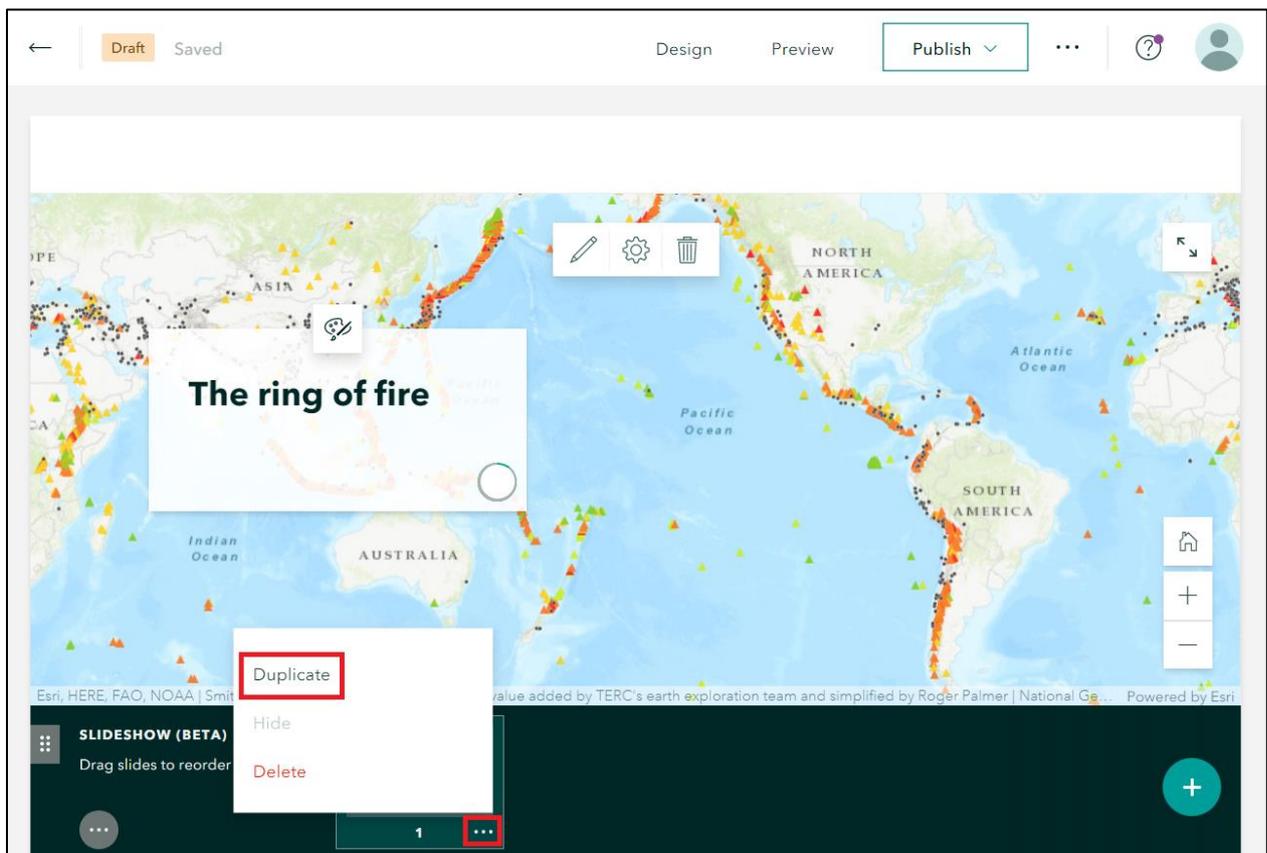

Figure 6 - duplicate a slide in the Slideshow

12 Sidecar

● The Sidecar is another way to arrange the page, combining media and text. Instead of the texts and media alternating with each other, you can add text next to your image or map. When you want to add a Sidecar, you will be asked to choose the layout. There is more room for longer text in the Docked panel. Don't worry too much about this, you can always change this later.

►Click 'Add media' in the right panel to add a map, image or other media. On the left, you can add the text that belongs with the shown media. Here you can also add a little frame with media. So, you can have a big map, some text and an accompanying image.

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►If you add a map to the right side, an extra function will become available on the left. Click the '+' and then 'Map action'.
● This will add a button. When the viewer clicks it, something in the map will change. You can decide the call-to-action text in the button and what happens in the map. Things you can do are; change the zoom-level, meaning zooming in or out, and you can enable or disable map layers.
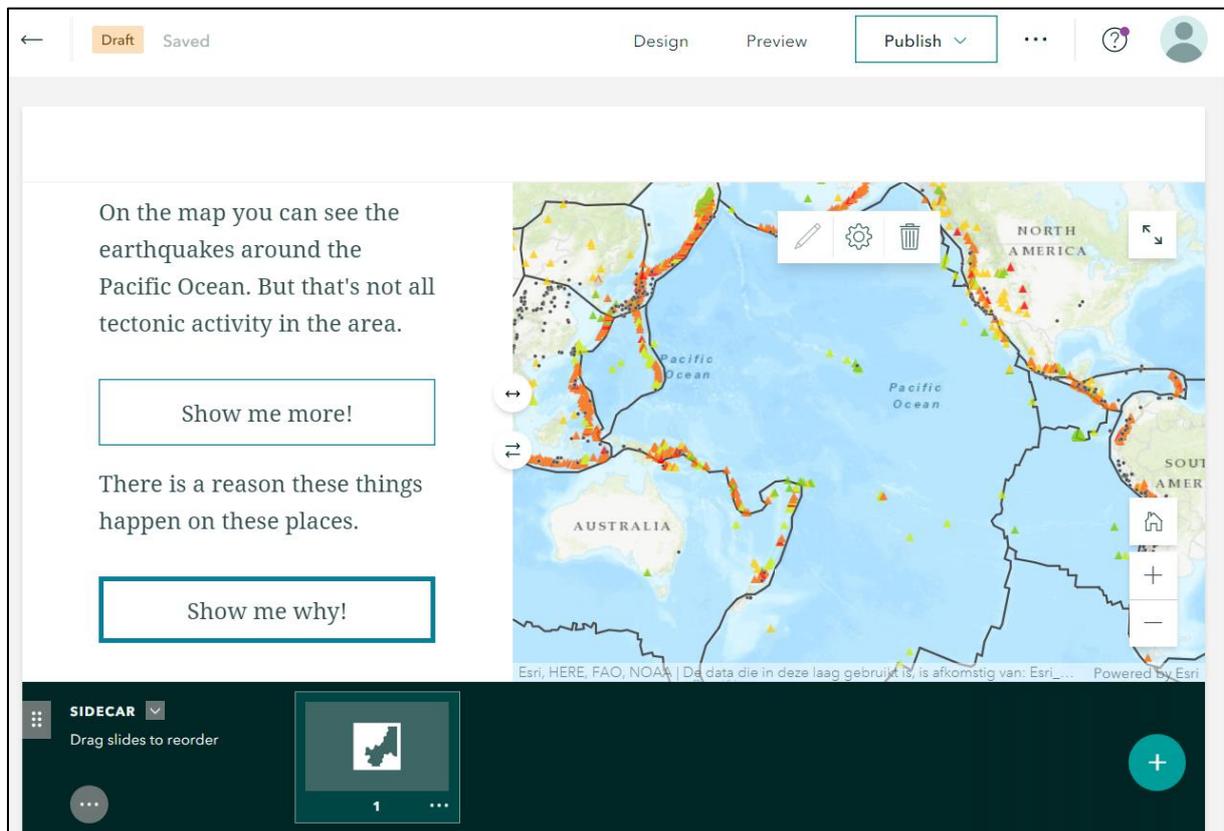

Figure 7 - example of the Map action inside the Sidecar

►Click on the '+' in the down-right corner to add a new slide. Navigation between the slides is possible by scrolling.

13 Map tour
● With the Map tour you can give a tour through an area, by showing different places. This happens one by one, on the map, together with an image and some text. There are different layouts of the Map tour, so you can choose one that fits with you story. There are three ways to add locations to the tour, when you make the map tour, you will be asked what way you want to use. You can add the locations one by one, upload all the photos in one go or use a map that has a point layer.

1. One by one.
   ►Click 'Start from scratch'.
   ►Choose the layout you want to use. Think about the story you want to tell and look what fits best.
   ►Add the image/video and give it a title. Click on 'Add location', a map will open where you can zoom to the location and click to add the tour point. Click 'Add

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location' to save this place. Now you have added the first place, you can add more places with the '+' in the down-right corner.
►If you click on the settings-gear, you can change the basemap and the colour of the points.

2. Upload in bulk.
►Click 'Upload photos' and select the images on your computer. Click 'Create tour' to upload the images. This can take some time.
►Choose the layout you want to use. Think about the story you want to tell and look what fits best.
►If your images include the coordinates, they will be placed on the map automatically. For the ones that don't have a location, click on 'Add location'. It is also possible to change the location of the ones that have been added automatically.
►Add a title and description (optional) for all the tour points.
►If you click on the settings-gear, you can change the basemap and the colour of the points.

3. Use a map that has a point layer.
● This is a more advanced option; it is advised to only use this if you have a point layer in your content with images as attachments.
►Click 'Start with a feature service'.
►Select your map.
● The map tour will be made automatically, you cannot change or add the text or the images inside the StoryMap, changes must be made in the original layer.
►If you click on 'Map options', you can change the basemap and the colour of the points.
►Click on the three dots on the bottom of the page to change the layout.

►When you are done, you can preview your StoryMap. To do this, click on 'Preview' in the top menu. Now you can see how the StoryMap will look like on a computer, tablet or telephone. Click the X on the right side to go back to the editor.

►To share your StoryMap with other people (for example your teacher or classmates) you must first publish it. Click 'Publish' in the upper menu and choose who can view your StoryMap, then click "Publish Story". The webpage you then see is your final product! You can share the link that you see in your browser with your teacher, for example in an email or in your learning environment. If you make another change after publishing, you will need to republish your StoryMap to share the change.