

**LESSON PLAN 35: FIVE THINGS TO DO WITH GOOGLE EARTH**

**Objective:** Exploring the world and beyond using satellite and digital imagery.  
**Age range:** 7-14

**YOU WILL NEED**

Computer, Internet access, Google Earth.

**DEVELOPING SKILLS**

Exploration and investigation; the use and interpretation of satellite and computer-generated imagery; general computer skills; learning about geography, history, travel, landscapes, geology, tourism, astronomy, space and marine environments.

**METHOD**

To use Google Earth you'll need to have downloaded the free software program (<http://earth.google.com/>). It's a tool that lets you view satellite imagery, maps, terrain, and 3D buildings on Earth. Plus, you can also explore the depths of the ocean and even go to outer space. If it's unfamiliar to you take the guided tour: <http://earth.google.com/tour.html>

So, what can you do with Google Earth? Here are five ways you could use the program in class. Tutorials for all these activities are available on our website in Video Watch.

**1. Go sightseeing**



Travel anywhere in the world. Either search for a spot, or manually move your mouse, keyboard or trackball to navigate and explore the globe. Drag the right slider up and down to zoom in and out. Drag the top slider left and right to tilt the view. To rotate the image, spin the navigator's on-screen wheel. Visit towns and cities, rivers and mountains, see castles, buildings, airports, roads, sports stadia, even your own home. See the site of a battle, the birthplace of an historical figure, the location of a current news event, the setting for a book – the list of possible destinations and teaching uses is almost endless.

**2. Travel back in time**

There are a couple of things you can do historically. You can watch how places have changed over times, suburban sprawl, melting ice caps, coastal erosion, and more. You're able to set the time and location that you want to observe. Alternatively, go back in time to visit Ancient Rome and see how Romans lived in 320 AD. Under

'Gallery', select Ancient Rome 3D to visit the Roman Forum, Colosseum and the Forum of Julius Caesar, and tour the interiors of famous landmarks.

**3. Dive into the oceans**



In the new ocean layer, you can dive all the way to the floor of the sea – you can even check out the deepest part of the ocean, the Mariana Trench. Discover new places including surf, dive, and travel hotspots, and 3D shipwrecks like the Titanic. There are features that let you learn about ocean observations, climate change, and endangered species, or take a guided tour with experts from the likes of the BBC and National Geographic.

**4. Take off to Mars**

Explore the Red Planet in 3D. Simply go to the planet symbol on the top tool bar and select Mars. You'll then travel to Mars where you can view the planet as it is today or view historic maps and see how our knowledge has changed. Once there, take a guided tour or use the search tool to find Martian landmarks, like Olympus Mons, the 4,000km canyon Valles Marineris, or the 'Face on Mars'. For the latest imagery (recorded by NASA within the last few hours), go to the 'live from Mars' layer. If at any point you want to learn more, click the green 'travel guide figure' – or chat with Meliza, a friendly Martian robot!

**5. Look through a virtual telescope**

Go to the planet symbol on the top tool bar and select Sky, or under 'View' select 'Switch to Sky'. Google Earth becomes a virtual telescope of the heavens, and now you can start exploring the night sky and the millions of stars it contains. View images of distant galaxies and nebulae from the Hubble Space Telescope, learn about the movement of the planets, and the lifecycle of the stars, and more.

**TRACK AND SHARE YOUR JOURNEYS**

The latest version of Google Earth (5.0) lets you record your virtual journey. Simply turn on the touring feature, press record, and see the world. You can even add a soundtrack or narration. You could use this feature to make presentations or set assignments – or students could use it to show project findings.