

Literary Road Trip

McKenzie, absorbed in research for his author study, exclaims, “Mrs. Hayes! Will Weaver is from Minnesota! I wondered about that because *Claws* takes place in Ely. That’s where my family and cousins go almost every year to camp in the Boundary Waters. This is so cool!”

If your kids are like mine, they know the geography of finding their favorite authors in the library, but not much about the authors’ locations in the world or details about their lives. When they start researching authors, though, they find events, trivia, life stories that surprise them or that connect to places and events in their own lives. The authors become real. Aren’t these connections what we, as passionate readers, also enjoy? I love to imagine how Kate DiCamillo used to stock books at the Bookmen warehouse in Minneapolis as I chose her *Because of Winn-Dixie* for my classroom library. I imagine myself drawn by my literary instinct, like a douser’s wand, to meet her in that moment.

Authors awaken our sense of place when they add fictional details to real locations: I’ve walked the campus setting of M.D. Lake’s mysteries, a thinly disguised University of Minnesota, and know his Old Campus and New Campus are really the East and West Banks, that The Second Story is really The Loft, a nearby writers’ center. Other writers create a sense of familiarity by adding plausible reality to fictional places: Garrison Keillor’s Lake Wobegon and his Our Lady of Perpetual Responsibility feel like the small town and

the church of my childhood. And still other writers construct places we have visited—and never want to leave—out of words alone: Neverland, The Shire, The Old Kingdom, Hogwarts.

Teacher teams, student teams, and NCTE affiliates are invited to share these connections and this sense of place evoked by authors and books in a special feature of this year’s Convention in New York City. In initiating The 21st Century Literacies and The 21st Century Literary Map Project, Convention Chair Kathleen Yancey invites you “to create a literary map of your specific locale, region, or state. Options for mapping include print, print with audio commentary, a set of posters mapping the same space, hypertext maps, hypertext maps with audio, video maps, video maps with live performances, or a gallery of different kinds of maps, with students providing live commentary. Our goal is to have at least one map for every state in the country.”

In addition to the usual display of NCTE’s print collection of affiliate literary maps, the Convention plans include additional gallery space equipped with electronics and wireless connections to showcase the digital or digital/print hybrid works submitted to The Map Project. These maps will be viewed, as much of the student work in our own classrooms is viewed, as works in progress, not as examples of artistic or technical perfection. In this spirit of exploration, map creators will also be encouraged to share the context for the maps and their map-making processes.

Mapping our literary neighborhood is a powerful and engaging project. Whether we decide to make a map for the Convention, a map with our kids in our classrooms, or a map of our personal journeys as readers, the examples below might

stretch our imaginings of what such a literary map could be.

I look forward to sharing our maps, our literary locations and connections—fabulous or factual—at the Convention or online.

Examples to Jump-start Your Thinking

Author Maps

Exxon Mobile Masterpiece Theatre's American Collection: www.ncteamericancollection.org/litmap/amcollectlitmap.htm

An artifact of a joint NCTE/PBS project in 2000. Students were encouraged to contribute to the map. Though contributions were limited, it is a good example of a possible format.

Pennsylvania Center for the Book: www.pabook.libraries.psu.edu/LitMap/pamap3.html

Rolling your mouse over each county triggers author information and photos.

South Carolina Center for the Book: <http://students.libsci.sc.edu/literarymap/Index.htm>

An interactive map and a simple table format, each linking to South Carolina author information by county.

Genre Map

National Poetry Map: www.poets.org/page.php/prmID/382

Information about local poets, poems, events, literary journals, writing programs, and poetry organizations for each state.

Maps of Real Places in Fictional Works

A Literary Map of Manhattan by Randy Cohen and Nigel Holmes: www.nytimes.com/packages/html/books/20050605_BOOKMAP_GRAPHIC/

An exemplary map compiled from readers of the *New York Times Book Review*.

Kansas City Literary Map: www.jocolibrary.org/?displaypageid=1362

Created by the Johnson County Library. Inspired by the *Literary Map of Manhattan*.

Detroit Literary Map: www.marygrove.edu/ids/Detroit_literary_map.asp

Created by Marygrove College.

The John Steinbeck Map of America: www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/tri148.html

Print map illustrated with evocative artwork and author portrait.

SIDE TRIP: MAP-MAKING AND LITERARY RESOURCES

Easy Maps

Do It Yourself Color-Coded State Maps: <http://monarch.tamu.edu/~maps2>

All states except Alaska and Hawaii. Includes a map of the entire United States that does include Alaska and Hawaii. Maps can be saved as a gif file.

Using Google™ Maps: <http://maps.google.com>

Click on *My Maps* tab and explore the *Oral Histories of Route 66* example.

Click on *Create new map* link to start your own.

Author Resources

Center for the Book: www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/stacen.html

Follow the link to your state affiliate; many have information about local authors. Some also have print or online literary maps.

Author Yellow Pages: www.authoryellowpages.com

Links to authors' official websites. Search by author or genre (including teen/young adult) or browse alphabetically.

Authors4Teens: www.authors4teens.com

Don Gallo's website about young adult authors. Free access to brief information about 50 popular authors. More extensive access for a \$75 yearly subscription.

Scholastic: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/authorsandbooks/teachingwithbooks/themesandtopics.asp>

Includes biographical information for many popular YA authors and archived transcripts of Scholastic author online chats with students.

Novelist: www.epnet.com

Extensive database of authors, book lists, book club discussion guides, first chapters. Includes Author Read-alikes, a unique feature to connect readers to books similar to the ones they like. Subscription required. Your school or public library should be a subscriber.

The DaVinci Code Map: www.sacred-destinations.com/sacred-sites/da-vinci-code-map.htm

Marks only a few locations, but an interesting and easy-to-use format adaptable to other types of literary maps.

Map of Fictional Places in the Real World

Stephen King's Maine: www.stephenking.com/miscellany.php

Places and towns in King's work in real Maine geography.

Map with Audio or Video Content

A Literary Map Podcast—The Washington DC Area: www.bazmakaz.com/lit_map_dc/main.html

A mashup (combination of content from more than one source) of street maps, visuals, and audio booktalks for children's books set in specific areas of the District of Columbia. The map was created by classroom teachers in the American University graduate classes of NCTE member Vivian Vasquez.

The Sopranos: www.hbo.com/sopranos/map

This commercial website is a mashup of Google™ earth maps and video clips of a scene at that location from the popular HBO television show.

Maps of Fictional Worlds

Marvel Atlas Project: www.aub.dk/~henckel/map.html

Marks locations important in the world of Marvel Comics. The cartography even has a comic book feel.

Map of Star Wars Galaxy: www.starwarss.com

An intergalactic take on mapping.

Interactive Map of Narnia: http://movies.aol.com/movie_exclusive_the_chronicles_of_narnia/map

A beautiful mouse-over map with text, visuals, and dramatic music from the movie.

For more information about submitting your literary map for display in the Convention gallery or to post comments, questions, or links to your map, check the Middle Level Section blog (<http://nctemiddle.blogspot.com>) or email me at sjhayes@aol.com.

Jim Mahoney—2007 CEL Exemplary Leader Award Recipient

“Within his tri-state area, during almost thirty years of classroom teaching, Jim Mahoney has served as a summer-school principal, a department chair three times (Commack South, Miller Place, and Smithtown high schools), the director of language arts twice (Patchogue-Medford Schools and Islip Schools), and student-teacher supervisor three times (SUNY-Stonybrook, Rutgers, and the College of New Jersey). And yet Jim Mahoney has reached beyond his local area to help teachers across the country. Year in and year out, Jim has given presentations nationally and regionally at NCTE, CEL, and the New York State English Council (NYSEC). Jim has done over 100 presentations for department workshops, district inservices, and meetings of professional organizations” (Jim Strickland, from his letter of support for the nomination). Jim has recently traveled to Kazakhstan to provide workshops for teachers, representing the US State Department and the US Embassy.

Jim Mahoney is also a highly regarded writer. He has written two books for Heinemann Educational Publishers: *Power and Portfolios: Best Practices for High School Classrooms* (2002) and *Power and Poetry: Best Practices for High School Classrooms* (2005).

Jim Mahoney embodies all the values and ideals of leadership that qualify him to receive this year's CEL Exemplary Leader Award. **Don't miss Jim Mahoney's presentation on Tuesday, November 20, 2007**, during the Conference on English Leadership (CEL) meeting in New York City.
