

Activity 10: Type Specs

Time: Twenty minutes

Goal: Using what you’ve learned about type, create a type specification sheet by assigning type styles to map features.

Type specifications or type specs organize your map features into categories that you can then assign styling too. It’s important to think about type styles and the relationships between features (nominal and ordinal?) before you begin placing labels. It’s also advantageous to utilize common conventions like *blue italic serif typefaces* for water features at least when you’re just starting out. Remember to avoid sizes smaller than 6pt for print!

Organizations like *National Geographic* use type specs to maintain the consistency across all of their iconic map products. Type specs help when working on maps collaboratively because styles are predetermined! Each type style in the selection below would be assigned to specific map features.

MAP·TYPE·FACES			
THE NATIONAL *GEOGRAPHIC*			
	TYPE STYLE	SPECIMEN	TYPE HEIGHT
REGULAR	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz	23467 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP	40/64
601	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz	ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP	40/64
602	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz	73642 ABCDEFGHIJKLM	35/55
2/2sc	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz	36427 ⁴⁵ ABCDEFGHIJKLMN	35/55 40
6	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz	46732 ABCDEFGHIJKLMN	35/55
6h	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz	ABCDEFGHIJKLM	35/55
6eh		ABCDEF GHIJKLM	55
3/3sc	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz	67342 ⁴⁵ ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP	35/55 46
3h	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz	36427 ⁴⁵ ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOP	35/55
31	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz	736427 ⁴⁵ ABCDEFGHIJKLMN	35/55

Activity: In this Mapping Activity, you’ll create your own type specification sheet!

1. Download Activity10_TypeSpecs.ai from Canvas and open.
2. Take a look at the list of map features and think about the relationships between them. Organize the map features into logical groups.
3. Explore the Character Panel and the typefaces available to you.
4. Pick a typeface or two. Look for typefaces with a “large family”—a typeface with numerous styles that go beyond just regular, italics, and bold.
5. Change the type styles of each map feature using the Character Panel.
6. Record the type style for each feature type (see City and Capital example in the Illustrator file).

Tips and Tricks: Cities and capitals, for example, present an ordinal relationship. How would you show that capitals are more prominent than cities in your label? Would bold work? What about size? Maybe both? How are cities and capitals different than rivers? How depict that nominal relationship in the label styles?

Submit: Save a (.pdf) of your type specs and submit to Canvas.