Font and Type

Content Area: **Fine Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **5 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

This unit introduces the foundational principles of typography and letterform design as essential elements of visual communication. Students will explore typography as both a visual form and visible language, progressing from traditional studio-based methodologies to contemporary digital typesetting software. Through hands-on projects and design studies, students will master core concepts such as type classification, kerning, tracking, spacing, and grid systems. Emphasis is placed on the strategic use of typographic hierarchy to organize information, establish visual structure, and effectively convey meaning. Ultimately, students will develop the critical observation and technical skills needed to apply typographic principles across both print and digital platforms, providing a strong foundation for future work in graphic design.

Revised: August 2026

Essential Questions/Enduring Understandings

Essential Questions:

- How has typography evolved throughout history, and how has its development influenced modern visual communication?
- What measurement systems are used in typography, and why are they important in the design process?
- What are kerning and tracking, and how do they contribute to the readability, visual balance, and effectiveness of typographic compositions?
- In what ways does typeface selection influence the tone, message, and audience perception of a design?
- What is the difference between points and picas, and how are these units used in professional typographic and layout design?
- What characteristics define a type family, and how do designers use variations within a type family to create hierarchy and consistency?
- How does typography function as both a visual and communicative element within graphic design?
- How can typographic hierarchy be used to organize information and guide a viewer's attention?
- What role do spacing, alignment, and proportion play in creating successful typographic compositions?
- How do designers use grid systems to create structure, balance, and clarity in typographic layouts?
- How do designers ensure typographic accessibility and legibility for diverse audiences, including those with visual impairments?

Enduring Understandings:

- Typography has evolved throughout history in response to cultural, technological, and communicative needs, shaping the way information is presented and understood in contemporary visual communication.
- Standardized typographic measurement systems provide designers with a common language for creating precise, consistent, and professional layouts.
- Effective typography requires careful attention to spacing and letter relationships, as these elements significantly impact readability, visual balance, and audience engagement.
- Typeface selection is a deliberate design decision that influences the tone, personality, and effectiveness of a visual message while shaping audience perception.
- Understanding and applying typographic measurements, including points and picas, is essential for creating accurate and well-structured designs.
- Type families provide designers with a range of related styles that can be used to establish hierarchy, consistency, and visual cohesion within a design.
- Typography serves both functional and aesthetic purposes, communicating information while contributing to the overall visual impact of a design.
- Typographic hierarchy helps organize content, establish importance, and guide viewers through information in a clear and intentional manner.
- The thoughtful use of spacing, alignment, proportion, and composition enhances readability, strengthens visual communication, and creates effective design solutions.
- Grid systems provide a structural framework that promotes organization, consistency, balance, and clarity in both print and digital layouts.
- Successful graphic designers use typography as a strategic tool to communicate ideas, solve visual problems, and create meaningful connections with their intended audience.
- Professional typographic design requires both technical skill and creative decision-making to effectively combine form, function, and communication.

Objectives

STUDENTS WILL KNOW:

- Students will know the history and evolution of typography and its influence on visual communication throughout history.
- Students will know the significant developments in type design and their impact on typographic innovation.
- Students will know that typography serves as both a functional communication tool and a respected artistic discipline.
- Students will know the relationship between typography, culture, technology, and design.
- Students will know the standard typographic measurement systems, including points and picas, used in

professional design.
- Students will know the differences between points and picas and the appropriate applications of each measurement system.
- Students will know the characteristics that define major type families and typeface classifications.
- Students will know the structure and purpose of type families and how variations within a family contribute to hierarchy and consistency.
- Students will know how typeface selection influences the tone, mood, and message of a design.
- Students will know the importance of thoughtful typeface selection in creating effective and visually compelling design solutions.
- Students will know the role of kerning, tracking, spacing, alignment, and hierarchy in successful typographic design.
- Students will know how typography can be used strategically to communicate ideas, organize information, and strengthen visual communication.

STUDENTS WILL BE SKILLED AT:

- Students will be skilled at identifying significant developments in type design and constructing a chronological timeline of typographic innovation.
- Students will be skilled at applying standard typographic measurement systems, including points and picas, within professional design contexts.
- Students will be skilled at accurately measuring and sizing type to achieve readability, visual balance, and effective communication.
- Students will be skilled at identifying and classifying major type families and recognizing the characteristics that distinguish various typeface categories.
- Students will be skilled at selecting appropriate typefaces and font sizes based on design objectives, target audiences, and communication goals.
- Students will be skilled at analyzing how typography influences the tone, mood, and message of a design.
- Students will be skilled at applying typographic principles, including kerning, tracking, spacing, alignment, and hierarchy, to improve readability and visual organization.
- Students will be skilled at utilizing kerning and tracking as intentional design elements to enhance the aesthetic quality and effectiveness of typographic compositions.
- Students will be skilled at evaluating and refining typographic layouts using established design principles and industry standards.
- Students will be skilled at demonstrating proficiency in both traditional and digital methods of typesetting and typographic composition.

Learning Plan

SEQUENCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES, INCLUDING HOW TECHNOLOGY SUPPORTS THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS:

1. **Instructor-led exploration of the history and evolution of typography**, examining its role in visual communication and its influence on contemporary graphic design practices.
2. **Project-based learning experiences focused on the history of type and font design.**
    - Creation and organization of a typographic timeline utilizing Smart Board technology to support interactive instruction and collaborative learning.
    - Use of internet-based resources to conduct research on significant typographic movements, designers, and typefaces.
    - Introduction to industry-standard design software, including Adobe Illustrator and Adobe InDesign, to explore basic typesetting and font design concepts.
3. **Teacher-led instruction on the importance of typeface selection**, including the study of type classifications, type families, and the role typography plays in visual communication.
4. **Student-centered exploration of typography's impact on design**, investigating how typeface selection influences mood, tone, readability, and audience perception through discussion, experimentation, visual analysis, and research.
5. **Hands-on learning activities and task sheets** focused on typographic fundamentals, including kerning, tracking, spacing, alignment, and visual hierarchy.
6. **Design projects emphasizing type selection and typographic refinement**, requiring students to apply principles of effective type usage, including proper kerning, tracking, hierarchy, and composition.
7. **Student-centered critiques and reflective discussions** that encourage the use of design vocabulary, peer feedback, and critical evaluation of typographic decisions and project outcomes.
8. **Rubric-based assessment** of student learning, measuring understanding of typographic principles, technical proficiency, creativity, craftsmanship, effective use of technology, and overall visual communication skills.
9. **Portfolio:** Prepare all work for portfolio development.

Assessment

Formative

answer essential questions

exit ticket

meaningfully participate in guided question and answer sessions, group and individual discussions, and show an understanding of the purpose of the unit lesson(s), and their key terms and concepts.

Summative

Design and create

Benchmark

Midterm Exam/Final Exam

Alternative Assessment

Present the project to peers and/or the community.

Complete writing prompt: (example) Complete writing prompt: Analyze the typographic choices in a modern advertising campaign and explain how they influence the viewer's perception

Materials

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    - Online design examples, tutorials, and step-by-step instructional guides demonstrating the use of Adobe Illustrator tools, design techniques, and professional graphic design practices.
    - Teacher-created demonstrations and instructional presentations modeling design concepts, software techniques, creative problem-solving, and project expectations.
    - Former student examples showcasing successful projects, logo designs, layouts, and applications of the elements and principles of design to provide students with reference points and inspiration.
    - Professional graphic design samples from advertisements, logos, branding materials, websites, posters, packaging, and digital media used for analysis and discussion.
    - Printed and digital handouts covering Adobe Illustrator tools, keyboard shortcuts, vocabulary, design terminology, project guidelines, and design process strategies.
    - Class notes and guided lecture materials related to the elements and principles of design, typography, color theory, composition, branding, and visual communication.
    - Instructional reference sheets and design process organizers to support brainstorming, sketching, concept development, and project planning.
    - Assessment rubrics outlining project expectations, grading criteria, technical skills, creativity, craftsmanship, and participation requirements.
    - Critique guides and peer review worksheets to support constructive feedback, reflection, and discussion during the design process.
    - Adobe Illustrator software for creating digital illustrations, logos, compositions, and design projects.
    - Computers or laptops capable of running Adobe Illustrator and supporting digital design work.
    - Digital projector or interactive display for teacher demonstrations, presentations, and group critiques.
    - Sketchbooks, drawing paper, or brainstorming worksheets for thumbnail sketches, concept development, and planning activities.

Standards

Information Literacy

This unit challenges students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to, digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons may include the research process and how information is created and produced; critical thinking and using information resources; research methods, including the difference between primary and secondary sources; the difference between facts, points of view, and opinions, accessing peer-reviewed print and digital library resources; the economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information.

ELD standards:https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wdmsiGOdCHlrjU-WPvAtENnEgi0EStZXo0uiFYv1Nu4/edit

1.5.12acc.Cr1	Generating and conceptualizing ideas.
1.5.12acc.Cr1a	Individually and collaboratively formulate new creative problems based on student's existing artwork.
1.5.12acc.Cr1b	Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan works of art and design.
1.5.12acc.Cr2	Organizing and developing ideas.
1.5.12acc.Cr2a	Through experimentation, practice and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.
1.5.12acc.Cr2b	Demonstrate awareness of ethical implications of making and distributing creative work.
1.5.12acc.Cr2c	Redesign an object, system, place, or design in response to contemporary issues.
1.5.12acc.Cr3	Refining and completing products.
1.5.12acc.Cr3a	Engage in constructive critique with peers, then reflect on, re-engage, revise, and refine works of art and design in response to personal artistic vision.
TECH.K-12.1.4	Innovative Designer
	Students use a variety of technologies within a design process to identify and solve problems by creating new, useful or imaginative solutions.
TECH.K-12.1.4.a	know and use a deliberate design process for generating ideas, testing theories, creating innovative artifacts or solving authentic problems.
TECH.K-12.1.4.b	select and use digital tools to plan and manage a design process that considers design constraints and calculated risks.
TECH.K-12.1.4.c	develop, test and refine prototypes as part of a cyclical design process.
1.5.12acc.Pr4a	Analyze, select and critique personal artwork for a collection or portfolio presentation.
1.5.12acc.Pr5	Developing and refining techniques and models or steps needed to create products.
1.5.12acc.Pr5a	Evaluate, select and apply methods or processes appropriate to display artwork in a specific place.
1.5.12acc.Pr6	Conveying meaning through art.
1.5.12acc.Pr6a	Make, explain and justify connections between artists or artwork and social, cultural and political history.
1.5.12acc.Re7	Perceiving and analyzing products.

1.5.12acc.Re7a	Recognize and describe personal aesthetic and empathetic responses to the natural world and constructed environments.
1.5.12acc.Re7b	Evaluate the effectiveness of visual artworks to influence ideas, feelings, and behaviors of specific audiences.
1.5.12acc.Re8a	Identify types of contextual information useful in the process of constructing interpretations of an artwork or collection of works.
1.5.12acc.Re9a	Determine the relevance of criteria used by others to evaluate a work of art or collection of works.
I	Inquire: Build new knowledge by inquiring, thinking critically, identifying problems, and developing strategies for solving problems.
I.A.2	Recalling prior and background knowledge as context for new meaning.
I.B.1	Using evidence to investigate questions.
I.B.2	Devising and implementing a plan to fill knowledge gaps.
V	Explore: Discover and innovate in a growth mindset developed through experience and reflection.
IV.B	Learners gather information appropriate to the task by:
IV.C	Learners exchange information resources within and beyond their learning community by:
III	Collaborate: Work effectively with others to broaden perspectives and work toward common goals.

Integrated Accommodation and Modifications, Special Education students, English Language Learners, At-Risk Students, Gifted and Talented students, Career Education, and those with 504s

Instructional Accommodations

- Provide step-by-step written and visual instructions for all design projects and software demonstrations.
- Break larger assignments into smaller, manageable tasks with interim deadlines and check-ins.
- Use modeling and teacher demonstrations before independent student work.
- Provide guided notes, vocabulary lists, and graphic organizers for lectures and presentations.
- Offer repeated directions and clarify expectations verbally and visually.
- Pre-teach key vocabulary related to graphic design, Adobe Illustrator tools, and design principles.
- Allow students to access recorded demonstrations or tutorial videos for review at their own pace.
- Provide exemplars and sample projects to reinforce expectations and concepts.
- Use frequent comprehension checks during instruction and demonstrations.
- Provide one-on-one or small-group instructional support when needed.

Assignment and Assessment Modifications

- Allow extended time for quizzes, projects, and class assignments.
- Reduce the number of required design variations or sketches without compromising learning objectives.
- Modify project complexity based on student ability levels while maintaining core standards.
- Allow oral explanations or presentations in place of written reflections when appropriate.
- Provide alternative assessments such as guided critiques, interviews, or portfolio conferences.
- Use simplified rubrics with clearly defined criteria and visual supports.

- Permit revisions and resubmissions after feedback and teacher conferencing.
- Grade based on individual growth, effort, and mastery of essential skills when appropriate.

Technology and Software Supports

- Provide access to assistive technology tools, including text-to-speech and speech-to-text software.
- Allow use of adaptive computer equipment, alternative mice, keyboards, or styluses if needed.
- Create keyboard shortcut reference sheets and simplified tool guides for Adobe Illustrator.
- Provide templates, partially completed files, or scaffolded starter documents.
- Allow students to zoom in on workspaces or use accessibility settings within software programs.
- Offer digital copies of handouts and notes for organization and accessibility.

Classroom Environment Accommodations

- Preferential seating near instruction or teacher demonstrations.
- Provide a distraction-reduced environment for assessments or focused project work.
- Allow movement breaks or flexible seating options as needed.
- Maintain consistent classroom routines and clearly posted daily objectives.
- Use visual schedules and checklists to support organization and task completion.
- Provide additional time for transitions between activities or software tasks.

Organizational and Executive Function Supports

- Assist students with project planning, time management, and organization of digital files.
- Provide project timelines with checkpoints and reminders.
- Use task checklists and progress-monitoring sheets during long-term projects.
- Help students organize digital folders and save work appropriately.
- Encourage use of planners, calendars, or digital reminders for assignment deadlines.

Social-Emotional and Communication Supports

- Encourage participation in peer critiques using structured sentence starters and guided feedback forms.
- Provide positive reinforcement and encouragement throughout the creative process.
- Allow students to demonstrate understanding in multiple ways.
- Support student self-advocacy by encouraging questions and clarification requests.
- Create opportunities for collaborative learning with supportive peer partners or groups.
- Foster a classroom culture that values creativity, effort, revision, and individual growth.

Fine Motor and Processing Accommodations

- Allow additional time for precise digital design work requiring fine motor control.
- Provide alternative methods for sketching or brainstorming, including digital sketch tools.
- Reduce repetitive drawing or tracing requirements if they create unnecessary barriers.
- Allow students to verbally explain concepts before translating ideas into digital formats.

English Language Learner and Reading Supports (when applicable)

- Pair visual examples with written directions.

- Simplify complex reading materials and provide audio or translated supports when available.
- Reinforce concepts through demonstrations and hands-on learning opportunities.
- Provide sentence frames for critiques, reflections, and project discussions.

Collaboration with Support Staff

- Coordinate with special education teachers, case managers, counselors, and related service providers to ensure accommodations are consistently implemented.
- Maintain ongoing communication regarding student progress, challenges, and successful strategies.
- Adjust instructional pacing and supports based on individual student needs and documented accommodations.