Project Justification
This unit of instruction is based on typography and the creative use of letterforms to visually communicate a message through images rather than just the printed word. Type manipulation will be explored as well as the origins and history of type to deepen learner’s knowledge of type and how it evolved through time both as a form of communication and as a visual art form. The learners will be community college level adult learners in an introductory digital design online course. All visual images employed are geared to this assumption. Additionally, the use of creative type in the instructional graphics will engage students and support learning in the field of graphic design. Unit goals are for students to explore the history, anatomy, and principles of type to create and complete typography activities listed in each lesson. Upon completion of this unit, students will have basic knowledge of typography to apply to future graphic design projects.

Unit Design
This unit has been broken down into four lessons. The initial entry point’s purpose is two-fold. First, to provide navigation to all the lessons; secondly, to visually stimulate the learner with images related to creative typography. The color palette for this unit of instruction is the use of two primary colors (red and blue) and black and white. Linda Lohr (2007) states that color for instruction is utilized to improve learner selection (figure/ground). Lohr (2007, p. 152) suggests using contrast as an entry point into an image. Contrast and color are incorporated in each lesson navigation link incorporating a rollover action to be initiated by the learner to access each individual lesson. The instructional interface incorporates the outline metaphor (Lohr, 2007, pp. 171-175) which relies on the gestalt principle to aid the learner in navigating the online lessons and learn the individual lessons. Edward Tuft (1990) describes good design as “simplicity in the underlying message, complexity in the detail.” With this in mind, the following images were created using this gestalt principle (the whole is greater than the sum of its parts) to expand student knowledge in creative typography.

Lesson 1: What is Type?
What is Type? visual (Integration): Gestaltists believe in the importance of presenting information within the original context (Lohr, 2007, p. 160). Information perceived as a whole rather than individual elements (Wertheimer, 1959) are incorporated into this visual. The gestalt principles of closure, contiguity, similarity, and proximity (Lohr, 2007, pp. 162-168) are integrated in the definition of type visual.

typeFACE Recognition visual (ACE with PAT): Using a synectic approach in the create phase of ACE (Lohr, 2007, p. 77), this visual was created as a visual metaphor to represent typeface recognition using emoticons as a mug shot. An emoticon is a representation of a facial expression commonly used in internet writings such as e-mail, chatting, or text messaging. Using a colon, dash and curly bracket resembles a man with a mustache when rotated 90 degrees. The main point this graphic illustrates is
that typeface recognition comes from association; much like how we learn to recognize people’s faces. In addition, the intent of the graphic is to show how the use of different typefaces can change the visual expression of the design. Additionally, this graphic incorporates a rollover image to engage the learner in identifying the typefaces.

**Lesson 2: History of Type**
The main navigation leads the learner into lesson 2 with a rollover graphic of expressive type (printing press visual). The image is a depiction of offset press with a piece of paper rolling off a drum onto a printer’s plate (akin to an old Heidelberg press). The origins of type are broad depending on which era you are referencing. The focus is on the printing press since it revolutionized our ability to spread the printed word. This

**Influential Type Designers visual (Selection – Figure/Ground):** This image incorporates the selection principle figure/ground (Lohr, 2007) to illustrate designers of type throughout history. The figure/ground principle is illustrated by the usage of fonts to create a face. If you look closely, upon closer inspection each face was created with letters and used the font that the designer originally constructed. This graphic will progresses to the detailed interactive PDF with more information for the learner.

The detailed graphic organizer changes the focus from the face of the designer to the information on the origins of the typefaces. By changing the color of the faces and deleting the background silhouettes in the interactive PDF, the designer’s name and information becomes the focus.

**Lesson 3: Anatomy of Type**
Lohr (2007, p. 116) suggests using figure/ground selection principle to achieve distinction; which is best done using contrast. The main navigation link for lesson 3 depicts a skeleton visual made out of type to emphasize the lesson of type anatomy. This novel image was created to seize interest in the topic (Lohr, 2007, p. 108).

**Type Anatomy visual (Contrast and Shapes):** This PDF visual is an advanced organizer illustrating type terms with callouts (a progression from the initial skeleton visual). Learners will access the printable reference handout through an external link.

**Serif vs. Sans Serif visual (Shapes):** The function of shapes in instructional design can be just as versatile as typography to emphasize content. This visual for the anatomy of typography lesson utilizes rectangles and squares to contain information and facilitate comparisons on the “Serif vs. Sans Serif” subject matter. The circles identify the difference between the two types of fonts. Labeling with color (Tuft, 1990) focuses the learner’s attention to what is important. The circles are yellow for focus on the differences of the two types of fonts using the letter “T” as an example.
Lesson 4: Designing with Type

CARP Typographic Principles visual (CARP): (Lohr, 2007, p. 152) states that the action of contrast, alignment, and proximity play an important role in creating hierarchy. This image incorporates the CARP principle in the following way:

- **Contrast:** Contrast is achieved in the reversed headline and reversed letters within the circles.
- **Alignment:** All elements are aligned to the left both in the small graphic and in the detailed graphic organizer.
- **Repetition:** The repeating elements are the circles within the headlines. Font usage has also been repeated in both images.
- **Proximity:** Proximity refers to groupings. In the detailed organizer, the headline and the associated text for each principle illustrates proximity.

Seven Principles of Typographic Contrast visual (Whitespace): What you leave out is just as important as what you put in. Lohr (2007) describes space as a design tool and includes white space, negative space, counter space, and trapped space. The focus of this lesson is on the seven principles of typographic contrast by Carl Dair (1982). Dair’s quote and type manipulation are used verbatim on the first page since this describes and illustrates the concept of contrast very well. The first page uses black to create negative space. An image of piano keys was added to support the quote and add visual contrast. The rest of the pages are slides of the each contrast principle. White space was incorporated extensively to focus on the type and the fonts utilized in the design.

Baseline Shift visual (Color & Depth): Lohr (2007) references Edward Tuft’s four functions of color to create informative yet appealing instructional materials. The four functions of color are labeling, identifying quantity and measurement, representing reality and creating aesthetic appeal (Tuft, 1990). Depth is also referenced as how the information stands out to facilitate selection.

Typography students will learn to differentiate letters naturally occurring on a baseline and forcing a baseline shift using the typographic editing tools in Adobe Illustrator. A forced baseline shift is indicated in red. The baseline is indicated in blue.

Justification of the four functions of color:

1. **Labeling** – red (action) and blue (baseline) are used to differentiate information
2. **Identifying quantity and measurement** - measurement is shown by character’s relative height above or below the baseline
3. **Representing reality** – characters are represented using a before and after technique using only a baseline shift typographic function in Adobe Illustrator
4. **Creating aesthetic appeal** – visually pleasing by minimal use of red color so focus is on character shift from baseline
Depth was incorporated by the use of the drop shadow around the before and after examples to help them stand out.

**Typography in Adobe Illustrator visual (Organization):** Misanchuk (1992) states that visual cues such as arrows are a form of hierarchy to focus learner attention. A study by Matutone and Mayer (2001) concluded that cues generated more significant student solutions on tests. This visual incorporates arrows to cue the student from the definition and example to the illustrated keyboard shortcuts in Adobe Illustrator. The information presented also incorporates chunking (Paas, Renkl, & Sweller, 2003) of related information as a means to show related terms and functions (Lohr, 2007).

**Expressive Typography visual (Typography):** This visual demonstrates pertinence to graphic design with an instructional purpose. This PDF document illustrates examples of the Creative Wordplay activity. To represent the history of type, type of text, and type styles, the four words chosen are:

- **Printing press** – word represents an offset press with a piece of paper rolling off a drum onto a printer’s plate (akin to an old Heidelberg press).
- **Uppercase & lowercase** – text is positioned and the case changed to illustrate the words. Uppercase is in all caps while lowercase is not. I mixed the case in the word “Case”
- **Boldface** – Utilized the letters B O L D to make a face to represent boldface type
- **Oblique** – italic type is often referred to as oblique, only two of the letters are slanted 45 degrees to the right

The origins of type are broad depending on which era you are referencing. The focus is on the printing press since it revolutionized our ability to spread the printed word. Quite a few of the typographic terms we use on the computer now are from this time such as leading (the pieces of lead in between the movable type) which we use to refer to the distance between one or more lines of type. Uppercase & lowercase refer to where the movable type blocks were stored in either the upper or lower cabinet case. The words boldface and oblique were chosen since these are terms used in describing type styles.

**Student Activities**

A number of student activities include:

- Typeface recognition (lesson 1)
- Web-based font games (lessons 1 and 3)
- Typographic self-portrait project (lesson 2)
- Creative Wordplay project (lesson 4)

Upon completion of this unit, students will have basic knowledge of typography to apply to future graphic design projects.
References


Finis!