Activity Goal
To identify the meaning of type on any map.

Materials Needed: None. No exercises included.

Lesson

Characteristics of Type

Type can be shown in many different ways to help make it different from other type. Some of the type differences are shown here;

- Black Color or Dark Blue Color
- Big or Small
- Straight or Leaning (italic)
- Light or Bold
- Upper-Lower or CAPITALS
- No Underline or Underlined
- With Serifs or No Serifs
- Regular or Extended

Type Fonts

The way in which these differences can be combined into a unique "look" is called a font. Mapmakers use many fonts on a map to help identify different features. The way
fonts are used effects the overall appearance of the map. Examples of different fonts are:

Antique Olive Bold
Times New Roman Italic

Univers Condensed
Albertus Medium

Different characteristics of type could be arranged on a map similar to this:

CONTINENT
STATE
Capital City
POINT OF INTEREST

OCEAN
SEA
River

MOUNTAIN

A quick way to become familiar with how type is used on a map is to look at an area you know, such as the United States. As an example, notice how United States appears on the world map. Though small countries will have smaller type, all countries should have the same style of country type; black, straight and bold letters shown in capitals. Check out the "look" of cities, capitals, rivers, mountains, and other features.