



Map Design Presentations

Stage 1 visuals

Styles, Expression
and Practicalities.

Illustration for Advertising

What is a Map?

A map is not just a tool for navigation, it is:

- A selective representation of space
- A designed interpretation of reality
- A visual argument about what matters

Every map leaves something out. The act of selection is where illustration can be both expressive and functional.

Purpose

From ancient cartography to contemporary editorial graphics, maps balance:

- Accuracy
- Clarity
- Narrative
- Aesthetic (visual language)

As illustrators, you are not just map-makers, you are world-builders.

Creative expression in mapping

When creating your Creative Quarter Map consider:

Perspective

- Bird's-eye
- Isometric (equal measurement technical drawings)
- Folded narrative (story or interactive)

Typography

- Integrated into landscape
- Hand-lettered vs digital
- Scale variation for hierarchy

Creative expression in mapping

Materiality and medium

- Ink wash
- Collage
- Risograph texture
- Digital vector
- 3D render hybrids

Narrative Devices

- Characters interacting with landscape
- Annotated marginalia (essential information outside the map)
- Icons as storytelling tools

Practicalities you will need to consider

Scale

If distances distort too much, your map will not be trusted.

Consider:

- Is the map symbolic or navigational?
- What actually is the intended practical use?

Visual Hierarchy

What should the viewer see first? You can influence this with:

- Line weight
- Color contrast
- Typography scale
- Negative space

Process Stages

Research & Brainstorm

- Identify narrative anchors
- Decide what NOT to include

Visual Language Development

- Design a symbol system
- Establish line hierarchy
- Test typography

1: Define the purpose

This map is for navigation and to communicate a concept.

Ask yourself:

- Who is the audience?
- What should the viewer understand first?

Write a one-sentence goal which in this case is:

“This map shows the Creative Quarter of Swansea.”

2: Choose your type of map

Decide what kind of map you're making:

- Observational (real place) ✓
- Pictorial (decorative & illustrative) ✓
- Thematic (data-driven)
- Emotional/personal
- Real. Fictional. Fantasy.
- This decision will affect scale, detail and style.

3: Gather reference

Even stylised maps need structure.

- Do a recce ✓
- Look at satellite views or existing maps ✓
- Collect photos of landmarks ✓
- Note proportions and key routes
- Identify major shapes (rivers, coastlines, roads)
- Focus on big shapes first, not details.

The requirement for today.

Rough visual presentations (5 mins max).

Create a rough visual to share with the client who will be coming to our studio on Tuesday 24th March from 10am onwards.

For your presentation you may want to follow this simple structure. You can present it in any way you wish (PowerPoint, printouts, film):

- 1. Explain your conceptual idea**
- 2. Share your visual and any other relevant examples**
- 3. Explain why you think it works**
- 4. Explain your next steps.**

(Make a note of any advice given by the client)

Schedule

- **Tuesday 24th March**

10 am: Maps – Client presentations of concepts.

pm: Maps tutorials for development over Easter.

- **Tuesday 21st April**

am: Maps tutorials and development.

pm: Map technical file support with Tash

- **Tuesday 28th April**

10am: Maps final client presentations

- **tbc**

WINNER CHOSEN!

TODAY

Stage 1 student presentations ...