The Task:

As a class, we will typeset the entire poem, including the repeated verse—first and last (otherwise we'd have to print in two runs).

The poem lends itself to bizarre, experimental, distorted typography. While we will not break the line, we will break with conventions of consistency in face, size, spacing, etc. within the line.

Certain restrictions will apply:

The total length of a line must be set so that our form is a uniform rectangle. If we set the line length at 40 picas, your line, spacing included (including a large em or quad on both ends) must be *exactly* 40 picas.

You must decide if there is any need to predetermine the look of the left-hand margin. The spacing of the copy on the right mimics the look of the original: line 1 & 3 of each stanza are aligned, while line 2 is indented "X" spaces, and line four appears to be indented "2X" spaces. The initial letter of each line is capitalized in the original. Need we adhere to these strictures?

The challenge.

Any time you break "the rules" of traditional typography, you are in some sense working against the originating logic of the technology. Type was designed to produce newspaper and book pages quickly, efficiently, and legibly.

When you alter the size of a typeface or dramatically shift faces within a line, you run into a few challenges, mostly involving spacing, and usually, therefore, . . . MATH.

TAKE NOTES on
EVERYTHING YOU SET...
you WILL have to put it AWAY!

JABBeRWOCKY

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
    Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves,
        And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
    The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird and shun
        The frumious bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
    Long time the manxome foe he sought—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
        And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
    The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
        And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
    The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
        He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
    Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
        He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
    Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves,
        And the mome raths outgrabe

...the disruption of this tradition seems particularly appropriate when faced with this poem. If we, for a moment, equate "legibililty" with "readability" (sense-making), the poem is clearly toying with what we mean by legibility. There is a way in which we all know exactly what Carroll is saying, yet the words have no fixed meaning. They are nonsense, but have all the sound and feeling of sense that words can have. As printers, we can translate Carroll's play with language into play with typography: the type can be as obstructive to meaning as it is suggestive... instead of transparently conveying images, we can draw attention to the material of language.

onky

If this is a 48 point "T," you might use some 12 point spacing to fill in this gap. Check the width of the "T" first, though: if it were 24 points wide, you could use a 12 point quad OR a 24 point en!!

The spacing sets the height and length of of the "field" in which I can set type. It's usually best to set the height to something convenient, either the largest letter of the line or some hieght corresponding to a spacing size.

approx. 60pt. en used to fill out the line and keep the form solid
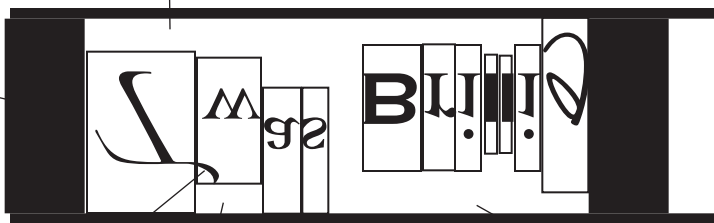
some faces, especially scripts and dramatic italics have letters that loop out over the edge of the type-body. Look out for loopy-leaning "f "s

the slight space at the base of the "w" and the larger gap at its top will need to be precisely filled. sometimes, material from the hellbox can be cut to fit

If the line height is 60 points, and the "Bri...i" is in a 30point face, it would be smart of me to space it such that I had a 12 point gap at the base of the letters and an 18 point gap above. That way, very simple space fills in a larger area. All that's left is to fit something above and below the "ll" and above the "g." (Most likely the "g" would be 48 points, leaving a 12 point gap above it,)

TYPe-SeTTiNG