You can also use this tab to associate a paragraph style with a list style. Refer to Chapter 12, Lists: Tips and Tricks, for additional information and an example.

Setting up a drop cap

Drop caps (one or more characters in a larger font at the beginning of a paragraph) are generally suitable only for a first paragraph style. You can predefine the properties in the *Drop Caps* tab of the Paragraph Style dialog. Select the **Display drop caps** option to enable the other choices: the number of lines occupied, the number of characters to enlarge (if you want the whole first word, check the corresponding box), and the space between the drop caps and the text.
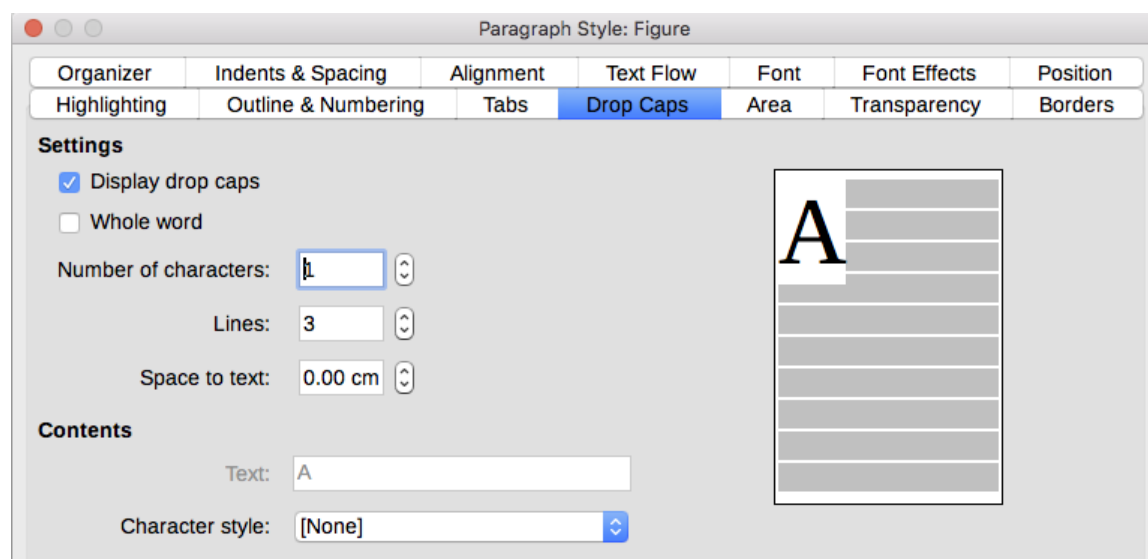

Figure 216: Options for adding a drop cap to the paragraph style

Drop caps use the same font and have the same properties as the rest of the paragraph; however, you can easily modify their appearance by creating a specific character style and using it. For example, you may want the drop caps to be of a different color or apply an outline effect. Select the character style you want to use in the corresponding drop-down menu.

Background (area), highlighting, and transparency

Adding a background color, gradient, pattern, hatching, or bitmap to a paragraph is an alternative to using a frame. You can customize the background using the *Area* tab of the Paragraph Style dialog. The choices are described in "Defining borders and backgrounds" in Chapter 6, Formatting Pages: Advanced.
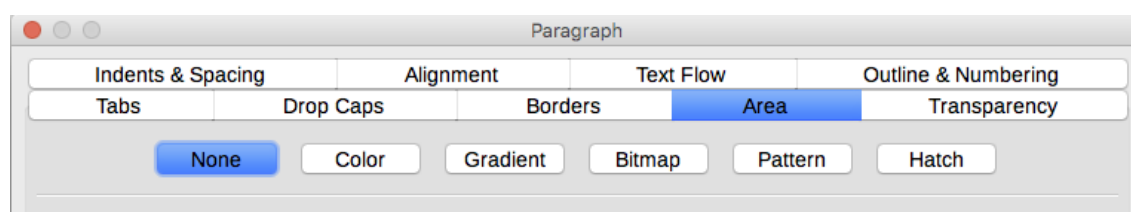

Figure 217: Types of fill for paragraph backgrounds

You may want to pay attention to the following points when working with the *Area* tab:

- If you do not find the desired color in the list of predefined ones, you can define your own as described in Chapter 20, Customizing Writer.
- You can select different backgrounds for the paragraph area and for the text in the paragraph. Use the *Highlighting* page for the text. Figure 218 shows the difference.