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# **Welcome to the SpecMap's Documentation!**

**Dec 07, 2021**



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# Setup and Installation

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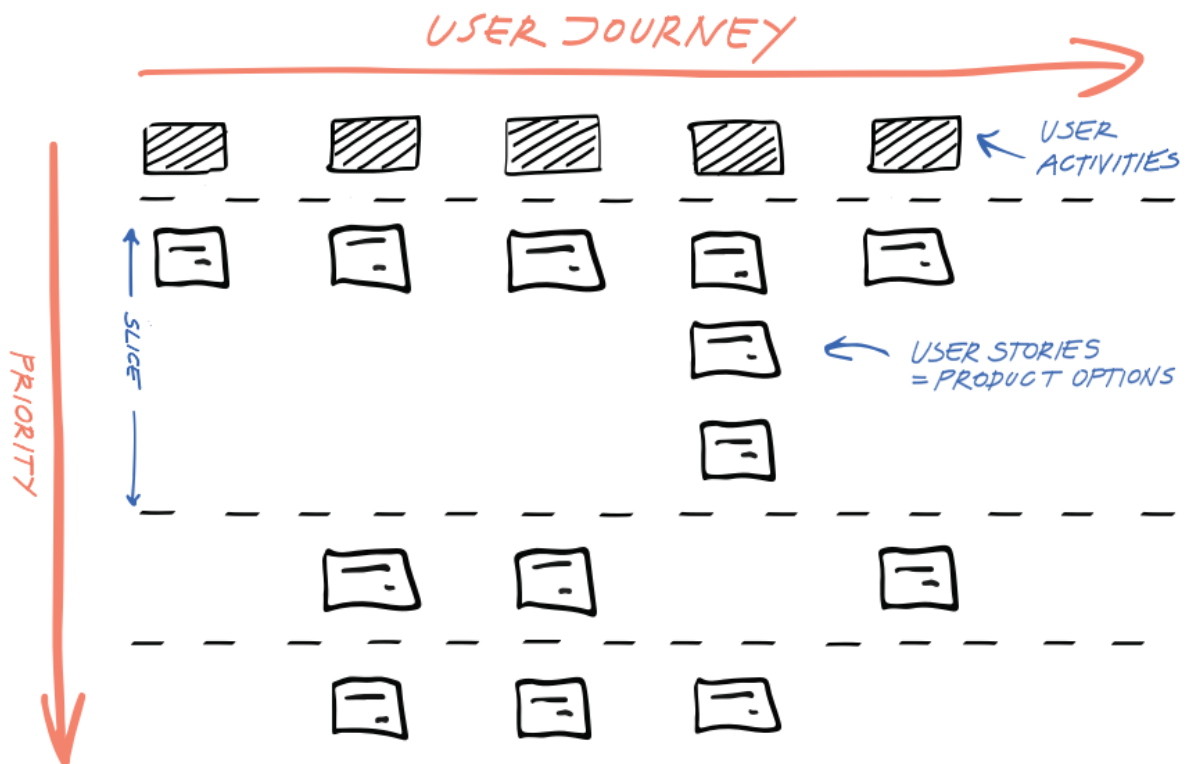
SpecMap is a story mapping tool for Team Services. Use SpecMap to structure your work items visually and organize your development teams.



# CHAPTER 1

## What is a Story Map?

Story maps provide a great basis for discussing the needs of your users, and prioritising development to deliver the biggest impact. A typical story map has a hierarchic structure involving user activities and user stories. The story maps tell stories from the user's perspective and represents the user's progress through the system as a series of activities.



In order for a user to achieve a goal, the user needs to perform a series of activities (browse for books, add books to the cart, enter shipping details, complete payment etc.). These activities are arranged to depict the user's typical progresses through the process from left to right; activities on the left are typically carried out before those on the right.

Each activity can be further broken down into smaller chunks, which are the user stories themselves. For example, browsing for books may involve searching the product catalog, viewing details and reviews of the books, and viewing other recommended books related to the current product.

Once the user stories have been discussed and defined, the next step is to prioritize development to deliver the biggest impact possible over the next development cycle. User stories that relate to the same activity are prioritized vertically, with more important stories at the top and less important stories lower down. This priority applies to all activities and should take into account factors such as dependent features (e.g. you cannot add products to the shopping cart if you cannot view products), as well as the needs of end users. Items on the same vertical level are referred to as “slices”, and typically represent one development cycle or sprint.

If you are interested in finding out more about story mapping, we recommend reading [User Story Mapping](#) by Jeff Patton.



## CHAPTER 2

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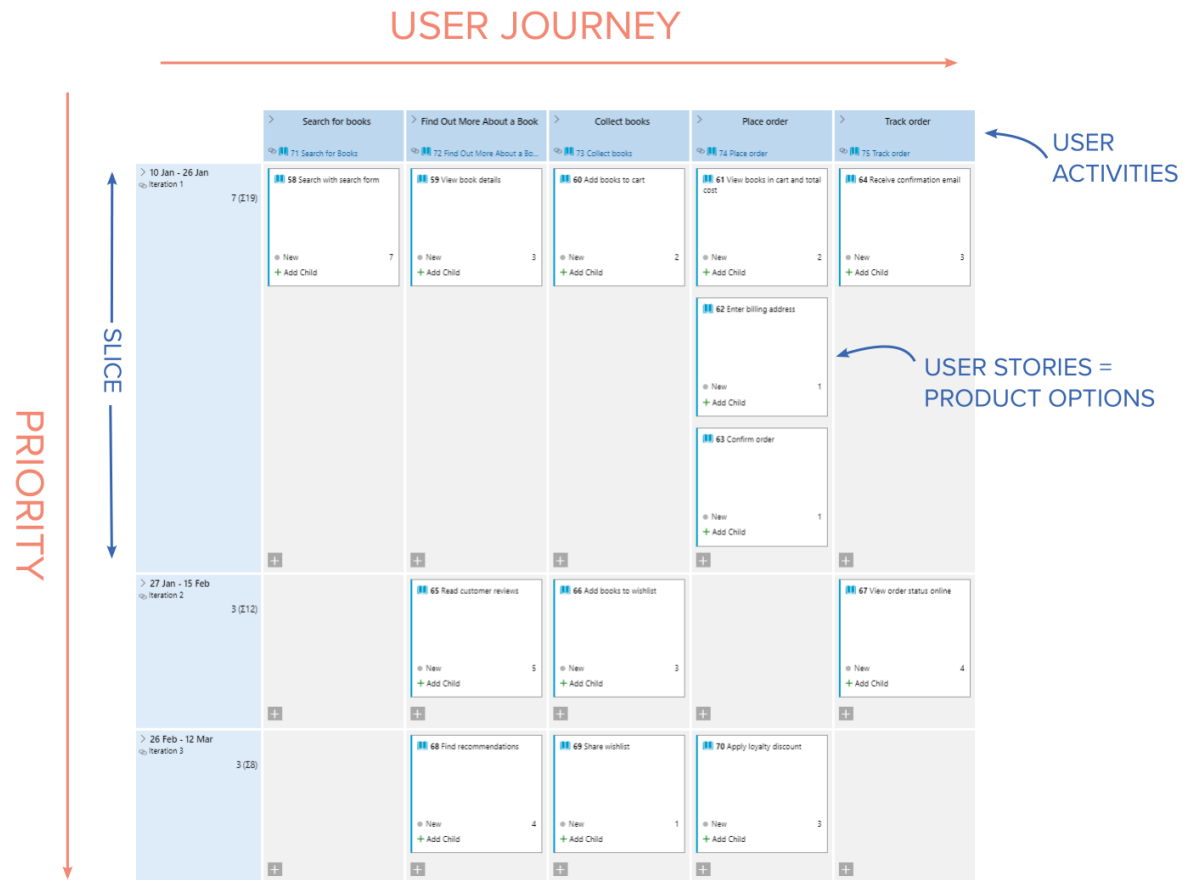
### What is SpecMap?

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Story maps are traditionally created using sticky notes on walls or whiteboards and have proven to be popular amongst agile development teams. However these traditional story boards are not without their disadvantages: walls are not transportable and the physical nature of these maps mean they are only temporary. Capturing the story board in an electronic format for archiving is often achieved by taking a photo of the story board.

SpecMap takes your walls and whiteboards into the digital age, allowing you to create story maps directly within Azure DevOps, and to link items on your story map to your backlog. Your story map is thus only a click away for your development team, and its electronic nature makes archiving easy. Furthermore, your story map can adapt to your development cycle and customer requirements as you progress simply by updating existing items or adding new ones.

SpecMap otherwise mimics traditional story maps with sticky notes: you can arrange items horizontally and vertically and easily create slices. But SpecMap goes further, and helps you structure your work items as you go. User stories assigned to a particular activity are automatically set as child items of the parent activity, and assigning an item to a particular slice automatically assigns the item to the iteration/sprint assigned to that slice. If you need to update the story map at a later date, for example to move an item to a different sprint, your changes are automatically applied to your backlog.



## 2.1 Requirements

SpecMap can be installed on both online and on-permise installations of TFS/VSTS/Azure DevOps.

- For online systems, install the extension from the [Visual Studio marketplace](#)
- For on-premise systems, download the installer from <https://specmap.cc/>

SpecMap is compatible with the following process templates:

- Agile
- Scrum
- Basic

## 2.2 Installation for Online Systems

For more detailed information on installing extensions, refer to the [Microsoft documentation](#).

### 2.2.1 Installing SpecMap for Azure DevOps

To install SpecMap on Azure DevOps:

1. Visit the SpecMap marketplace page.
2. Click on the **Get** button at the top of the page.
3. Select the account where you want to install the extension. Note that installing the extension requires administrator privileges. If you do not have the necessary rights, you will be given the option to submit a request to your organisation's systems administrator.



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## Select an Azure DevOps organization

Admin privileges are required to acquire this extension. You can submit a request to your organization's admin.

Request

For Azure DevOps Server

Download

4. Click on **Install** to install SpecMap if you have the necessary privileges.

## 2.2.2 Installing SpecMap for Team Foundation Server 2017+

To install SpecMap for Team Foundation Server:

1. Open the team project collection you want to install the extension for.
2. Visit the [SpecMap marketplace page](#).
3. Click on the Get button at the top of the page.
4. Confirm your project collection.
5. Save the installer (.vsix file).
6. Follow the instructions in the popup on how to upload the installer to your TFS server.

## 2.3 Installation for On-Premise Systems

For more detailed information on installing extensions, refer to the [Microsoft documentation](#).

If you are using an on-premise installation, you will need to [download the SpecMap installer](#) directly from the SpecMap website.

Once you have downloaded the .vsix file, follow [these steps](#) to install the extension on your server.

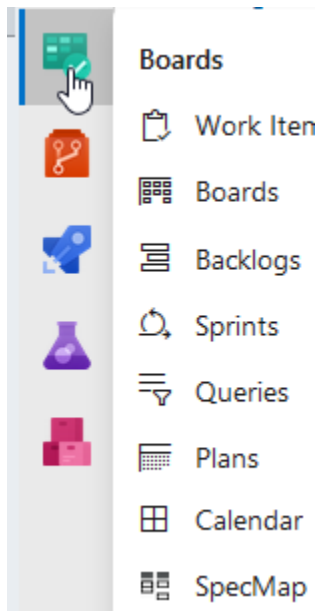
## 2.4 Licensing

The licensing of SpecMap is account-based. Users need to sign up for a free personal SpecFlow account in order to use SpecMap.

Learn more about the SpecFlow account [here](#).

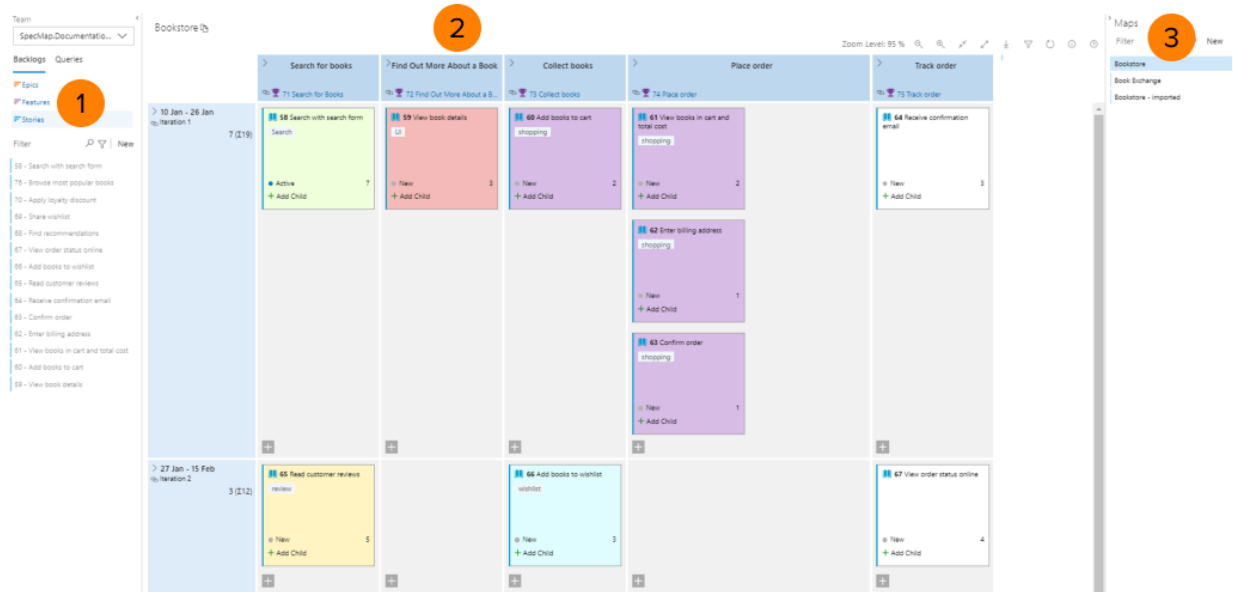
## 2.5 Starting SpecMap

Once SpecMap has been *installed*, you can open SpecMap from the **Boards** menu in Azure DevOps (or **Works** menu in TFS):



Select **SpecMap** from the menu.

- The first time you start SpecMap, you will be asked to sign in with your Microsoft Identity and set up your [SpecFlow account](#).
- If you have signed in with your Specflow account, the SpecMap workspace is opened.



SpecMap's UI is broken down into several areas:

1. The **backlog explorer** on the left of the screen lists your work items. You can drag these work items onto the map as user stories.
2. The **map area** contains your story map itself. This is where you can assign user stories to user activities, prioritise stories as well as assign slices to iterations and link columns to top-level work items.
3. The **map explorer** on the right lists the maps available in SpecMap. You can also export maps and clone them from here.

**Note:** The UI's appearance will differ slightly depending on your version of Azure DevOps or TFS.

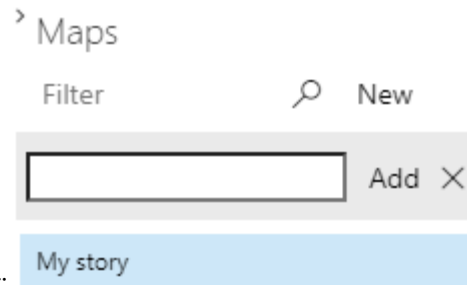
## 2.6 Your First Story Map

The first step is to create a new story map:

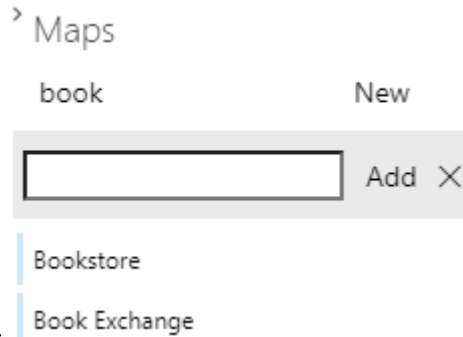
1. If you have not already **opened SpecMap**, select **SpecMap** from the **Work** menu in the header.



2. Click **New** in the right sidebar to add a new story map:
3. Enter a title for the story map and press Enter or click on **Add**.



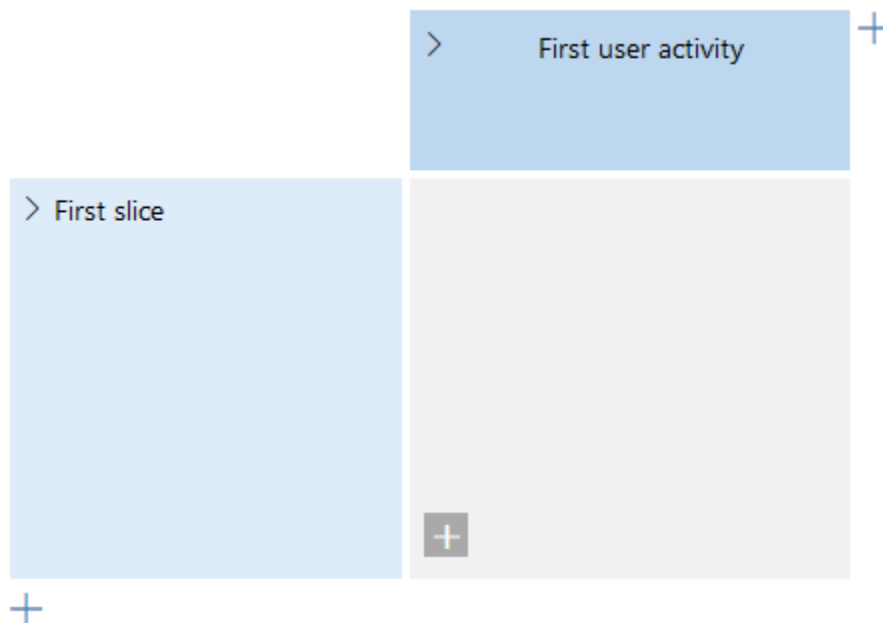
4. Your story map is created and listed in the right sidebar:
5. You can add multiple maps. Click on a map's name in the right sidebar to display that map. Use the search box



to filter maps by name:

## 2.7 Adding User Activities

When you first add a map, it is empty apart from one row and one column:




The next step is to add the top-level user activities:

1. Click on the **First user activity** entry in the text box at the top to edit

## Edit User Activity



First user activity

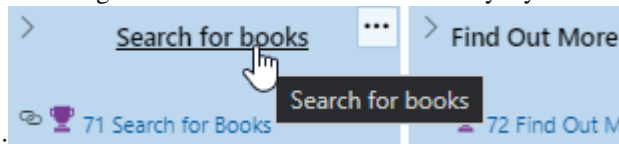
 Save and Close

### Link Work Item:

### Outcome

it:

2. Change the name of the activity and enter an **Outcome** for the user activity.
3. Click on **Save and close**.
4. You can assign a work item to the user activity by entering the work item ID in the **Link Work Item**



field:

The selected work item is entered in the user

## Edit User Activity

Title

Search for books

Link Work Item

71



71 Search for Books

activity:

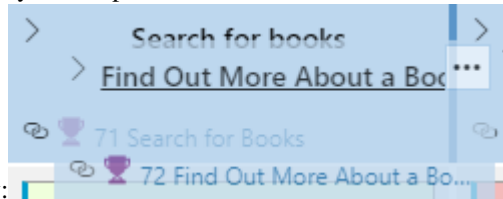
5. Repeat the process until you have finished adding your activities:



### 2.7.1 Reordering User Activities

To reorder a user activity:

1. Click anywhere on the box representing the user activity at the top of your map and keep the mouse button pressed.
2. Drag the user activity to the space between user activities to move it there. A blue bar indicates the new position



of the user activity:

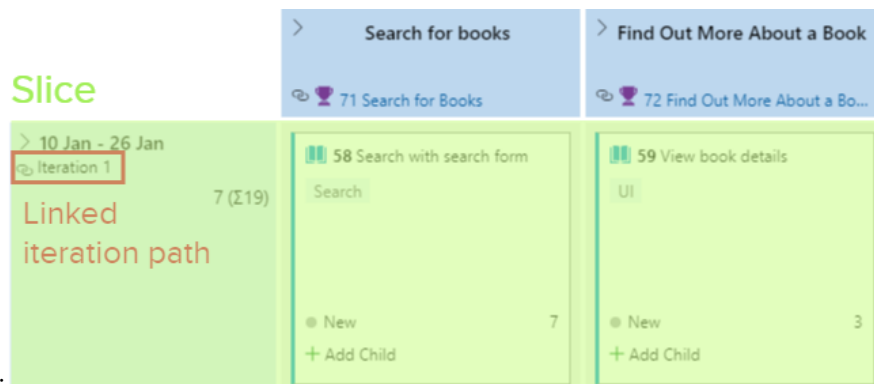
3. Release the mouse button.

### 2.8 Adding Slices

Rows in the map are called “slices”. Slices can be linked to iteration paths.

To add a new slice:

1. Click on the plus icon indicated by the **Click to add a new slice** hint.
2. Enter a name for your slice in the text box at the top.
3. Select the iteration path that this slice represents from the **Link to an Iteration** drop-down menu. User stories (work items) mapped to this slice are automatically added to the selected iteration.
4. Enter a description for the slice.
5. Click on **Save and close**.



6. A new horizontal slice is added to the story map:
7. Add additional slices to prioritize your user stories as needed and assign them to iterations.

You can merge and split slices as needed. For more details, see [Working with Slices](#).



## 2.9 Adding User Stories (Work Items)

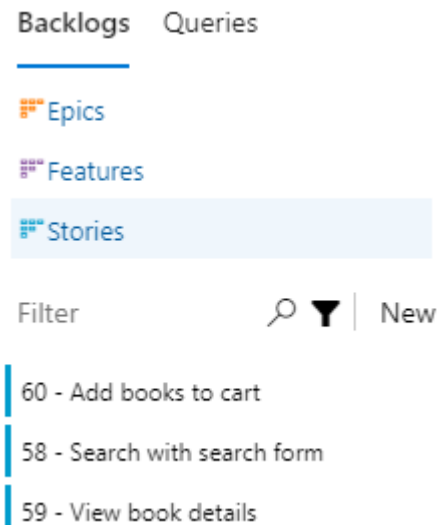
Now that you have a first slice, you can begin adding user stories to the story map for each activity. There are two ways of adding user stories:


- Drag an existing work item from your product backlog to the story map.
- Create a new user story directly on the map using the plus icon in a cell.

**Note:** Dragging work items to the map is unsupported in Internet Explorer. We recommend using a different browser.

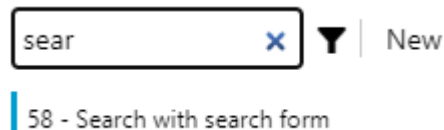
### 2.9.1 Dragging Work Items

1. A list of the work items available in your backlog is displayed on the left of the screen (if this area is hidden, click



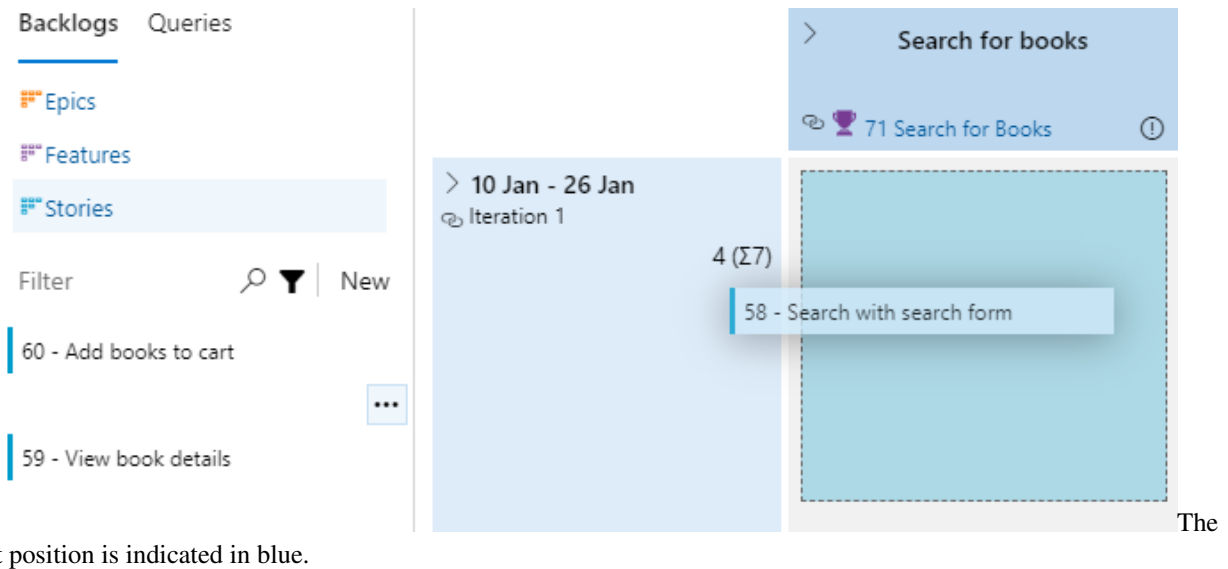
on the arrow above **Backlog explorer** to display your backlog). Work items that have already been added to the map cannot be added to the story map again and are displayed with a grey background. To hide these entries completely, click on the Filter icon above the list so that it turns black: 

2. Click on **Stories/Epics/Features** to restrict the entries in the list to items of that type. Enter text in the text box

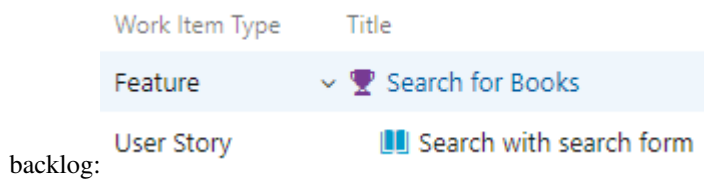


to filter your work items further:

3. Once you have identified the work item you want, drag it to the desired cell on the story



4. Release the mouse button to drop the item at the desired position. The story's parent is automatically set to the work item entered in the column header, as you can see in your



### 2.9.2 Creating a new story directly on the map

To add a new story to your product backlog directly on the map:

1. Click on the plus icon in the desired cell, select the desired work item type and fill in the title:\

If the user activity (in the column header) has been linked to a work item, the story's parent is automatically set to this work item.

### 2.9.3 Add work items assigned already to the iteration

If there are work items already assigned to an iteration, but not present on your map where the iteration is linked to a slice, a warning indicator is displayed (exclamation mark). Click on this indicator to display a list of the missing work items in the Backlog Explorer. You can then quickly add the missing items to your map where they belong.

## 2.10 Arranging and Prioritising User Stories

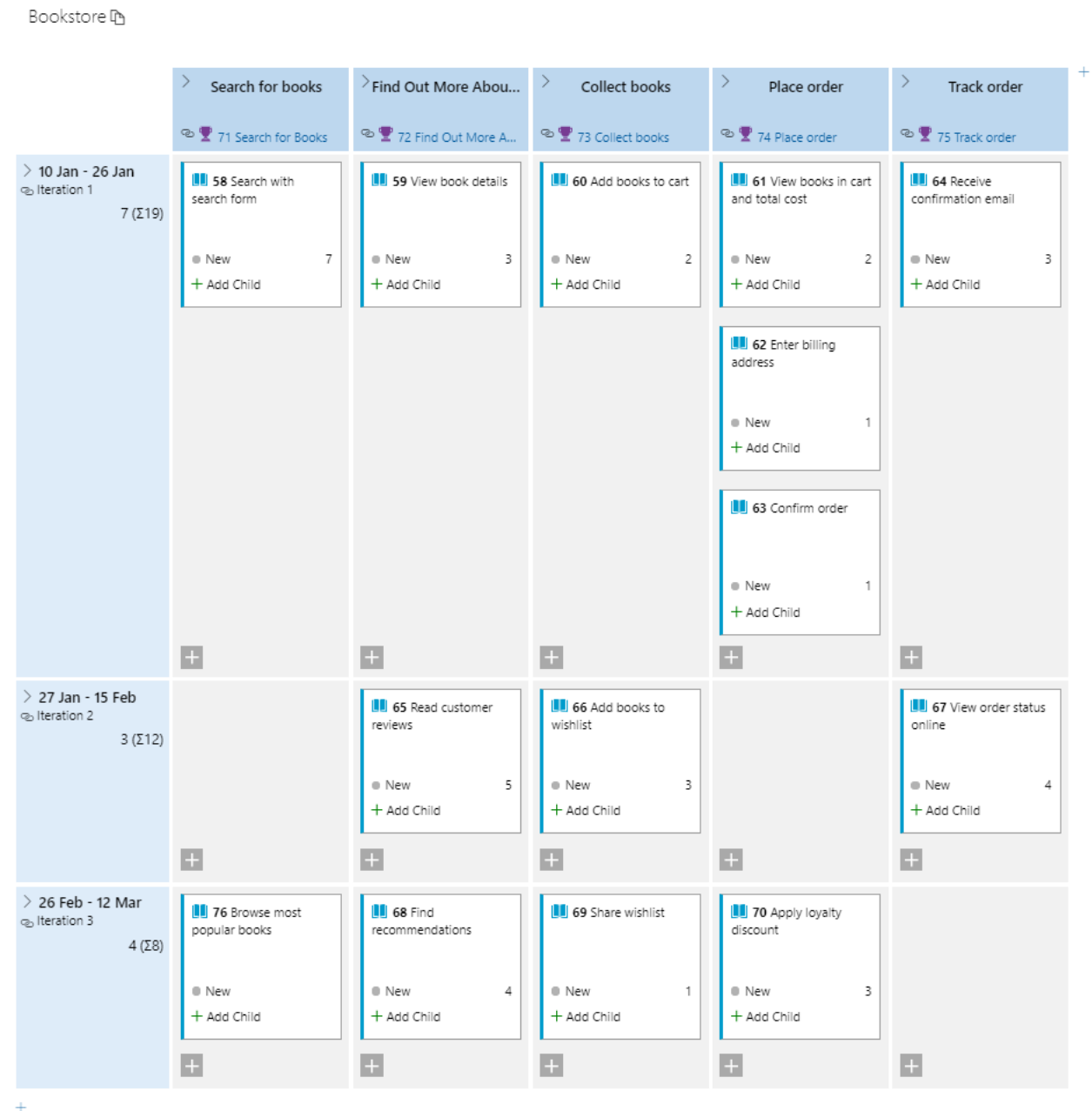
Once you have added your user stories, the next step is to assign them to the user activities they support (horizontally), and prioritise them (vertically) within this user activity. The story map visualizes, how the user journey (user activity steps) will be supported incrementally with additional features of the product described by the user stories. Drag user stories on the story map to the desired position on the map.

You can place items on either side of existing items, as well as above or below them. In this case a new row or column will be added to the map, pushing down or left all other items on the map. This is useful for keeping positions of other

cards on the map stable relative to each other (e.g. priority). A red bar is displayed to indicate where the item will be positioned:

You can also change priority in a single column, without affecting other columns on the map, by dropping an item on a card:

You can now prioritise your work items visually, and assign different items to different iterations/sprints based on their priority:



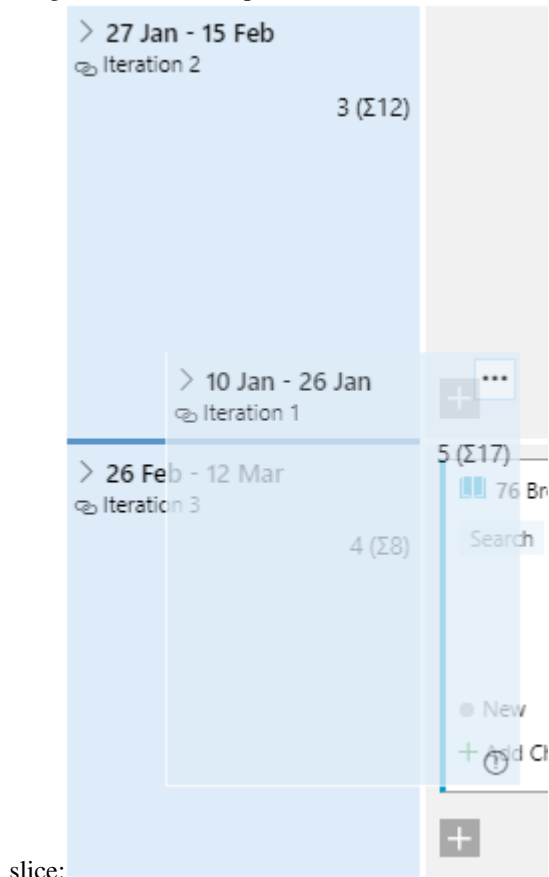
## 2.11 Working with Slices

In addition to adding new slices using the plus icon, you can rearrange the order of slices. You can also split an existing slice vertically or merge a slice with the slice below it.

### 2.11.1 Reordering Slices

To reorder a slice:

1. Click anywhere on the box representing the slice on the left of your map and keep the mouse button pressed.
2. Drag the slice to the space between slices to move the slice there. A blue bar indicates the new position of the

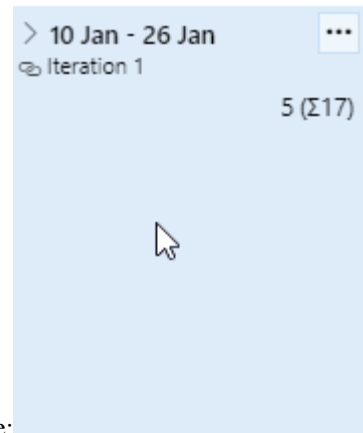


3. Release the mouse button.

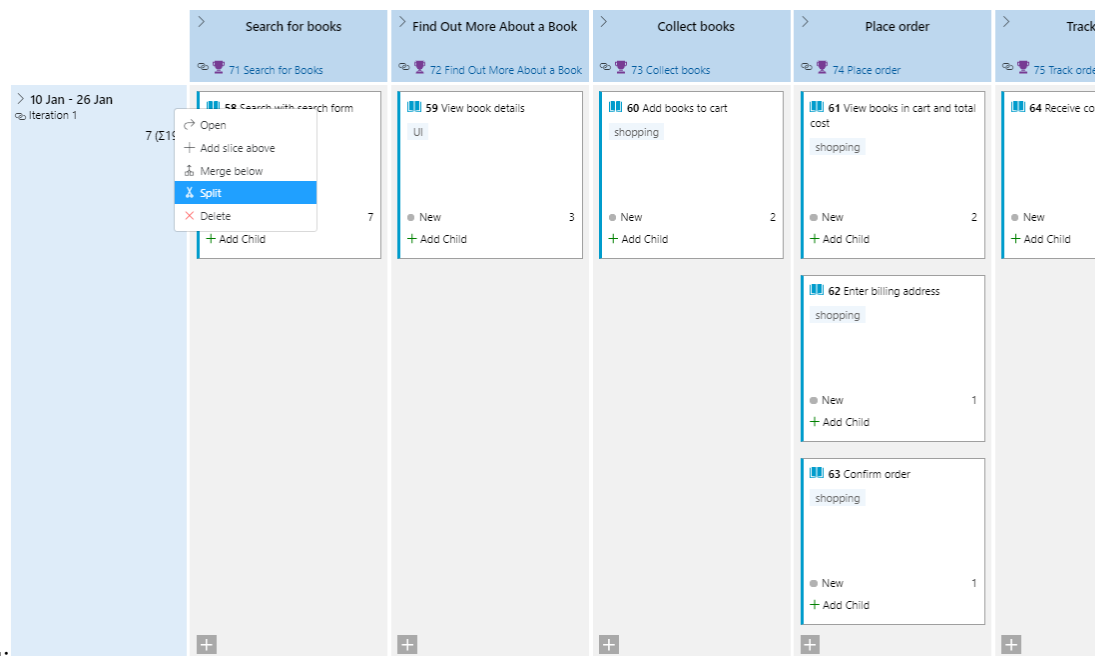
### 2.11.2 Splitting a Slice

**Note:** You cannot split a slice that only contains a single row or items; the slice must have at least two rows.

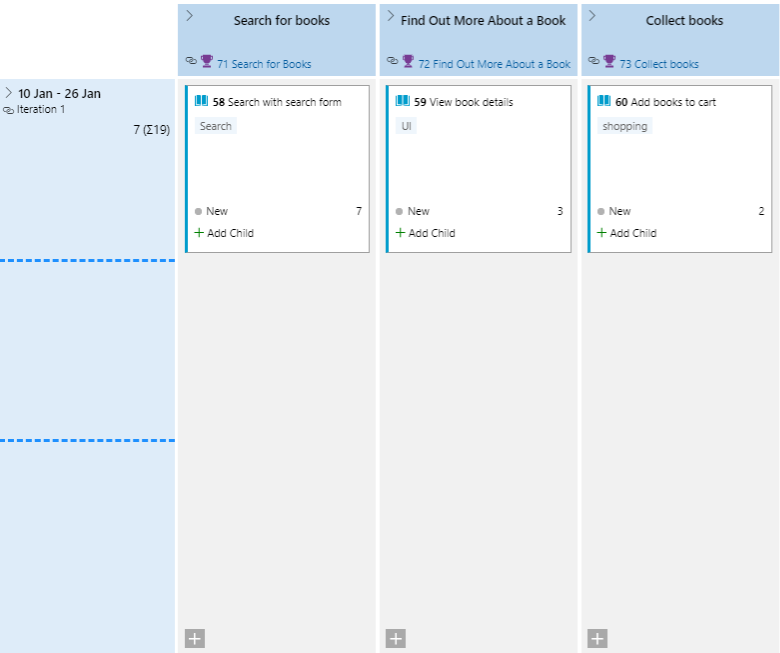
To split a slice:



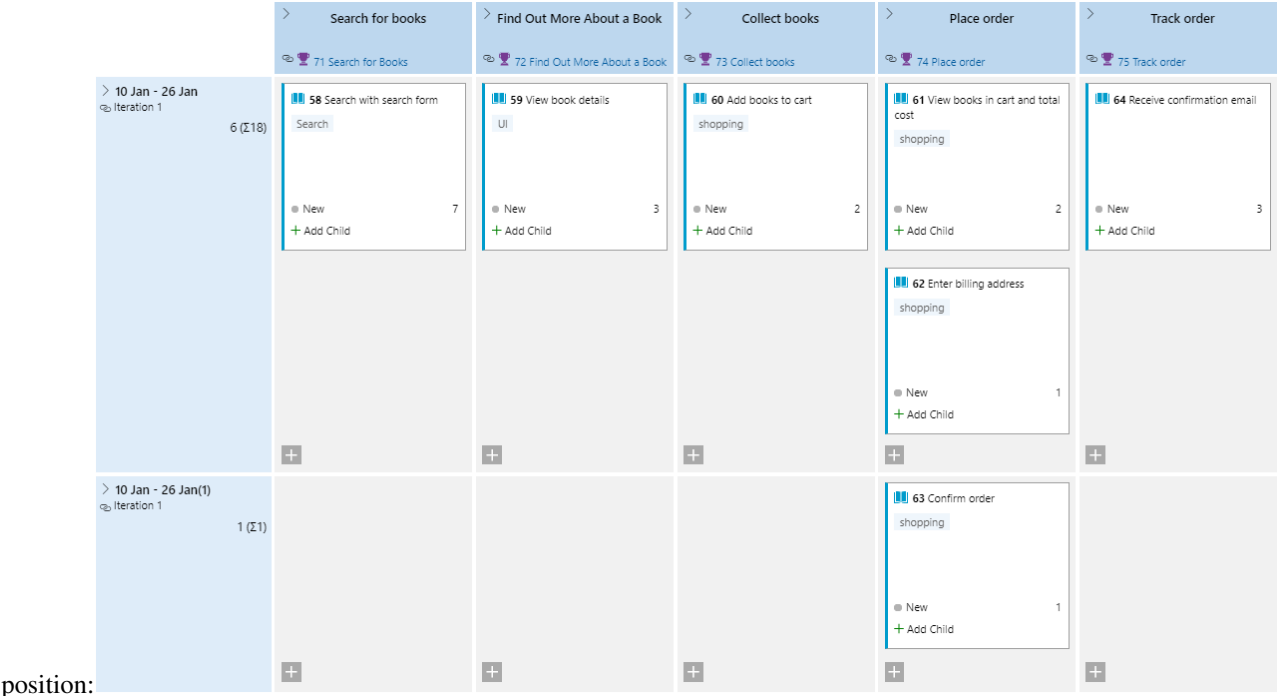
1. Click on the ... icon next to the name of the slice:



2. Select **Split** from the menu:



- 3. Dashed lines are displayed where you can split the slice:
- 4. Move your mouse cursor over the dashed line where you want to split the slice. The mouse cursor changes to indicate that you can split the slice here.
- 5. Click on the dashed line. The slice is split into two at the selected



2.11.3 Merging Slices

You can merge two neighbouring slices together. To do so:



1. Click on the ... icon next to the name of the top slice you want to merge:
2. Select **Merge below** from the menu.
3. The slice is merged with the slice below it. Your layout is retained; the items in the bottom slice are arranged below the items in the top slice when merging.

## 2.12 Refinements and Child Items

To refine a story on the map, child items can be added directly to a card on the map to slice out smaller increments:

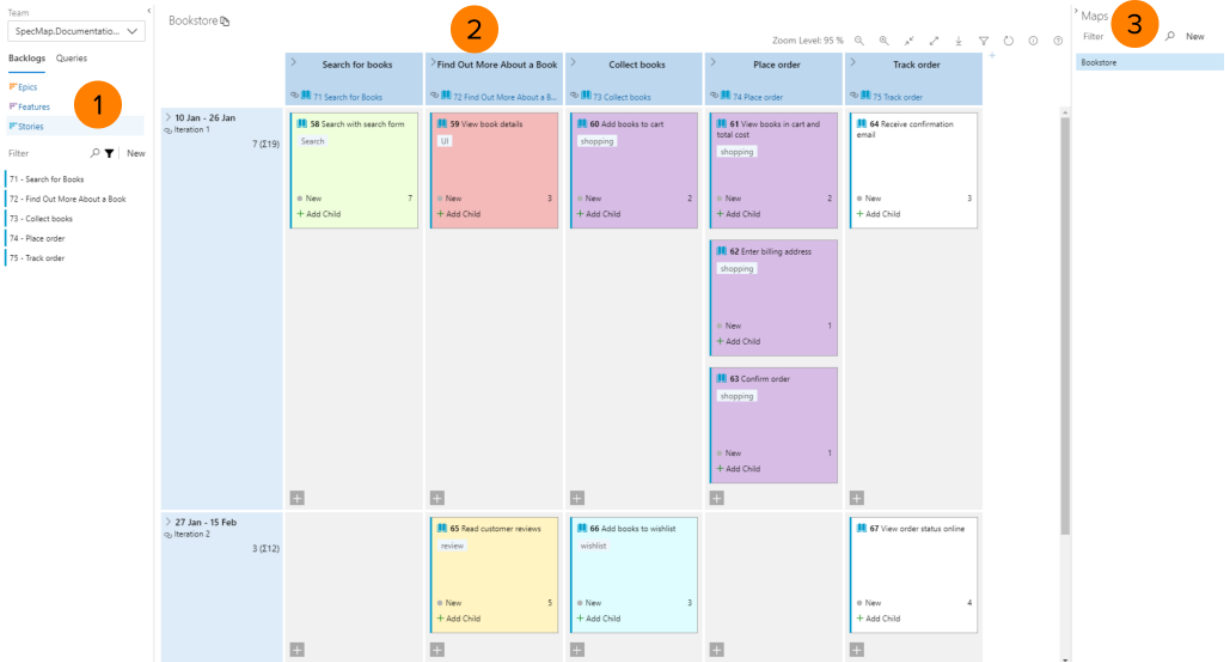
Child items can be then dragged on the map to prioritize them individually:

The status of all child items (mapped, completed) is displayed on the parent card, providing you with an overview of the current status at a glance:

## 2.13 User Interface

SpecMap's UI is broken down into several areas:

1. The [backlog explorer](#) on the left of the screen lists your work items. You can drag these work items onto the map as user stories.
2. The [map area](#) contains your story map itself. This is where you can assign user stories to user activities, prioritise stories as well as assign slices to iterations and link columns to top-level work items.
3. The [map explorer](#) on the right lists the maps available in SpecMap. You can also export maps and clone them from here.



**Note:** The UI's appearance will differ slightly depending on your version of Azure DevOps or TFS.

## 2.14 Backlog Explorer

The backlog explorer on the left lists the stories (work items) of the selected type or returned by your **Query**. You can also apply a **Filter** to the results.



Backlogs Queries

Epics

Features

Stories

Filter

🔍 | New

58 - Search with search form  
76 - Browse most popular books  
70 - Apply loyalty discount  
69 - Share wishlist  
68 - Find recommendations  
67 - View order status online  
66 - Add books to wishlist  
65 - Read customer reviews  
64 - Receive confirmation email  
63 - Confirm order  
62 - Enter billing address  
61 - View books in cart and total cost  
60 - Add books to cart  
59 - View book details

Stories not yet on your map are listed with a white background. You can add these stories to your map, see [Adding Stories to the Map](#). Stories that have already been added to the map are displayed with a grey background. These cannot be added to the map, as each story can only be added to the map once. You can choose to hide the items already on the map (see below).

### 2.14.1 Selecting Features/Epics/Stories

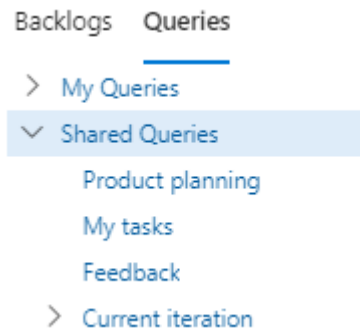
Click on Backlogs at the top of the list to access the queries for **Features**, **Epics** and **Stories** (PBIs). These queries restrict the list to the selected item type

The default query returns all work items with the following states:

- Proposed
- New
- Active
- Approved
- Committed

## 2.14.2 Using Your Own Queries

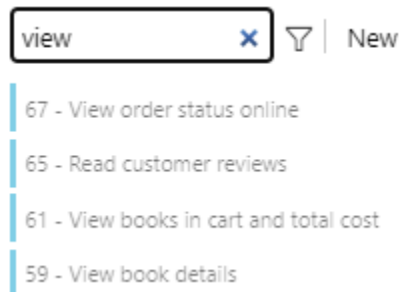
You can also use other queries you have defined in Azure DevOps/TFS. To do so:



1. Click on **Queries** at the top of the list.
2. Select the desired query from the list to apply it to the list of work items.

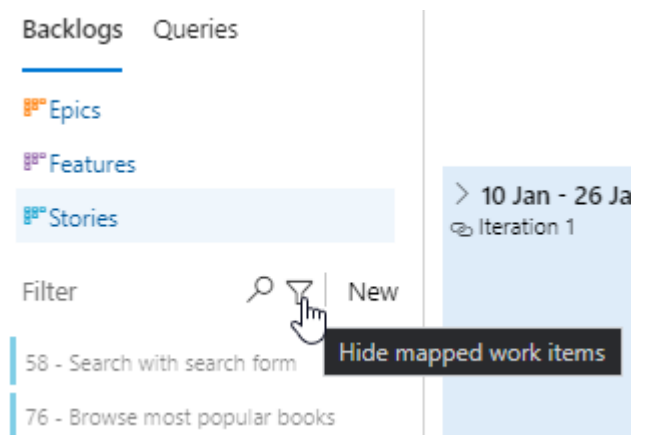
## 2.14.3 Filtering the Stories in the List

In addition to using queries to define which stories are displayed in the list, you can also use the **Filter** field to search for stories by title. Enter part of the stories name in the field to display all matching titles:



## 2.14.4 Hiding Mapped Items

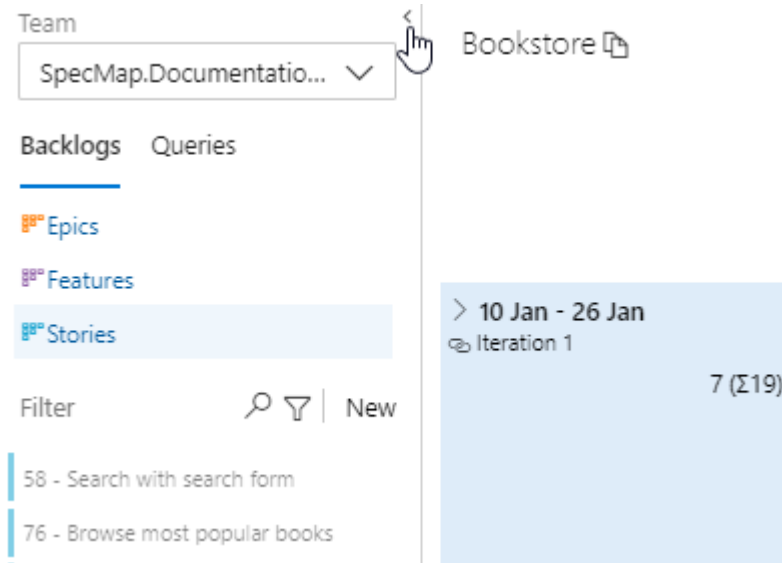
You can hide the items already on your map (i.e. those with a grey background). To do so:



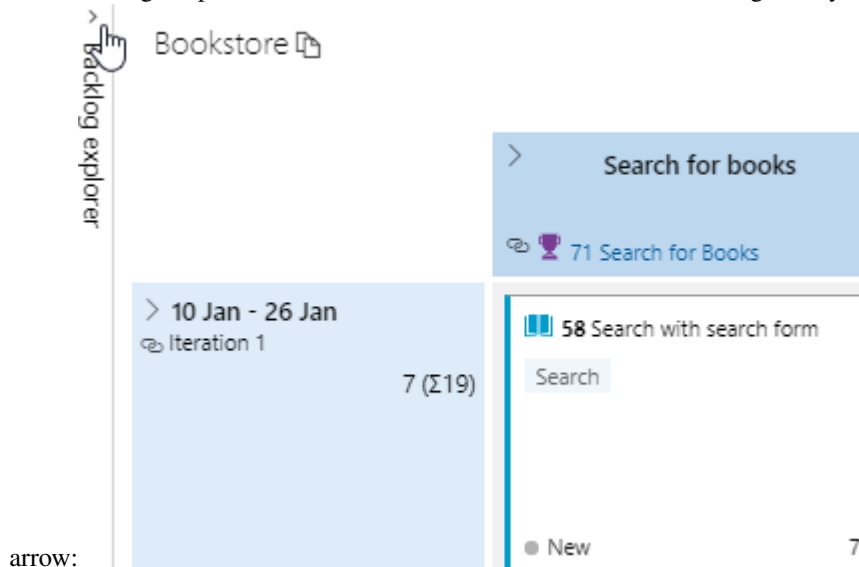
- Click on the **Hide mapped work items** icon next to the **Filter**.

## 2.14.5 Hiding the Backlog Explorer

To hide the backlog explorer:



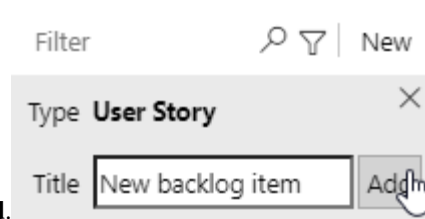
1. Click on the small left arrow at the top of the **Stories** list:
2. The backlog explorer is hidden. You can show the list again by clicking on the small right



## 2.14.6 Adding New Items to the Backlog

You can add new PBIs to your product backlog from the story list. To do so:

1. Click on **New**.



2. Enter a name for the new item and click on **Add**.
3. A new (empty) product backlog item is added with the name you specified.

## 2.15 Map Area

The central area contains your story map and a number of options in the header. This is where you can map user stories to user activities and prioritise stories, as well as assign slices to iterations and columns to top-level work items.

The map area consists of three separate areas:

- The *header*, which displays the name of your map and contains a toolbar.
- The *story map* itself. This is where you can position your *cards* in the map, assign slices to iterations and assign user activities to work items.

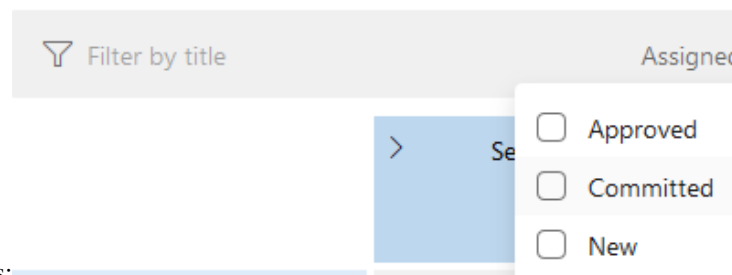
### 2.15.1 Header

The header is displayed above the story map:



The header contains the following elements:

- Zoom level indication: The current zoom level is displayed as a percentage
- **Zoom In** (🔍): Increases the zoom level by 5% (the maximum zoom level is 100%)
- **Zoom Out** (🔍): Decreases the zoom level by 5% (minimum zoom level is 5%)
- **Reset Zoom to 100%** (↔️): Resets the zoom level to 100%
- **Zoom to fit Screen** (↔️): Sets the zoom level so that the map fits on the screen
- **Download map as image** (⬇️): Download the current map as an image (PNG)



- **Filter cards** (🔍): Click on this icon to display the card filters: the drop down lists to select which cards on the map to highlight. You can choose to highlight stories based on the user they are assigned to, the state of work item and tags. Filters can be combined with one another. Cards that match the filter are displayed as normal; cards that do not match the filter are greyed out.
- **Refresh map** (🔄): Refreshes the map to update any changes made in the meantime by other users.

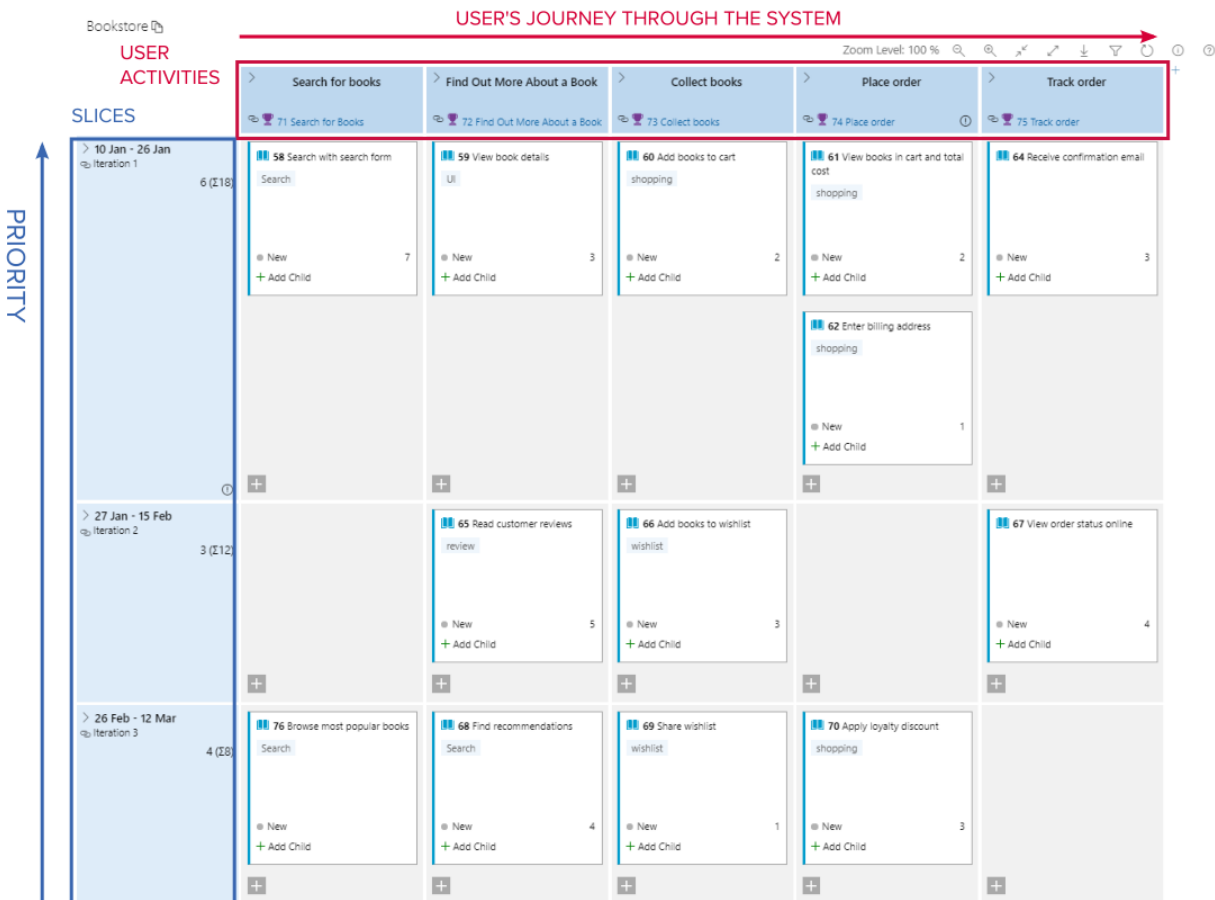
- Help (?): Displays a quick overview of the steps necessary to set up your story map.

## 2.15.2 Story Map

The central area is mostly taken up by your story map.

### Structure of a Story Map

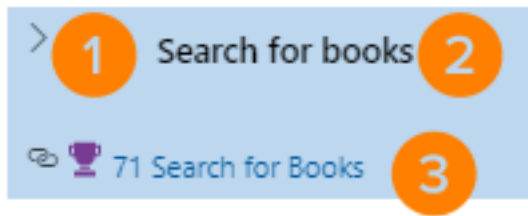
A story map places user stories represented by card in a matrix. The X axis represents the user's journey through the system over time, starting on the left and moving the the right. Each of the stations on the user's journey are represented by user activities, which are displayed at the top of the map. The Y axis represents the priority, with stories higher up the map having a higher priority. Stories can be assigned to vertical slices, which represent iterations.



In SpecMap, user activities can be linked to work items in Azure DevOps/TFS, and slices can be linked to iteration paths. User stories are depicted using work items.

### User Activities

User activities are displayed at the top of the story map in the individual columns. Each user activity can be linked to a work item, see [Adding User Activities](#). The following information is displayed for user



activities:

1. Click on the small arrow to collapse or expand the column.
2. Name of the user activity (e.g. "Search for books").
3. If the user activity is linked to a work item, the link icon is displayed along with the ID and name of the work item. If the user activity is not linked to a work item, no information is displayed.

If you mouse over an activity, the menu icon (...) is displayed.

The following options are available:

- **Open:** Opens the user activity. This performs the same action as clicking on the name of the user activity.
- **Add user activity left:** Add a new user activity to the left.
- **Merge right:** Merges the user activity column with the one on the right. This option is only available if there is another column to the right of the current one.
- **Delete:** Deletes the user activity.

### Slices

Slices allow you to group user stories vertically. You can assign a slice to an iteration path. The following information is displayed for slices:



1. Click on the small arrow to collapse or expand the slice/row.

2. The name of the slice (e.g. "27 Jan - 15 Feb")
3. If the slice is *linked to an iteration path*.
4. Information on the user stories in the slice. The first number is the number of user stories in the slice, the second number represents the total effort entered for these stories.

## Linking Slices to Iterations

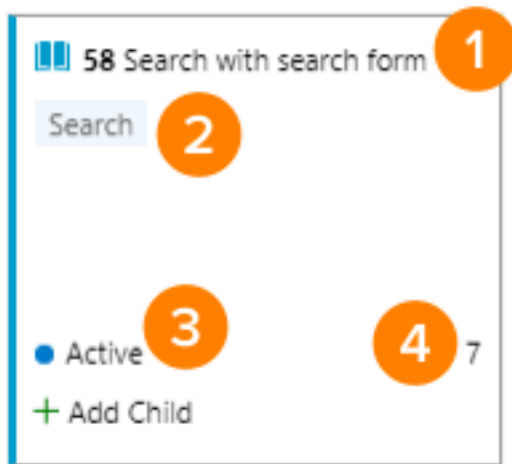
Slices can be linked to an iteration path. This will automatically assign work items mapped to that slice to the linked iteration path.

A linked iteration path is shown with the link icon (see (3)) along with the name of the iteration path. If the slice is not linked to an iteration path, no information is displayed.

Slices linked to an iteration that miss cards assigned to that iteration show a warning indicator (exclamation mark). Click on this indicator to display a list of the missing work items in the Backlog Explorer. You can then quickly add the missing items to your map where they belong.

## Cards

User stories are represented by cards on the story map. Each user story is represented by a work item. The following information is displayed for user stories:



1. Name and ID of the work item.
2. The tags defined for the work item.
3. The status of the work item.
4. The estimated effort.

### 2.15.3 Cards

Cards in SpecMap represent user stories. Information on the associated work item is displayed on the card. This includes the icon defined for the work item type, any tags you have defined, the user assigned to the work item, the state and the estimated effort.

### Card Styling

Cards on the map inherit their styling from the styles you have defined for work items in Azure DevOps/TFS.


**Note:** In Azure DevOps, styles are defined at the team level. Make sure that the team you have selected in SpecMap is the team you defined the style settings for in Azure DevOps!

Styling in SpecMap depends on the styling defined for the **Product backlog**. So make sure you have configured the styling for your product backlog items (**Stories** (for Agile), **Issues** (for Basic), **Backlog items** (for Scrum), or **Requirements** (for CMMI)) and for the correct team (the one selected in the Backlog Explorer in SpecMap). If the styling has been defined for the product backlog items and for the selected team, the cards are displayed with the matching style in SpecMap.

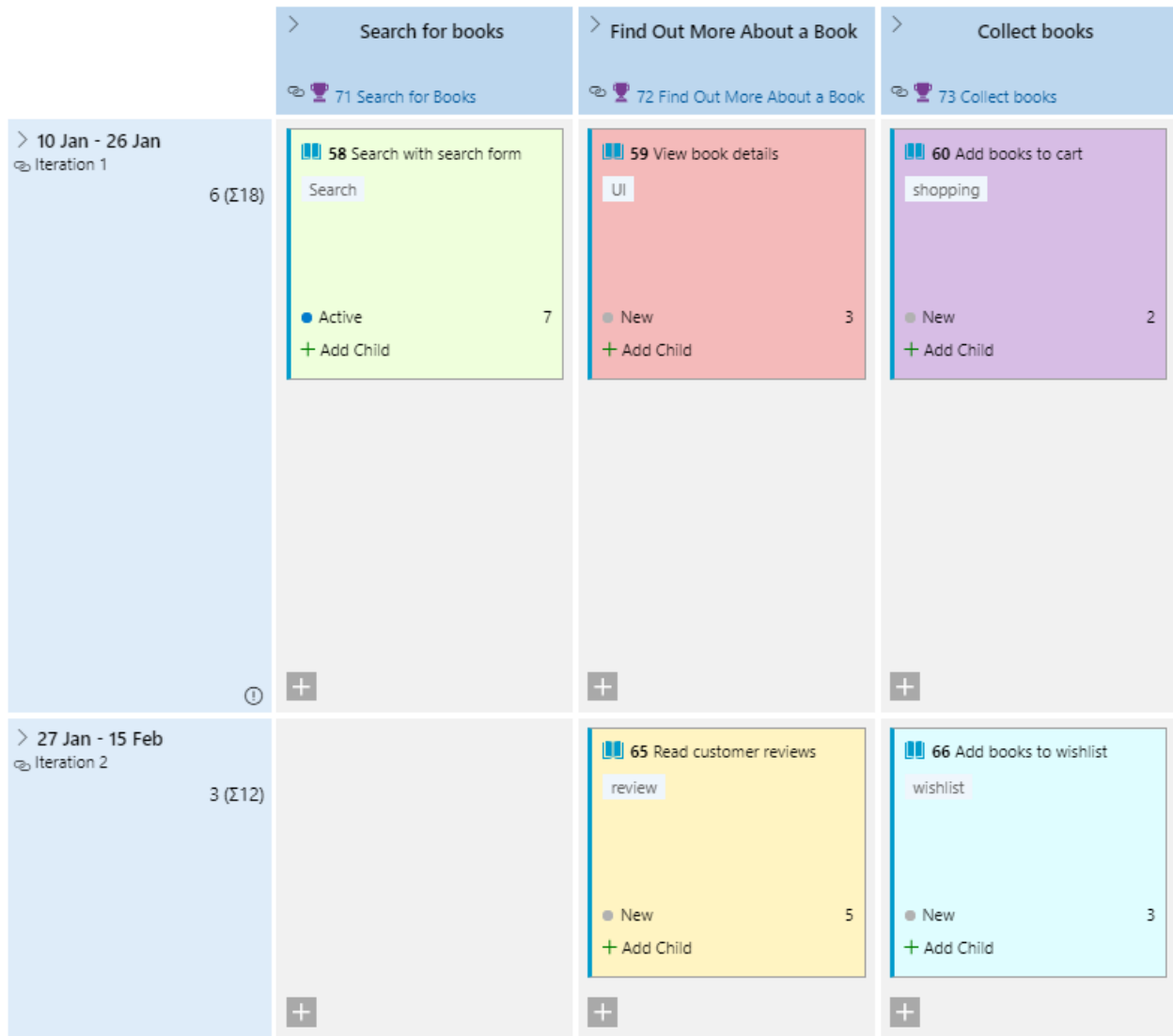
To access these settings:

1. Open a Kanban board (**Boards**) in your project in Azure DevOps/TFS.
2. Select the correct team if you are using Azure DevOps.
3. Select the correct backlog level (**Stories** (for Agile), **Issues** (for Basic), **Backlog items** (for Scrum), or **Requirements** (for CMMI)), because styles in SpecMap are always taken from the configuration of the Product



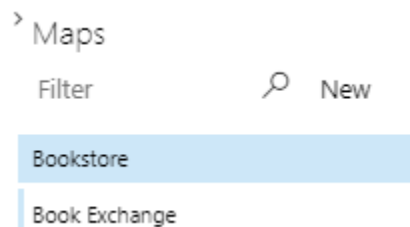
4. Click on the  icon (top right).
5. Click on **Styles** in the list on the left.
6. Define [style settings for your cards](#).
7. The styles are now applied to cards in SpecMap:





## 2.16 Map Explorer

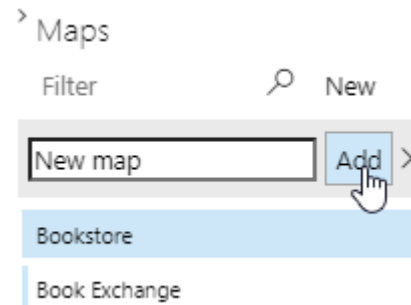
The map explorer on the right lists your story maps:



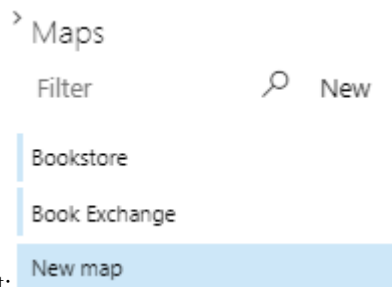
### 2.16.1 Adding a Map

To add a new map:

1. Click on **New** in the header.



2. Enter a name for the map in the text field and click on **Add**:



3. The new map is added to the list:

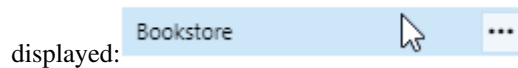
### 2.16.2 Opening a Map

Click on the name of a map in the list of maps to display the map in the central map area.

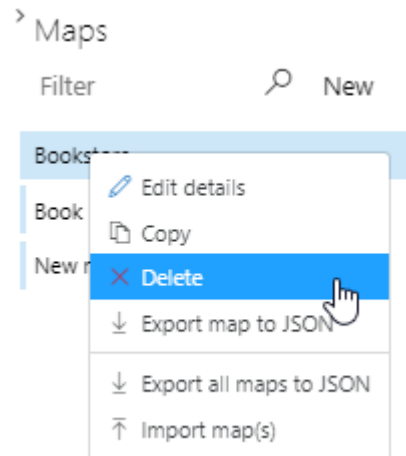
### 2.16.3 Deleting a Map

To delete a map:

1. Move your mouse cursor over the name of the map in the list so that the menu icon (...) is



displayed:



2. Click on the options (...) icon and select Delete:
3. You will be asked whether you want to unlink the affected work items. Choose the appropriate option:
  - **Unlink:** Removes the parent-child links between items defined in SpecMap and deletes the map.

- **Keep links:** Keeps the parent-child links between items defined in SpecMap and deletes the map.
- **Cancel:** The map is not deleted and no changes are made.

## 2.16.4 Cloning a Map

To clone a map:

1. Move you mouse cursor over the name of the map in the list so that the option icon (...) is displayed.
2. Click on the options (...) icon and select **Copy**.
3. Enter a name for the cloned map and click on **Save&Close**.
4. A new map is added with the contents as the map you cloned. Note that links in the user activities and slices are not retained, only the contents of the map itself and the names of the rows and columns.

## 2.16.5 Filters

Enter a search term in the Filter text box in the header to restrict the list of maps to only those containing your search term.

## 2.17 Adding Stories to the Map Manually

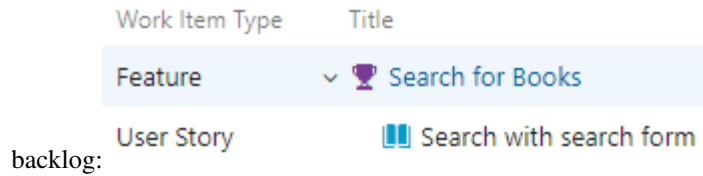
The stories available for your map are displayed in the *backlog explorer*. To add a story to your map:

1. Locate the story you want to add in the list. You can search for specific stories using the **Filter** field.
2. Click on the desired story and drag it to the cell on the map you want to assign the story

to.

target position is indicated in blue.

3. Release the mouse button to drop the item at the desired position. The story's parent is automatically set to the work item entered in the column header, as you can see in your



**Note:** You can also add new product backlog items by clicking on **New** in the backlog explorer.

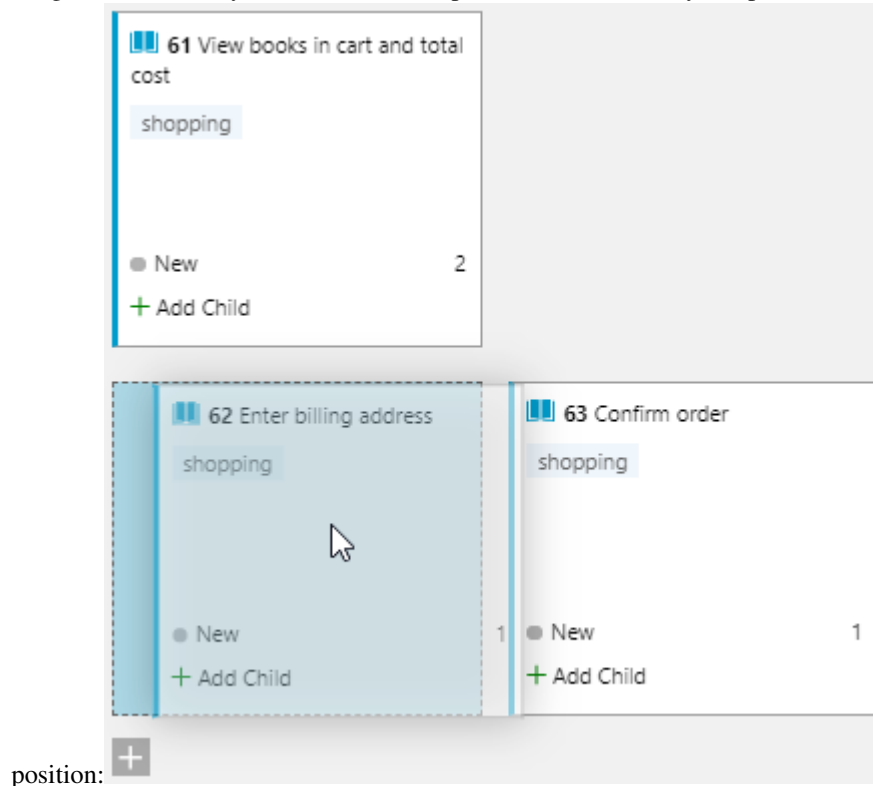
## 2.18 Placing Stories

You can add entries in your work items to the story map as user stories, see [Adding Stories to the Map Manually](#). Once added, you can move the user stories on your map as needed, e.g. to change the priority or parent user activity.

### 2.18.1 Dragging a User Story to New Position

To move a user story to a new position:

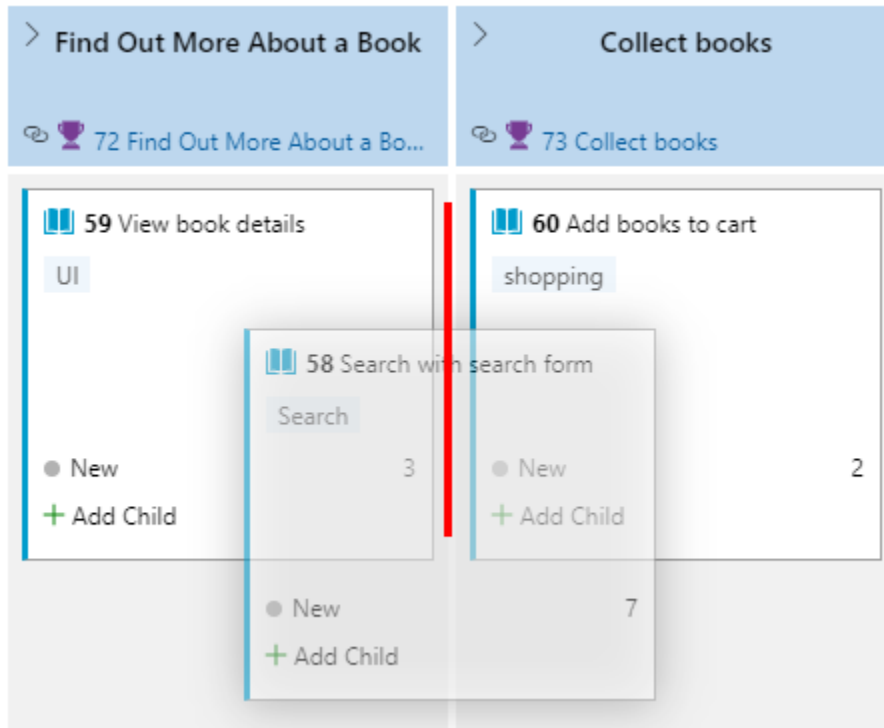
1. Click on the user story and keep holding the mouse.
2. Drag the user story to the desired position on the story map. A blue rectangle indicates the target



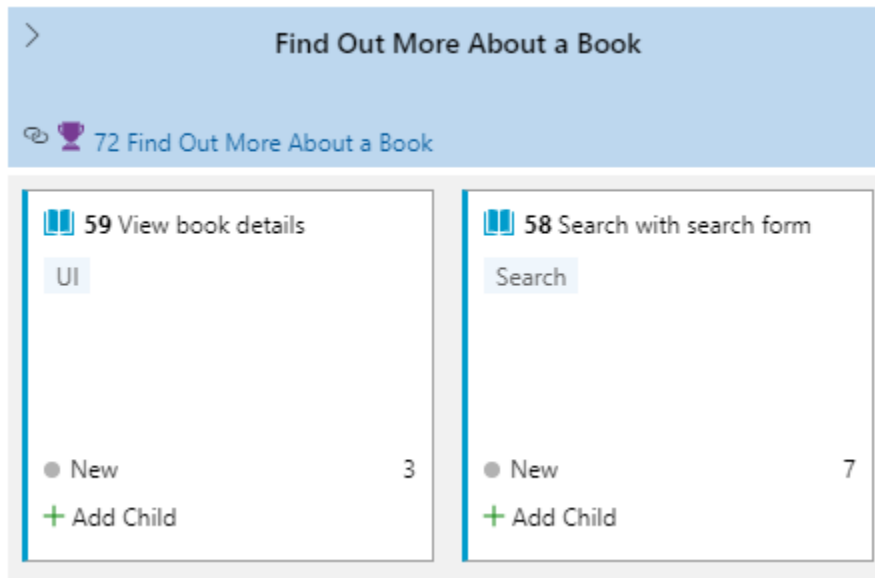
3. Release the mouse button when the user story is in the desired position.

Once you have added your user stories, the next step is to prioritise them, taking into account which user stories are required by other user stories. Drag user stories on the story map to the desired position on the map.

You can place items on either side of existing items, as well as above or below them. A red bar is displayed to indicate where the item will be positioned:

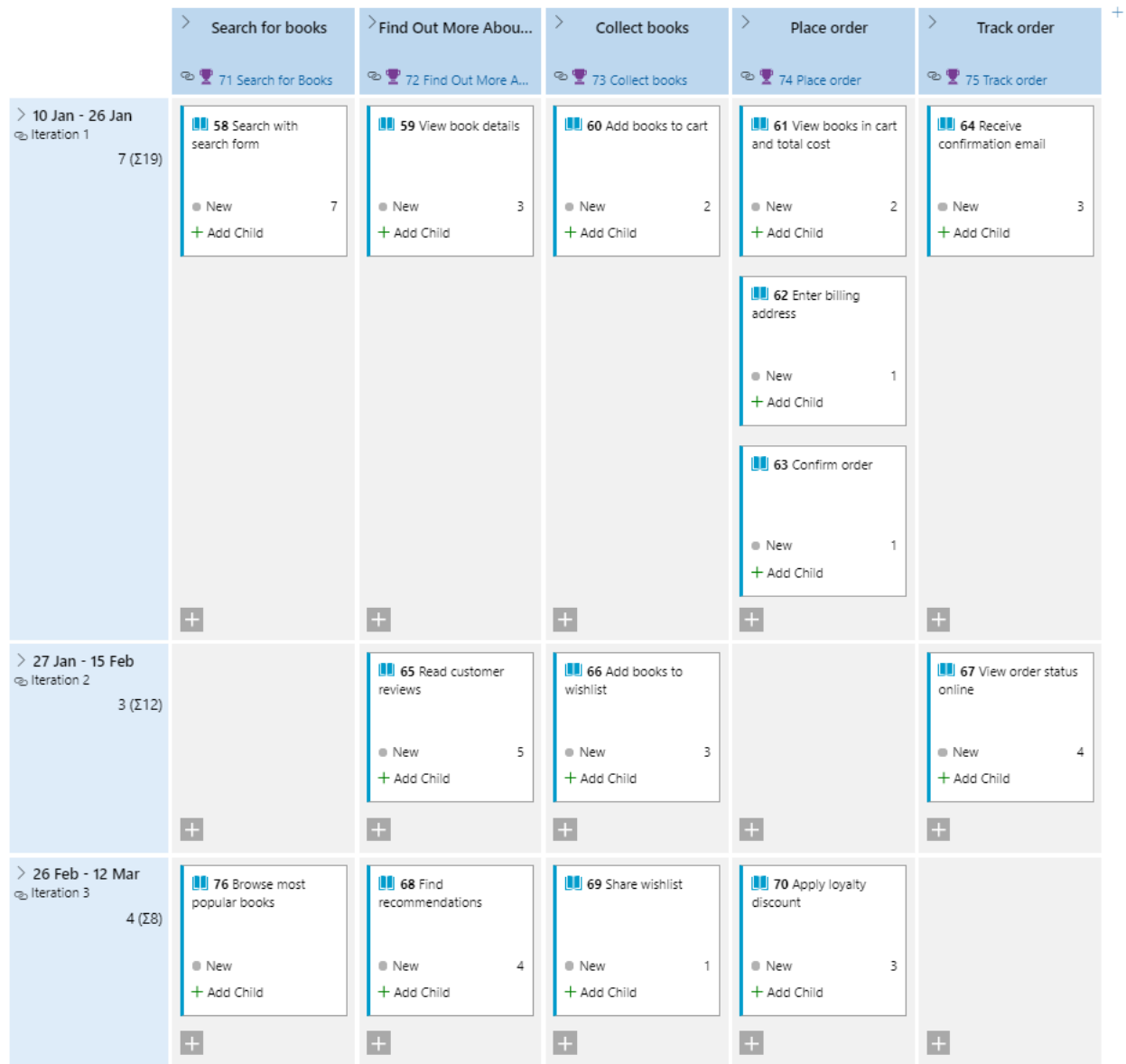


In this case, the “Search with search form” item will be placed to the right of the “View book details” item (the red indicator is to the right of the existing item):



You can now prioritise your work items visually, and assign different items to different iterations/sprints based on their priority:

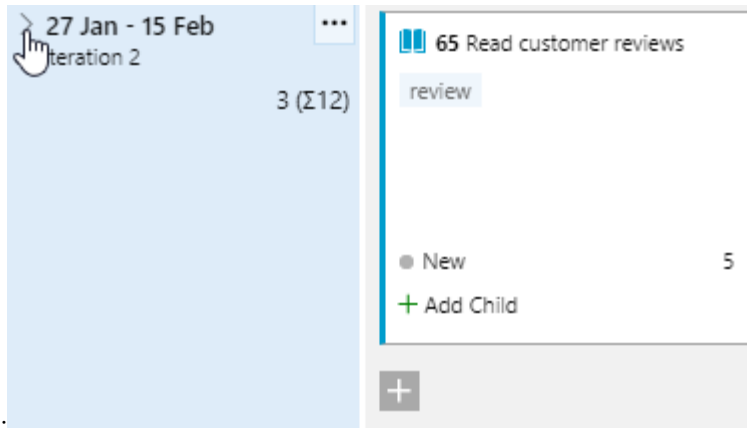
Bookstore 



## 2.19 Collapsing User Activities and Slices

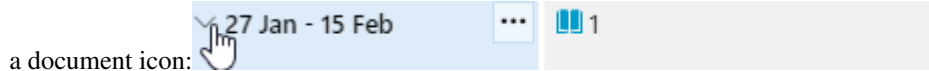
You can collapse columns (user activities) and rows (iterations), allowing you to focus on just a subset of your user stories. To collapse a row or column:

1. Click on the small downwards arrow in the row, or small right arrow in the column you want to



collapse:

- The row/column is collapsed to only show key information. User stories in the collapsed cells are indicated with



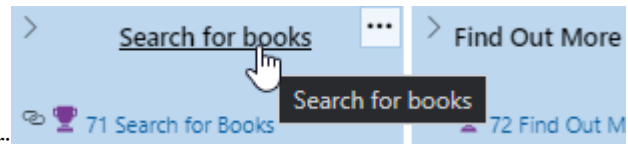
a document icon:

- Click on the arrow again to expand the row/column.

## 2.20 Linking User Activities

### 2.20.1 Linking a Work Item Manually

To link a user activity to a work item manually:



- Click on the name of an existing slice in the row header:
- The user activity is displayed.
- Enter the ID of the work item you want to link the user activity to from the **Link Work**

#### Edit User Activity

Title

Link Work Item

71 Search for Books

**item** field:

link to a work item in another team project.

**Note:** A warning is displayed if you try an

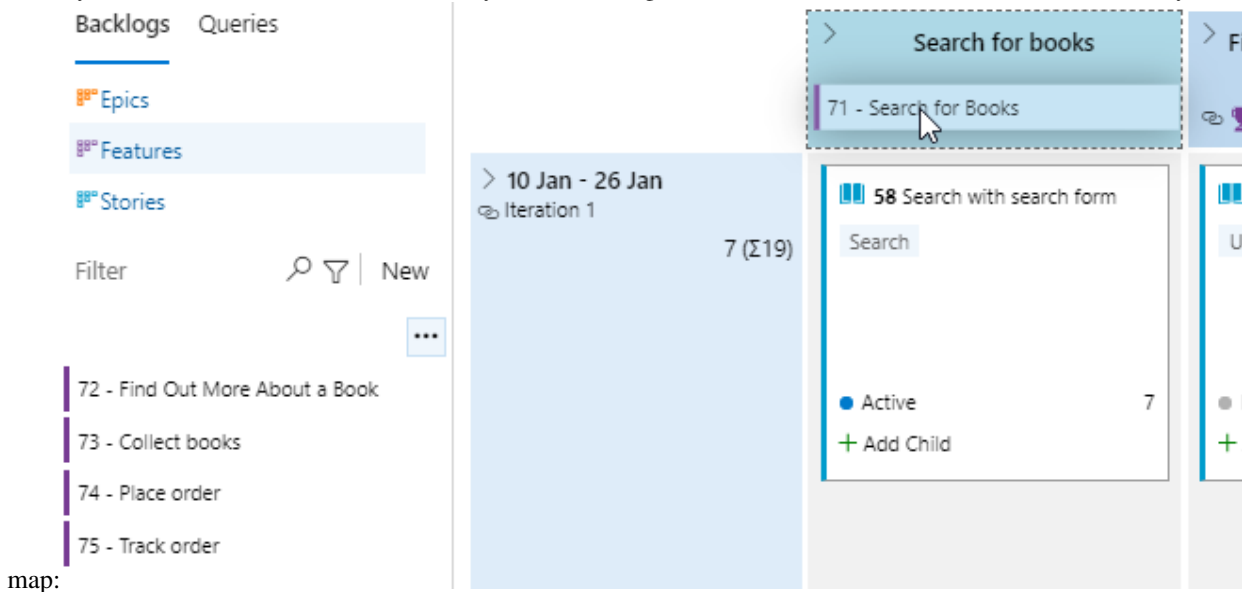
## 2.21 Linking User Activities with Drag&Drop

User activities at the top of the map can be linked to work items in Azure DevOps/TFS.

### 2.21.1 Linking with Drag&Drop

To assign a work item to a user activity with drag&drop:

1. Locate the desired work item in the list on the left. Click on **Stories/Epics/Features** to restrict the entries in the list to items of that type. Enter text in the text box to filter your work items further.
2. Once you have identified the work item you want, drag it to the desired column header on the story



map:

3. Release the mouse button. The user activity is linked to the work item, as you can see on the map and in the

#### Edit User Activity

Title

Search for books

Link Work Item

71

71 Search for Books

user activity's details:

## 2.22 Linking Slices

Slices (rows) in the map can be linked to iterations in Azure DevOps/TFS. To link a slice to an iteration:



1. Either *add a slice to the map*, or click on the name of an existing user activity in the column




header:

2. The slice is displayed. If you have added a new slice, you will need to enter a name before you can save.
3. Select the iteration you want to link the slice to from the Link Iteration drop-down

**Edit Slice** ×

Title

10 Jan - 26 Jan

 Save and Close

Link iteration

SpecMap.Documentation\Iteration 1 ✕

SpecMap.Documentation

Iteration 1

Iteration 2

Iteration 3

list:

4. Click on Save&Close to save your changes.

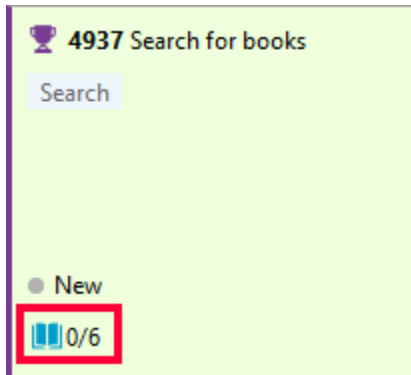
## 2.23 Refining large work items on the map

Story maps help you to prioritize incremental delivery of features over time to deliver key value to users quickly while keeping track of the overall scope of planned work.

SpecMap helps to translate this incremental planning and visualization into Azure DevOps by allowing to break up large work items into multiple smaller child work items and planning them over multiple iterations.

### 2.23.1 Breaking large work items into smaller work items

In SpecMap, you can add child items to cards on your story map, such as adding PBIs to features. You can track the overall completion status of the child items from the parent.



In this example, the “Search for books” feature has 6 child PBIs, none of which have yet been completed (“0/6”). As the PBIs are completed, the counter in the parent item is updated accordingly, allowing you to track the overall progress of the feature.

### 2.23.2 Adding Child Items to Cards

There are a number of ways you can add children to stories on the story map:

- Click on Add Child (only visible when no children exist) to add a child item. If only one type of child item is supported by the parent item, the name of this option includes the name of the child item type (e.g. Add User Story)
- Drag a work item onto the child area of a card (below the state), either from the map or from your backlog.

You can do this when the child area is both expanded and contracted.



If children have already been added, expand the children and click on Add (Item Type) to add more child items of the same type to the card. To add a child of a different type, you need to drag it onto the card from the backlog (or the map).

If you open up one of the child work items, you will notice that its parent has automatically been set.

## Related Work

+ Add link ▾

Parent

  4937 [Search for books](#)  
Updated Wednesday, ● New

### 2.23.3 Mapping Child Items

If you expand the list of child items in SpecMap, you can drag items from the list and place them on the map.

Depending on whether your columns (user activities) are linked to work items or not, the behavior when moving the card onto the story map is different:

- If **user activities are linked to work items**, moving a child work item onto the story map will change the item's parent to the user activity's work item. It will no longer be listed as a child item of the card you removed it from.
- If **user activities are not linked to work items**, moving a child work item onto the map will not change the item's parent. It will continue to be listed as a child work item in the parent card, as well as be its own entry on the map. This is the case in the example above, there the child continues to be listed after being placed on the story map. You can use this to help you plan bigger stories that will take more than one iteration to complete.

### 2.23.4 Slicing Longer Stories

Big features often need several iterations to implement, and parts of the feature may depend on other stories. SpecMap offers a way of splitting up these features and helping you to plan their implementation over multiple sprints while keeping track of the overall progress of the feature.

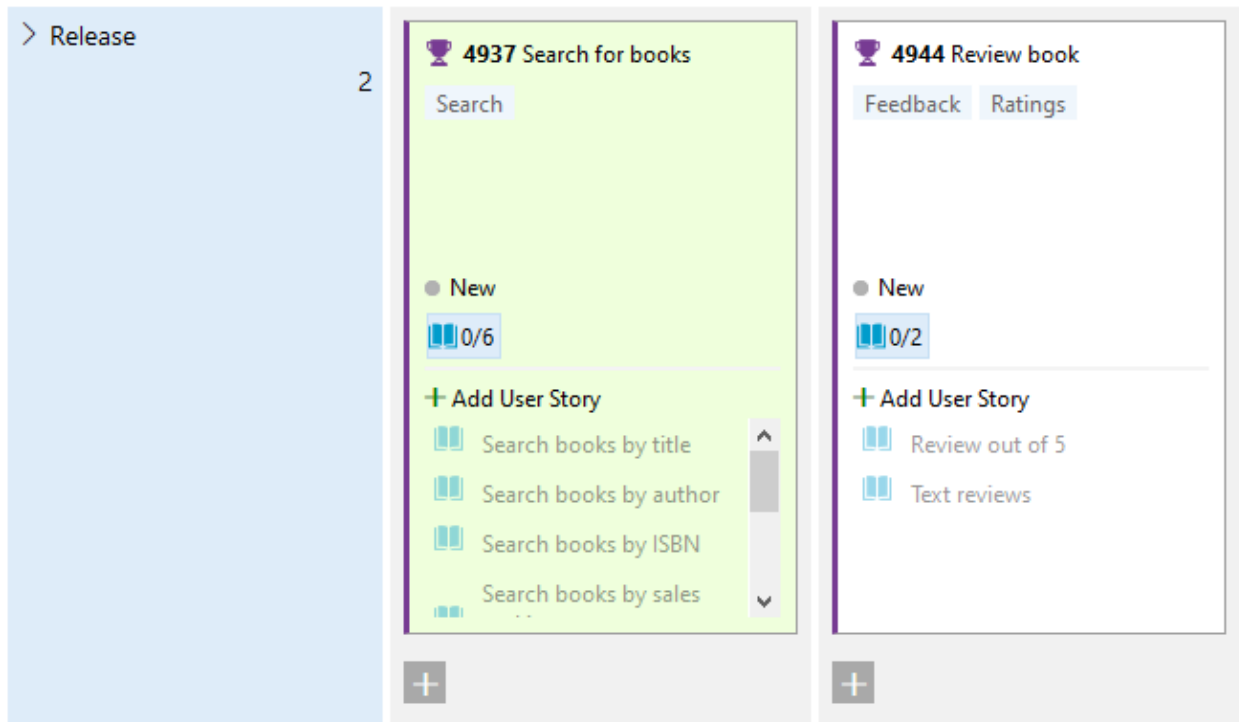
To illustrate this, let's look at two features relating to an online book store: one about searching for books and one about reviewing books. Both of these features should be completed before the next release, and both will take a couple of iterations to complete. Part of the search story covers searching for books based on their review rating, which requires reviews to be implemented first.

In this example, we will only link rows (slices) in the story map to iterations, while leaving the column headers unlinked (see above). We will also add a sperate row (not linked to an iteration) representing the release itself. This row is where we will place the parent stories, allowing us to monitor the overall progress towards the release at a glance.

To start off with, we define our iterations (3 in this case), and an additional row that represents a release. Each row representing an iteration is linked to an iteration in DevOps, while the release row is left unlinked:

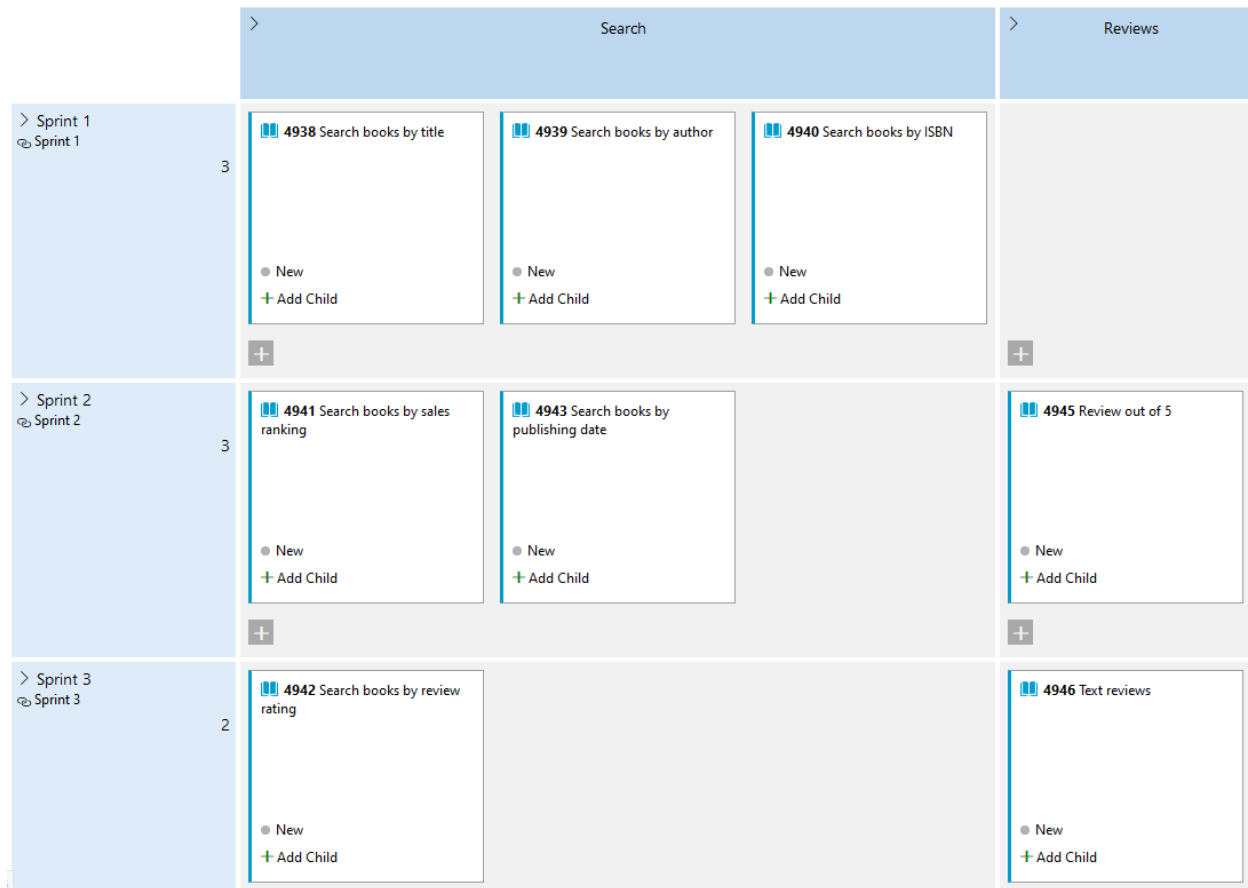
	> Search	> Reviews	+
> Sprint 1 🔗 Sprint 1	+	+	
> Sprint 2 🔗 Sprint 2	+	+	
> Sprint 3 🔗 Sprint 3	+	+	
> Release			
40	+	+	Chapter 2. What is SpecMap?

The next step is to add the features that should be included in the release to the release lane, including all child stories required by the features:



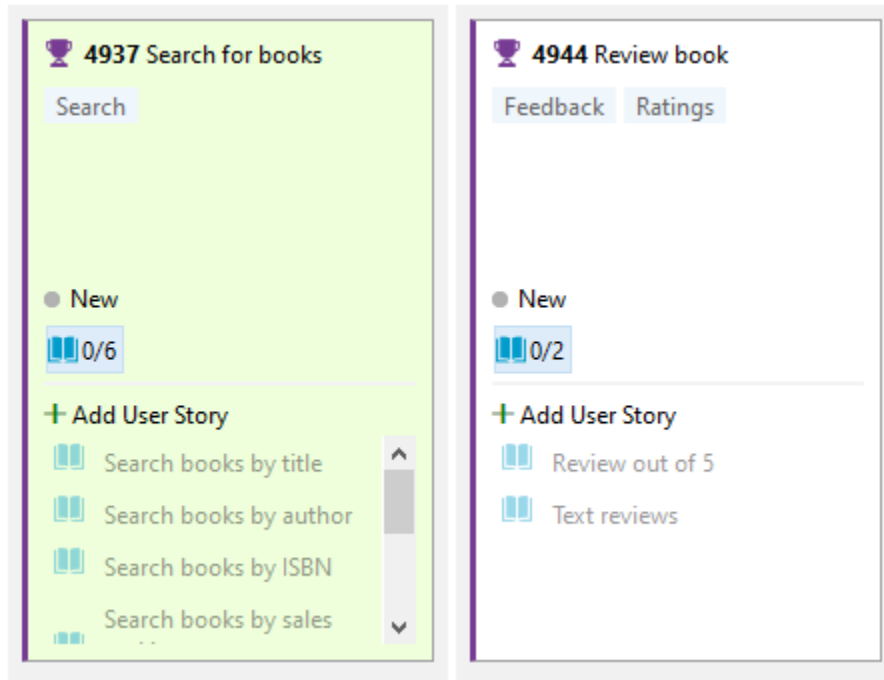
In this case, you can see stories related to searching for books and to adding reviews. The two features are not independent, as “Search books by review rating” requires “Review out of 5” to be implemented first (you cannot search by review rating without support for review ratings).

This means that certain stories should be completed in earlier iterations than others. You can assign the stories to iterations by dragging them out of the list of child items and onto the map in the correct iteration:

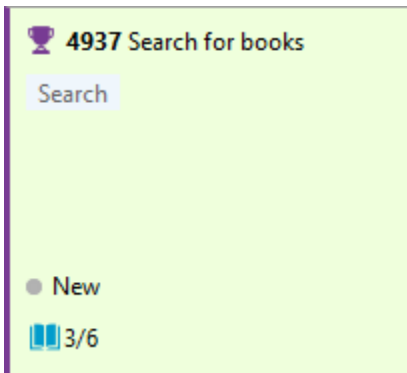


As you can see, the story relating to reviews out of 5 is scheduled for iteration 2, while the story for searching for books by review rating is in iteration 3.

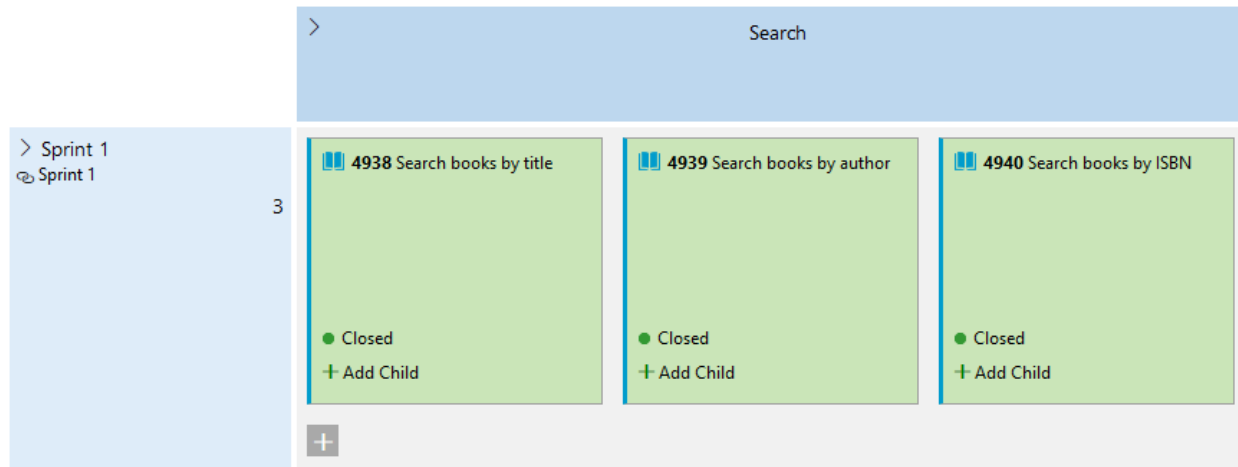
Because there are no work items assigned to the columns, dragging stories out of the features and placing them on the map does not change their parent:



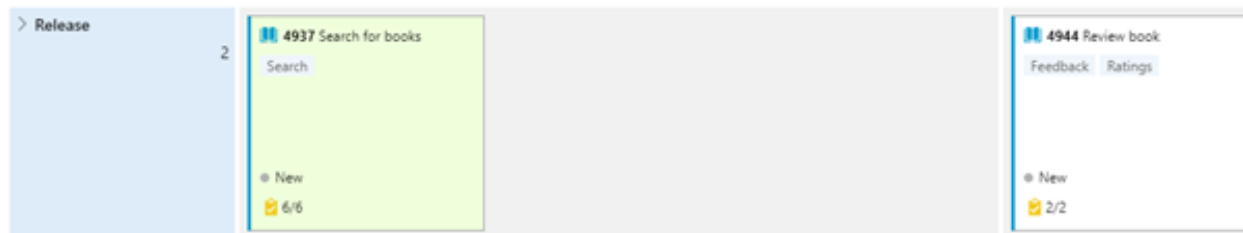
You can now start working on the stories in iteration one, and as their state is set to completed, the completion status of the parent feature in DevOps is updated accordingly. So once all stories in sprint 1 are completed, the “Search for books” feature will look like this:



This is because 3 of the 6 stories have now been completed:




Once all DevOps features in the release lane indicate that all child stories are complete, you are ready to release!



## 2.24 Download Maps as Images

You can download the current map as a PNG image. To do so:

1. Switch to the map you want to download as an image.
2. Click on  (**Download**) in the *header*.
3. Choose where to save the image (if prompted to do so; otherwise the image is saved in your default download location).

## 2.25 Snapshots

Every time you change a map in SpecMap, a snapshot of the map is stored. You can restore these snapshots if you realise you want to undo your changes. A total of 10 snapshots are stored:

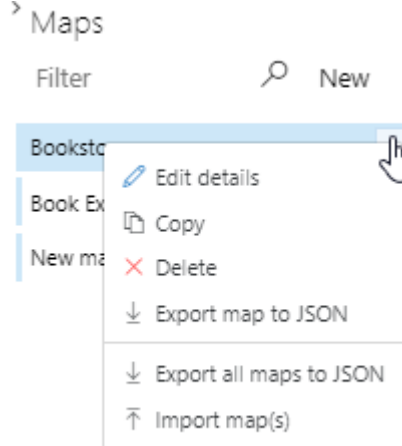
- The 5 most recent changes to the map are stored as separate snapshots.
- An additional snapshot is taken every 5 changes, and 5 of these less frequent snapshots are also stored.

### 2.25.1 Restoring a Snapshot

To restore a snapshot:

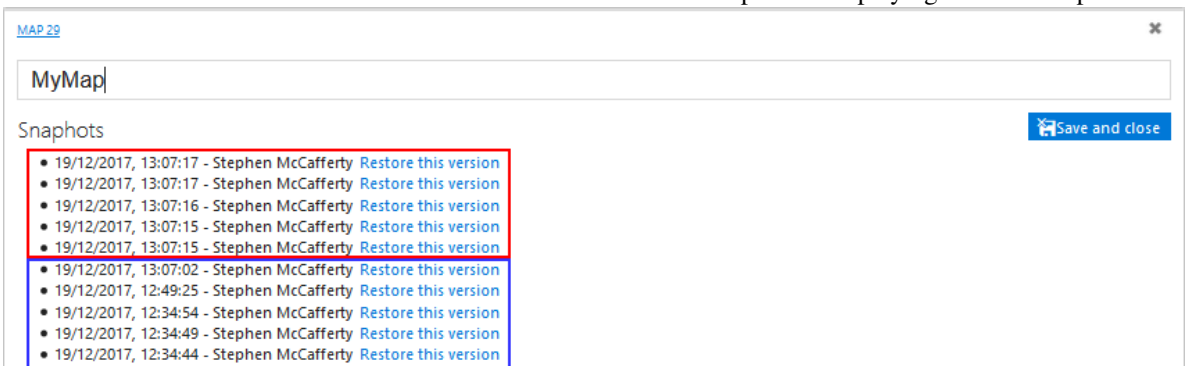


1. Locate the map whose snapshot you want to restore in the list, and click on ... to open the



menu.

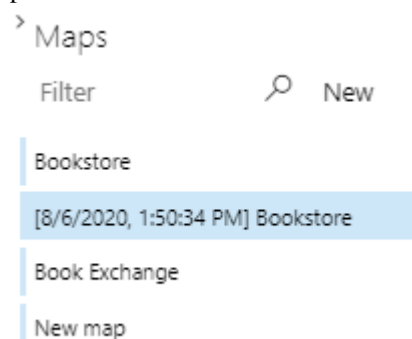
2. Select **Edit details** from the menu. A window opens displaying the map's



details:

The first 5 entries (red) in the **Snapshots** list are the 5 most recent changes to the map. The last 5 entries (blue) are snapshots that are saved every 5 changes.

3. Click on **Restore this version** next to the snapshot you want to restore.
4. The map is restored and added to the list of maps, including the time stamp of the



snapshot:

## 2.26 Exporting Maps

You can export your maps for backup, or in order to migrate to another system. **Note that the export only includes your map data. It does not include any work items. If you export a map and then import it into a system that**

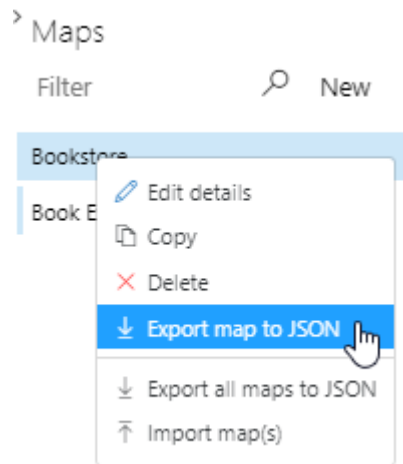
does not contain the work items referenced by the map with the same IDs, the map will not display correctly.

For details on how to import a map, see [Importing Maps](#).

### 2.26.1 Exporting a Single Map

To export a map:

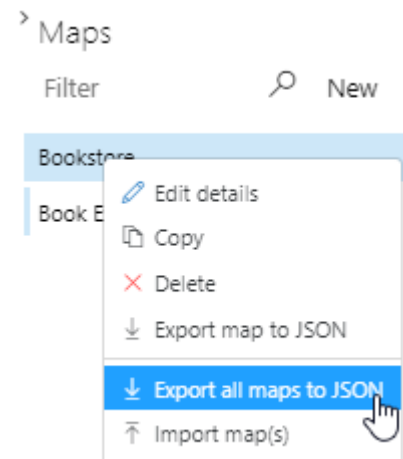
1. Locate the map in the list of maps on the right.



2. Mouse over the map, and click on the menu icon.
3. Select **Export to JSON**.
4. Save the file.

### 2.26.2 Exporting All Maps

To export all maps at once:



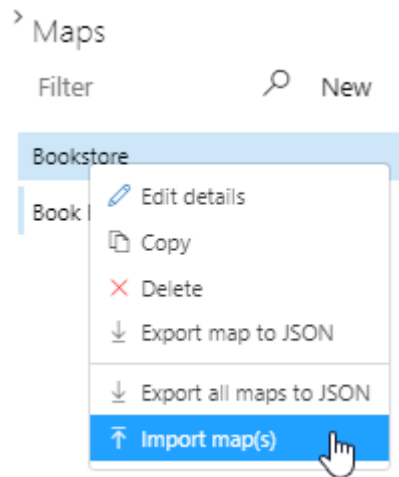
1. Mouse over any map, and click on the menu icon.
2. Select **Export all maps to JSON**.
3. Save the file.

## 2.27 Importing Maps

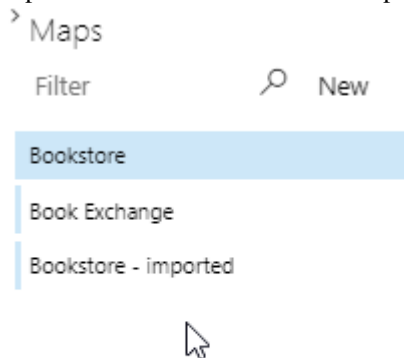
You can export your maps for backup, or in order to migrate to another system. **Note that the export only includes your map data. It does not include any work items. If you export a map and then import it into a system that does not contain the work items referenced by the map with the same IDs, the map will not display correctly.**

For details on how to export maps, see [Exporting Maps](#).

To import a map:



1. Mouse over any map, and click on the menu icon.
2. Select **Import map(s)**.
3. Select the exported map file in the **Open** dialog.
4. All maps in the selected file are imported. Imported maps have the “- imported” suffix in their



name:

## 2.28 Known Issues

- Dragging and dropping work items on the map does not work does not work in IE11, Edge “non” Chrome with on-premise installations. We recommend using a different browser in this case.
- A known *iframe* issue exists with TFS2017 and TFS2019 which causes SpecMap to not function properly and/or cannot be downloaded. We recommend upgrading to **TFS2020** to resolve this.

- If you are adding a new work item via SpecMap, and you have custom rules applied to your work items from your Azure organization (such a mandatory description field) then your work item will fail to be created.