Convert a Character Variable to a Numeric Variable

The following instruction converts the character variable \texttt{var1} to a numeric variable by creating a new numeric variable, \texttt{nvar}. The original variable, \texttt{var1}, has values “a” and “b”, and we want to convert “a” to 1 and “b” to 2.

**Step 1:** Click \textbf{Data} on Menu bar, select \textbf{Manage variables in active data set} and choose \textbf{Recode variables} ...

**Step 2:** In \textbf{Recode Variable} dialog box, select the variable to be recoded, that is \texttt{var1}, and enter the code shown in the \textbf{Enter recode directives} box: \texttt{nvar} is the name for new variable, and “a”=1 is to use value 1 for a character string a. You always use double quotes “” to specify a character string. So, assigning value 2 for b would be “b” = 2. Having \textbf{Make new variable a factor} box unchecked will make the new variable a numeric variable. And, click \textbf{OK}.