

Hands-On Lesson

to accompany

Curriculum Webs

A Practical Guide to Weaving the Web into Teaching and Learning

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LESSON 3: Working with text, layout, and links

Composer

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Goals for this lesson

- Make the text look the way you want on your web pages
- Insert tables and images on your web pages
- Create links between your web pages


Changing the page properties

The page properties include colors for text, links, background color, and page margins.

Composer

- To manipulate page colors, use Format|Page Colors and Background. If you want to choose your own colors (instead of allowing the user's default colors to prevail), click the Use Custom Colors radio button, and then click each rectangle to choose colors for text, links, visited links, active links, and background. You can also add a background image.
- To change margins and other advanced page attributes in Composer, you need to change the HTML code using the <HTML> Source view.


Justifying text

All the software packages have a set of buttons that look like this: . These are used to create left, center, and right justification.

First, make sure the cursor is in the paragraph you wish to justify.

Composer

- Click the appropriate justification button.

Composer also has a “align justified” button  that makes multi-line paragraphs aligned on the left and the right.

Adjusting text colors

When selecting colors for text and links, you should use “browser safe” colors. See Chapter 6 in *Curriculum Webs* for more information about color in web pages.

Composer

- Select the text you want to change. Use Format | Text Color.... Choose a color.

Applying styles

A “style” is a defined set of font attributes. Paragraph styles can include font, font size, bold, underline, or italic, and line spacing. Headings 1 through 6 are examples of predefined paragraph styles in HTML. Another paragraph style is “preformatted,” which keeps the line breaks and spacing that the text has been given already.

Text styles can include any combination of attributes except line spacing. Predefined HTML styles include:

- underline
- ~~strike-through~~
- teletype -- a monospaced font
- *emphasis* -- the official version of “italic”
- **strong** -- the official version of “bold”
- code -- used for HTML or other programming code
- *variable* -- used when listing HTML code or programs
- sample -- used to display text to be entered
- keyboard -- used for text that has been entered


- *citation -- for sources*

Composer

- Use Format | Text Style and choose a style. Composer does not allow you to create your own styles.

Indenting paragraphs

Composer

- Use Format | Increase Indent or Decrease Indent.
- Or click the Decrease Indent or Increase Indent buttons .

Working with fonts sets

Each web browser has a default font that is used when the page does not specify which font to use. If you do specify a font, you must specify a font found on the client's machine. If you choose an unavailable font, the client's browser will use its default font.

To get around this problem, fonts are grouped into families known as "Font Combinations" or "Font Sets." When displaying text formatted with a font combination, the web browser attempts to display the text in the first font in the set, then the second font in the set, etc. If none of the fonts in the combination are installed on the client computer, the browser uses its own default font.

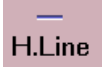
Composer

- Use Format | Font and select a font.

Composer does not allow you to edit font combinations.

Inserting a horizontal line


Composer

- Click the Horiz. Line button  on the toolbar.
- Or, use Insert | Horizontal Line.
- To manipulate the properties of the horizontal line (width, alignment, height), double-click the line.

Creating links

Each of the software packages will allow you to type URLs directly into a link field. This is fine if you know what you are doing (for example, if you are linking directly to an external URL such as <http://curriculumwebs.com>). However, each program will also allow you to browse on your local computer and choose files, and have the URL information entered automatically. This is usually a good idea when you are making links to other pages within your web site.)


Composer

- Highlight the text you want to be the link (or put the cursor where you want the link to appear). Use Insert | Link (Ctrl+L) or click on the Link button . Fill in the Link Text and/or Link Location field.
- If you are linking to a file in an external web site, be sure to include the http://.
- If you are linking to a file on your local computer (one that will be published to the web server along with the file you are currently working on), you can browse to the file by clicking on the Choose File button.

Inserting images

Composer



- Click the Image button . Browse to the image, click OK
- Or use Insert | Image.... Click Choose File button. Browse to the image, click OK.

Creating anchors

Named anchors (also sometimes called targets and page bookmarks) are specified locations on a web page that can serve as the destination or “target” of a link. They are used in menus to navigate within a page, or can be added to links to the page to specify a particular spot in the page.

Composer

- Use Insert | Named Anchor..., and type a name for the anchor. A little anchor icon appears where you placed the anchor.

Composer also allows you to create an anchor at the time you are linking to it, if the anchor is at the same spot as a Heading in your page. See below.

Linking to an anchor within the same page

The whole point of creating an anchor is that you can link to it either from within the same page or from another page.

You might want to link to anchors within a page from a menu at the top of the page. For example, Figure 3-1 shows the menu in one of the “Building a Curriculum Web with Dreamweaver” pages:

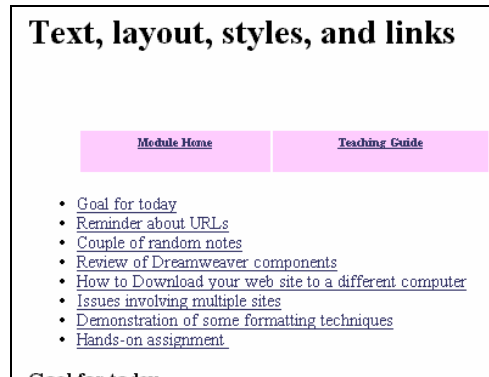


Figure 3-1: A menu linked to anchors with a long page.

These are the directions for linking to an anchor from within the same page.

Composer

- Highlight the text you want to link from, and click the link button. A list of the anchors on the page appears in the window. See Figure 3-2.
- Click on the anchor you want to link to and click OK.
- If you want to link to a Heading that you have previously defined, click on the heading text listed in the dialog box.
- Or, just type “#” and the anchor’s name into the “Link to” field.

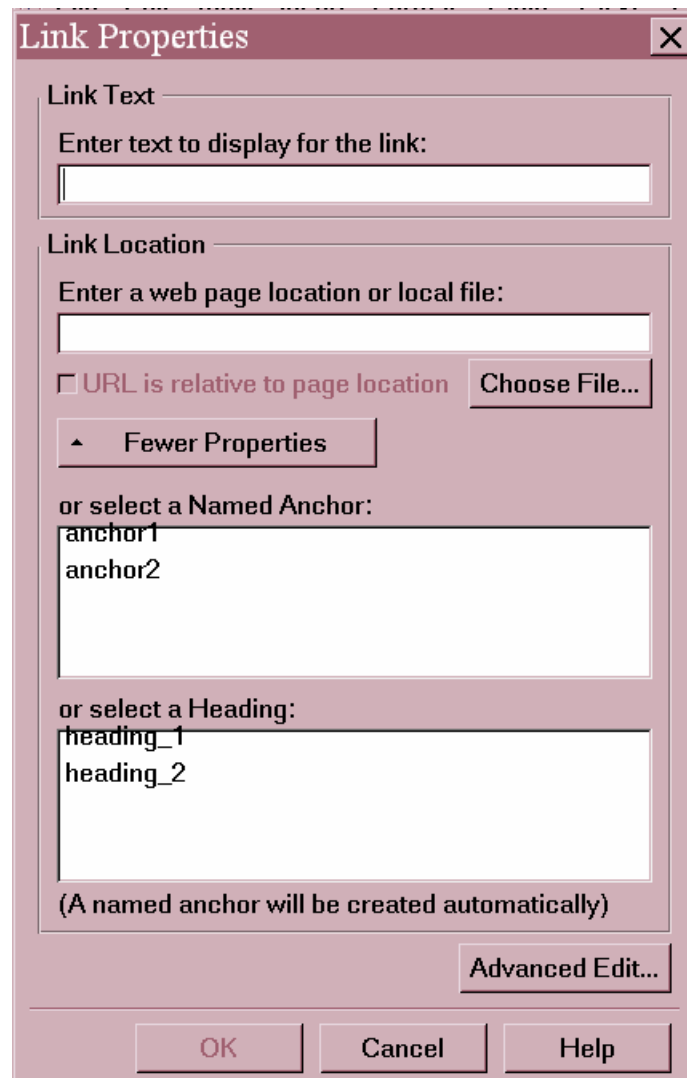


Figure 3-2: Composer's Link dialog box. Note the ability to link to a heading when no anchor has yet been defined.

Linking to an anchor on a different page

Anchors can also serve as the target of a link from another page.

Composer

Composer does not let you automatically choose an anchor in another page to link to. However, you can create the link manually.

- Be sure that the page you want to link to has at least one anchor in it and that the file has been saved. (It does not have to be open.) Make sure you know the name of the anchor you want to link to.
- Highlight the text you want to link from. Click the link button on the toolbar. Click the button that says “Choose File...” Locate the file you want to link to and select it. Click OK. Add a number sign (#) and the name of the anchor to the end of the file name.

Linking to email addresses

An email link on a web page pops up an email compose box with the address already in the “To:” field. (This assumes that the browser has been configured to handle email.)

The examples assume you want to create an email link to c-cunningham@uchicago.edu.

First, highlight the text you want to link from.

Composer

- Highlight the text you wish to make into an email link. Click the link button and type “<mailto:c-cunningham@uchicago.edu>” into the Link Location field.



Adding tables

Tables consist of rows, columns, and cells. They can be used for displaying tabular data, for example names and email addresses. They also allow careful positioning of elements on a page. You can nest tables within tables in order to achieve exact placement.

In all of the packages, you can set the color and formatting of individual cells or groups of cells.

Composer

- Use Insert|Table.... Choose number of rows and columns.
- Or click the Table button on the toolbar.