

Hands-On Lesson

to accompany

Curriculum Webs

A Practical Guide to Weaving the Web into Teaching and Learning

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Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2003

LESSON 6: Designing a curriculum web with a consistent page format

DREAMWEAVER

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Goal for this lesson

- Create a navigation structure for a curriculum web
- Apply a consistent design to the pages of your curriculum web
- Upload your new curriculum web to the server.

In this lesson, we will create the file and link structure for a curriculum web that contains a home page, five pages containing demonstrations of steps or techniques, five activities implementing the demonstrated techniques, a final or culminating activity, and a list of useful links. This curriculum web is navigated in a linear fashion.

Figure 6-1 shows a Dreamweaver Site Map for the site you will create. The `index.htm` file is the home page; the five demonstration pages are called `demo1.htm`, etc; the five activities are called `activity1.htm` etc., and there is a list of links and a final activity. We will create this structure without including any content. Then, we will develop a template for the site that incorporates a consistent navigation scheme, and will apply this template to the pages in the site. Then, we will publish the site to the web server.

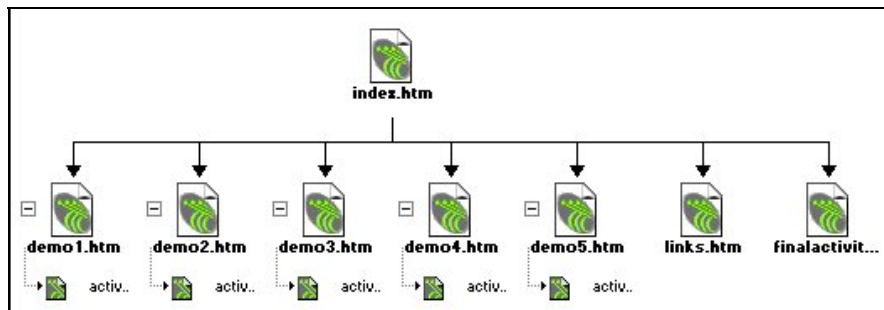


Figure 6-1: The structure of the curriculum web you will create in this lesson.

Creating a new server

If you have an account on a web server, you can use the space to support multiple curriculum webs (up to whatever limit is placed on your account size). To avoid having the web sites interfere with one another, it is necessary to create new directories for each curriculum. Depending on what type of web server you are using, creating a new directory is a matter of logging in to the server using an application like Telnet or SSH, or using

Windows Explorer or the Mac Finder, or using your web editing software to create the directory for you. We cannot cover all the possibilities here but will show you how to do it with Dreamweaver, GoLive, and FrontPage. Composer cannot be used to create new directories on the server. If you are using Composer you will have to find out the procedure from your technical coordinator or ISP.

First you need to define a site that has your top-level web directory (usually “www” or “public_html”) as the host directory. Then you will connect to this site, and use the web editing software’s tools to create a new subdirectory. Then, you’ll create a new site using this subdirectory as the host directory.

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- If you already have defined a site with your top-level web page directory as the Host Directory, use Site | Open Site... and select the site.
- ❖ If you have not already defined a site with your top-level web page directory as the Host Directory, do it now. Use Site | New Site.... Give the site a name like “Home Site.” Enter the Local Info.
- ❖ Click on Remote Info. In the “Host Directory” field, type “www” or “public_html” or whatever your top-level web page folder is called. Enter the remaining info. Click OK, then Done, then OK when Dreamweaver asks if you want to set up the site cache.
- Click the Connect button. Your server files should appear on the left.
- Right-click the top level server directory. Choose New Folder. Give the directory a name like “Lesson6curriculumweb.”
- Right-click the new directory you just created on the server and choose Get to copy it to your local computer.
- Now you need to set up another site called “Lesson 6” with “Lesson6curriculumweb” (the new folder you just copied from the server) as the Local Root Folder and www/Lesson6curriculumweb (or the correct path to the new folder you just created) as the Host Directory. When you connect, you should not see any other files or directories in the server listing (since this new directory is empty).

Creating a home page

(If you're using GoLive, you already completed this step.)

Create a file called `index.htm` in the `Lesson6curriculumweb` folder. Define it as the home page of the site.

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- Right-click on the `Lesson6curriculumweb` folder on the local listing of the site view. Choose **New File**. The new file will have the name `untitled.htm`. Right-click the new file. Choose **Rename**. Name the file `index.htm`.
- Use **Site | Define Sites...** Choose the Lesson 6 site. Click on **Site Map Layout** on the left side of the site definition screen. Click the yellow folder icon to the right of the **Home Page** field. Choose the `index.htm` file in the `Lesson6curriculumweb` folder.

Creating the site structure

Now we will set up all the files in the curriculum web. To remind you, we need `index.htm` (already created), `demo1.htm`, `demo2.htm`, `demo3.htm`, `demo4.htm`, `demo5.htm`, `activity1.htm`, `activity2.htm`, `activity3.htm`, `activity4.htm`, `activity5.htm`, `links.htm`, and `finalactivity.htm`.

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- Create the files using the Site Map. The advantage of this method is that the link structure can be created along with the new files. Use **Window | Site Map**. You will see your home page at the top center of the screen. To create new files, right-click on a file icon, and choose **Link to New File**. Give the new file a name (do not forget the `*.htm` extension), title if you want it, and some text for the link. We suggest the text simply be "Link to [name of the file]". Repeat for each of the files you want to create.

If you open `index.htm` after you have created all the files, you'll see several links. When you use the Site Map to create new files, the links are automatically created. You can either incorporate these links into your actual pages or replace them with the navigation structure we will create below.

Creating a template

Once you're done setting up your new site like this, you're ready to set up a template for the pages in the site.

Templates are files that control the layout of a number of HTML files in your site.

We will create a very simple template that will include a title and subtitle, and links to the demonstration pages, final activity, and links page. See Figure 6-2.

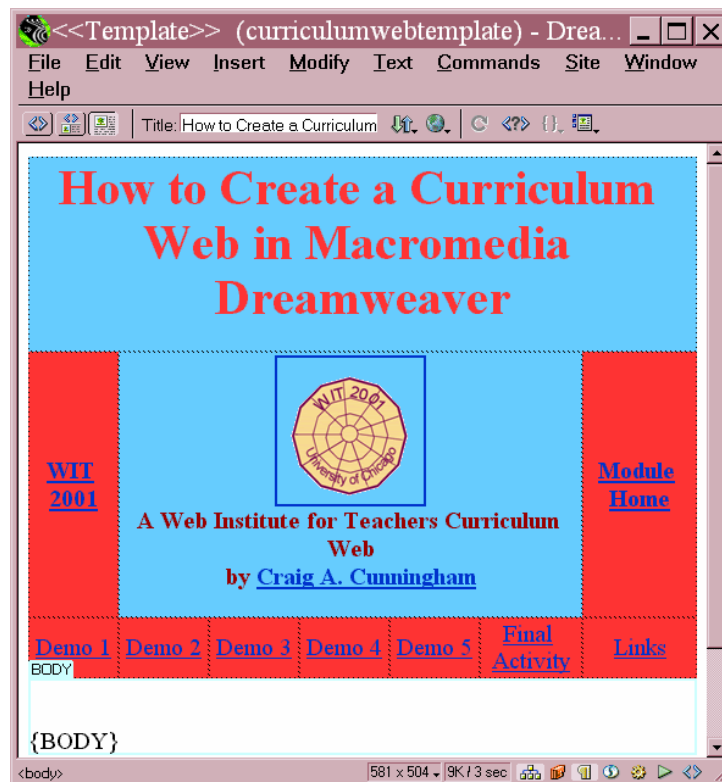


Figure 6-2: A sample template file for a curriculum web, shown in Dreamweaver.

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The KEY THING about Dreamweaver template files is that they are just like other HTML files except they have "editable regions." Editable regions are the areas of a template file that contain variable information, depending on the particular page. Everything that is not in an editable region is only editable on the template, and not in the individual files to which it is assigned. Generally, your template files will have at least two editable regions:

doctitle and body. The doctitle region is created automatically. The body will be manually created later.

- To create a template file, just create a new file, and then save it as a template.
 - ❖ In the Site View, use File | New Window. A new page layout window opens.
 - ❖ Save the new file immediately as a template by clicking File | Save as Template. Give it a name that makes sense, such as Lesson6template. Dreamweaver automatically adds the extension *.dwt to template files. Notice (in the Site View) that a new folder (Templates) has been created for the new template file.
 - ❖ If you get an error that no editable regions have been created, ignore the message for now.
 - ❖ Saving it immediately as a template will spare you the problem of accidentally saving it as a regular document later.

The navigation structure for your Lesson6curriculumweb will be contained within a table in “locked region” at the top of the page. Once the template is applied to the pages in your curriculum web, you will only be able to edit the navigation structure by opening the Lesson6template.dwt file, and then reapplying the template to the pages in the curriculum web.

These instructions will create a template similar to that shown in Figure 6-2.

- Insert a table at the top of the page with 3 rows and 7 columns, 100% of window, border = 0.
- Expand your Property Inspector by clicking the tiny little down arrow on the lower right of the Property Inspector. This reveals additional settings.
- Merge the cells in the top row of the table into one. To do this, hold the mouse just to the left of the top row. When the cursor looks like a right arrow, click. (Or, click and drag over the top row.) Then click the "merge cells" button on the Property Inspector. This will turn the top row into one cell. Type a title into the cell, for example "Lesson 6 Curriculum Web". Center the title in the cell by clicking the center justification button.
- Now merge the center 5 cells of the middle row. Click and drag to select the five cells, and then use the merge button. Type some suitable text into this new merged cell, for example "A Curriculum Web produced by YOUR NAME."

- To change the background colors of selected cells, select them and use the Bg field on the Property Inspector to select a color.
- In the third row of the table, we will create a row of links to the major pages in your sample curriculum web, one label in each cell.
- Add links to the text you just typed. You do this by selecting each label in turn, then clicking the yellow folder icon next to the Link field on the Property Inspector, and choosing the correct file from the list.
- At the end of the table, put in a series of blank lines (press Enter four or five times.)
- Save the template file. (Since you already saved it as a template, you should use File|Save, NOT File|Save as... or File|Save as template...). If you get an error message that you haven't created any editable regions, just ignore the message for now.

So far, everything we have added to the template will be the same on all the pages of the site. The title and navigation buttons are "locked regions." Now it is time to add the main "editable region" of your template. This is where the parts that will vary by page will appear.

- To make a new editable region, select several of the lines at the bottom of the page. Then use Modify|Templates|New Editable Region. Give the new region the name "body" (or something else descriptive). This will be the area of the page that will alter in each page in the site.

When you save your template, Dreamweaver will ask if you want to update the pages in your site that use the template. You'll usually choose "yes," even if there are no such pages (as now), unless there is a reason you do not want to update the pages.

Applying the template to pages

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- Open each file in your site individually, then use "Modify|Templates|Apply Template to page." Select the Lesson6template from the list (if you have multiple templates). You will then be asked where to put the content of the page. Choose the "Body" region. When you save each document, it will be linked to the template.

- If, after you apply the template to your page, you want to edit the non-editable regions of the page, you can either open and edit the Template (Modify | Templates | Open Attached Template), or you can choose "Modify | Templates | Detach from Template." The template's look and content will remain with the document. (However, if you detach the template, new changes to the template will not be reflected in any pages with detached templates.)

Adding content

Normally at this point in the development of your curriculum web, you would be adding content to the pages. But we are going to skip that step here. However, you should make sure all the pages have appropriate titles. (We covered this in Lesson 3.) Make them short and descriptive. For now, just call them "Demo 1" etc. so the links work.

Updating multiple pages

Dreamweaver

- Open your template. Change something in it (a background color in a cell, for example). Save it. You'll now be asked if you want to update all the pages in your site that use the template. Choose Yes.

Uploading your site to the server


Once you've created your template and applied it to all the pages in your sample curriculum web, upload the site to the server.

Dreamweaver

Make sure you are connected to the Internet and that your site view is open.



Click the Connect button . You should see the server files listed on the left.

- Highlight the file or files you want to upload. Click the Put button .