Design Your Own Website: CSS

This is the second part of a two-part class. Between this class on CSS and the previous class on HTML, you will learn the basics of designing a website. CSS is the coding language used to tell web browsers about the layout and style of your web page. When you write CSS statements, they do not display on the web page itself, but they instruct the browser about how your content should appear. The CSS works together with the HTML to tell web browsers all the information about the content and design of your site.

There are three ways to use CSS: external stylesheets, internal stylesheets, and in-line style. CSS stands for Cascading Style Sheets. Often websites will use combinations of the three ways to use CSS. If the browser gets conflicting instructions about how to display a page, the priority cascades from in-line style to external and internal stylesheets to the browser default. For this class, we will work with one external stylesheet.

To get started, open a new notepad file and save it as style.css in the same folder as your HTML files from the last class. Next, open each of your HTML files and add the following line of code into the <head> section:

```html
<link rel="stylesheet" href="style.css">
```

The above line of code tells the browser to reference your external stylesheet.

CSS looks a little different than HTML. Curly brackets are used. Each CSS statement is composed of three parts: the selector, the property, and the value. In the first statement, body is the selector, background-color is the property and lightblue is the value. So, in this instance, the background will be lightblue for the entire body. Note that there can be more than one property/value set for each selector. Each set must have a semicolon at the end. You may also use more than one selector for a statement. For instance, if you want headings 1-3 to be white and centered, you would simply change the selector to h1, h2, h3.

```css
body {
  background-color: lightblue;
}

h1 {
  color: white;
  text-align: center;
}

p {
  font-family: verdana;
  font-size: 20px;
}
```

Use classes with your selectors to specify only certain instances for the style to apply. For example, if you want only certain paragraphs to be verdana 20, your selector would look like p.normal-font instead of simply p. The words after the dot are the name of the class. These can be whatever you like. In your HTML, change the <p> tag to <p class="normal-font"> to indicate that the paragraph should follow this class’s style rules.
We will use the lessons on W3 Schools (https://www.w3schools.com/css/default.asp) to add content to your first stylesheet. The information on this handout covers most of the introduction and syntax sections but we will review those. We will also cover colors, backgrounds, borders, margins, fonts, and links.

**CSS resources**

Keep learning CSS with these tools:


*PC Magazine "Best Web Hosting“* (http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2424725,00.asp): This article explains different types of web hosting setups and compares several web hosting companies.

*W3C Validator* (http://www.css-validator.org/): Check that your code is up to proper CSS standards by uploading it to the validator.

*W3 Schools selectors list* (https://www.w3schools.com/cssref/css_selectors.asp): In addition to the lessons covered in this class, W3 Schools has a list of the type of selectors you can use in CSS along with examples.

Questions? Contact Adult Services at askref@elmwoodparklibrary.org or 708.395.1217.