Inspiration Software Guide

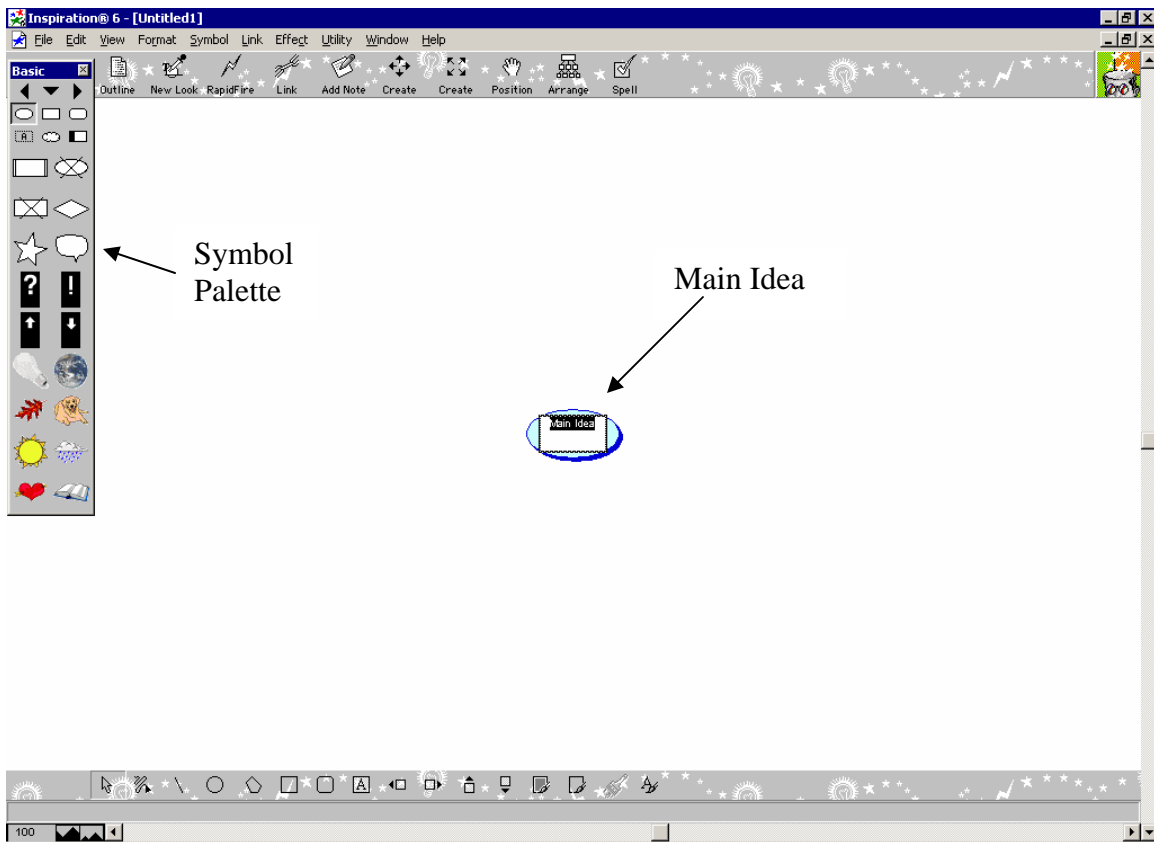**Building a Map Using Inspiration Software**

Inspiration Web site Logo

In this class, you will be using concept-mapping software called Inspiration to design the framework of your site. The software is user friendly and allows the developer to graphically depict the organization of the site, as well as provide a map to follow during construction. For each of the parts that follow, you will put new parts into your map. This is not a class in how to use Inspiration, but you will get a good introduction to using this software with a purpose, in that you should construct a map of the Web Site that you are planning to build. Inspiration software is available on the Web and can be accessed at the following URL: http://www.inspiration.com/

Classroom Practice with Inspiration

Begin by double clicking on the Inspiration shortcut on your desktop. When you launch the program, you will see a blank page with a Main Idea waiting to be entered. Inspiration has two main views or environments: Diagram view and Outline view. In planning you Web Site, you may want to work exclusively in the Diagram view in order to create a pictorial map of your site. In effect, you will be creating a concept map of your site. A concept map is a hierarchical diagram used to represent the relationships between concepts. It is normally organized from the most general topics to more specific items. For purposes of this class, the arrangement of the objects in your diagram should be a visual representation of the Web structure that you will be building.

In the Diagram view, the Main Idea is the starting point for your map. You type the name of the root folder that will be containing all subsequent directories, Web pages, images and other media. From the Main Idea, you will add your connected folders and files for your Web Site. The Symbol palette, located on the far left, contains different libraries of idea symbols that you can add to your diagram.

Introducing the Inspiration Screen

Next, you should type in the name of your root folder into the Main Idea window. Press Shift+Enter to end text entry and select the symbol. For each subsequent part of your diagram you can click into the diagram and type, and a new object will appear in your diagram. Try creating a few additional ideas in your diagram.

In order to link ideas within your diagram, you first select the object you want to link from by clicking on it once. When you do that, the symbol has squares on the ends and diamonds on the sides. You can resize the symbol by grabbing the squares and from the diamonds; you draw the links to another symbol. You can also click into the link, and write a descriptor word for the link if you so desire.
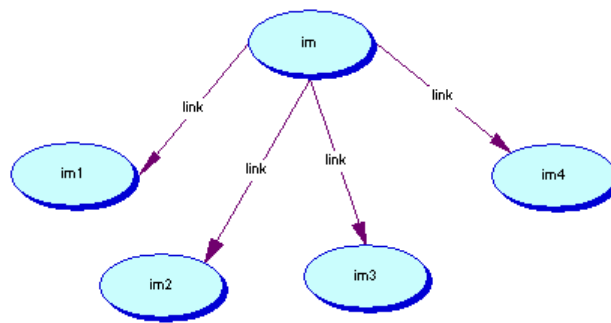
There are a number of features associated with the symbols and the links. You can scroll through the symbol palette to look for symbols that will represent folders and individual files. You can also change the thickness of links or make them form at 90-degree angles. On the menu under "File", there is a choice for "Diagram Properties" where you can set many of the basic features for your diagram. Take a few moments to familiarize yourself with the menu lists and choices that you can make in Inspiration.

Exercise – Working with Inspiration

Using Inspiration, build a map using "Music" as the Main Idea. Identify the sub-levels of music (such as Jazz, Classical, Rock, etc..) and then add artist underneath these levels. Next, connect the ideas with links. Practice with the formatting in Inspiration by changing the properties of the items in your diagram.

Exercise – Designing A PBL Concept Map

Using Inspiration, create a basic diagram of a PBL Site that you are planning to build or review. Choose different symbols for folders and files, and fill in the text within the symbols. Connect all of your ideas using links.

Inspiration Basic Diagram Showing Symbols and Links

Exercise – Designing A PBL Concept Map Using Symbols and Links

Using Inspiration, create a basic diagram of a PBL Site that you are planning to build or review and identify the elements from the CTCM (listed below). Choose different symbols for folders and files, and fill in the text within the symbols. Connect all of your ideas using links.

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TED 5314
UTEP   12/14/2005