Chapter 7 Introducing Flash
Lesson 1 (pages 257 – 272)

Expectations

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:

1. Create Flash buttons and Flash text in Dreamweaver.
2. Use the Assets panel to access Flash movie files.
3. Explain animation.
4. Demonstrate the basic features and functions of Flash.
5. Outline the process of creating a Flash movie.
6. Create a frame-by-frame animation.

Instructional Strategy

Students read pages 257 through 272 and complete the practices within those pages.

Use slides 1 through 5 from Ch07 Visual Aids to enhance instruction:

1. Creating a Flash Button in Dreamweaver
   Displays the Insert Flash Button dialog box, as shown on page 259 in the text.

2. Arranging Flash Buttons in a Web Page Document
   Illustrates how to arrange Flash buttons in a nested table, as shown on page 259 in the text.

3. Using Flash Movie Files
   Displays the Assets panel with a Flash movie file, as shown on page 262 in the text.

4. Flash
   Displays the Flash application, as shown on page 266 in the text.

5. The Flash Timeline
   Identifies parts of the Flash timeline, as shown on page 268 in the text.

Students answer review questions 1 through 22 and 40a – e.

Students complete related exercises or exercise steps: Exercise 1a – f, Exercise 2, Exercise 8.

- In Exercise 8, students design and then create a website. Content is not provided; the students create their own. Students should use a style sheet to format the website content.

Teaching Notes

Flash

page 257 It may be helpful to students to view existing Flash applications. Examples of Flash applications, as well as examples of work created using other Macromedia applications, can be found at www.macromedia.com/cfusion/showcase/index.cfm.

Creating Flash Buttons in Dreamweaver

page 258 Remind students to consider appropriateness when selecting a Flash button style. To download additional styles of Flash buttons from the Macromedia website, select Get More Styles in the Insert Flash Button dialog box.

Some Flash button styles have a sound effect that is played when the button is clicked. Sound effects can be heard by previewing the web page document in a browser.
Creating Flash Text in Dreamweaver

Emphasize Flash text provides an opportunity to use a font in a web page document without worrying about whether the user’s computer has the font installed. Flash text is useful for creating simple, professional logos. Flash text also has a much smaller file size than an equivalent GIF image.

To resize a Flash button or Flash text, select the object and drag a handle. Press the Shift key while dragging a corner handle to proportionately resize. Click the Reset Size button in the Property inspector to return the object to its original dimensions.

Practices

Due to the nature of the practices in this chapter, students do not print their work. The best method of assessing the student’s work in these practices is on screen.

Practice: SAMPLER – part 3 of 10

The appearance of the Flash text on the rollover.htm page will vary because students select a font and colors of their choice.

Animation

Animation is the result of many images shown quickly one after the other to create the effect of movement, and is a topic that will interest many students. Learning to animate in Flash not only expands the student’s computer skills, but also develops sequencing and story-telling skills. If time permits, animation could be discussed in class and activities could be assigned to students before introducing the Flash application. For example, you could have students research the history of animation, or different types of animation (such as 3D, 3D Claymation, 2D), or manual animation (thaumatrope, flip book, phenakistoscope, zoetrope).

The Flash Tools Panel

Student’s abilities and experience with drawing will vary. Most students will have had some experience with a paint program and you can reassure them that the Line, Oval, and Rectangle tools work in a similar manner to other paint programs. For students that are having difficulty drawing, introduce the concept of dividing images into shapes or lines and then draw the image one shape or line at a time.

The Flash Tools Panel

The Line, Oval, Rectangle, PolyStar, Pen, Pencil, and Brush tools are used to draw basic shapes and lines. When one of these tools is selected, modifier button(s) in the Options section can change the appearance of a shape or line. For example:

- The Rounded Rectangle Radius modifier button ( Españez) displays a dialog box used to create a rectangle with rounded corners.
- The Pencil tool modifier button includes options to Straighten, Smooth, and Ink:

To modify a line, click the Selection tool ( Españez) and then drag a line. This technique only works if the shape is not selected first.

Click the Free Transform Tool ( Españez) and then click a shape or line to display anchors that can be dragged to scale, rotate, stretch, and skew the line or shape.
Creating a Flash Movie  

The size of the Stage is a true representation of the size of the Flash movie. Once the movie has been created, size the Stage to exactly fit the movie by clicking the button next to Size in the Property inspector, which displays a dialog box. In the dialog box, select Contents and then OK. This step ensures that the movie will take up the least amount of space in a web page document.

The Playhead can be dragged manually over frames to preview the animation. This technique is referred to as “scrubbing the Timeline.”

The frame rate is the speed at which the animation is played. The frame rate directly correlates to the animation movement. A frame rate that is too high will result in an animation that is blurry and a frame rate that is too slow will appear awkward. The default frame rate in Flash is 12 frames per second (fps) which works best with web based animations. Only one frame rate can be specified for an entire movie.

When discussing frame rate, you may also want to introduce the persistence of vision theory, which states that the eye focuses on an image for approximately one-tenth of a second before it is able to process the next image.

Editing Techniques  

Students sometimes have difficulty distinguishing what frame is the current frame when using the onion skinning technique. A visual clue for students is that when Onion Skin markers are displayed, the frames are dimmed with increasing opacity as they move farther away from the current frame.