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Project 2-Web Page Using CSS and Bootstrap Report

Finding the Theme and Resources

An essential part of this project was using a bootstrap theme or template to help guide us as we built the web page. The first thing I did to find a template was search "free bootstrap template" on google. I found many themes that I initially thought would be a great to use as a base for my web page, however I soon found out that they were far more complicated than I could handle or needed. One of the templates that I began to tinker in brackets with included a significant amount of JavaScript that I did not understand, and the layout was obscure and difficult to understand. The template itself was loaded with modern features that made it look great but was far too complex for me to use. After several attempts at trying to find an appropriate template, I ended up using the Grayscale theme from Start Bootstrap. The theme was simple enough for me to understand it and help me in developing the web page in an organized and structured way that complied with standard bootstrap usage, but it also looked modern. Additionally, I wanted to use high quality, modern looking images to keep the smooth look of the theme for my own page. In order to do this, I used images from unsplash.com, which is a library of high-quality photographs that are free to use both in commercial and personal projects and do not require attribution. All of the photographs on the page were found on Unsplash, besides the image of myself.

Difficulties Encountered

Throughout the process of developing the webpage there were several difficulties that I encountered. Besides the initial difficulty of finding the best theme to use, I had several problems with modifying the layout of the page because I did not yet fully understand how to use bootstrap. I had trouble trying to alter the two-column design that the theme came with in order to create a one column layout in some areas of the page. After using numerous resources such as Zybooks and w3schools, I started to understand how to change the layout using bootstrap and the overall structure of a page developed with bootstrap. I was then able to change the layout relatively simply using the information that I gathered. Another issue that I encountered was how to change the background images that are present at the top and bottom of the web page. My previous experience told me that any images used in the page would be found in the html portion of the code, however after searching for it I found it in the CSS portion of the code. This was because the images were background images which influenced the look of the page and not the actual content. To change these images to the ones that I wanted to use I copied the CSS and created a new CSS style sheet to override the CSS of the current background images. I did not modify the CSS that came with the project because there were several hundred line of code in the CSS document and without reading and understanding how all of the code works together, it is unadvisable to change a CSS class that could impact multiple elements. Instead, it is easier and safer to override the element that you want to change the appearance of using a new CSS document containing a class that you could apply to that element.

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Final Thoughts

The project greatly increased my knowledge of bootstrap and my level of comfort working with it. At the beginning of the assignment, I had hardly any knowledge of how to use bootstrap other than from the Zybooks chapter that I read on it. After finishing the project, I now know how to use several bootstrap classes by memory and how the structure of a bootstrap grid system works. If I had to do the assignment again I would try a template with minimal content other than a basic grid system in place. This would allow me to have more control over the page from the beginning and allow me to have practice with some aspect of developing the page that the theme did not require me to practice. I would also like to try using bootstrap via the Bootstrap CDN instead of using the downloaded version of Bootstrap as I did in this project because of the potential advantages of using the CDN version. The theme I used came with the Bootstrap files, so I did not have to do anything other than download the theme, open brackets, and start editing the code. Overall, the project greatly increased my understanding of Bootstrap and helped me understand a procedure used to develop web pages.