5.6 Session

A session is a way to store information (in variables) to be used across multiple pages on a website. Session support in PHP consists of a way to preserve certain data across subsequent accesses.

Session variables are set with the PHP global variable: **$_SESSION**.

1. Using Sessions/Starting Session

Before you can to store information in a session, you have to start PHP's session handling. This is done at the beginning of your PHP code, and must be done before any text, HTML, or JavaScript is sent to the browser. To start the session, you call the **session_start()** function in your first file:

File: index.php

```php
<?php
// start the engines!
session_start();

// store session data
$_SESSION["username"] = "ram";

?>
```

Explanation/Accessing session variables:
session_start() starts the session between the user and the server, and allows values stored in$_SESSION to be accessible in other scripts later on.

Please Note: *$_SESSION variable can store string/numeric, array and object. Session can be stored in file/database/memory. The default storage of session data is file.*

File: other.php

```php
<?php
// continue the session
session_start();
// retrieve session data
echo "Username = " . $_SESSION["username"];

// Output: Username = ram
?>
```

2. Ending a Session

To delete a single session value, we use the unset() function:

```php
<?php
session_start();
// delete the username value
unset($_SESSION["username"]);
?>
```

To unset all of the session's values, you can use the session_unset() function:

```php
<?php
session_start();
// delete all session values
session_unset();
?>
```

Both examples only affect data stored in the session, not the session itself. You can still store other values to $_SESSION after calling them if you so choose. If you wish to completely stop using the session, for example a user logs out, you use the **session_destroy()** function.

```php
<?php
session_start();
// terminate the session
session_destroy();
?>
```

References:
http://www.sitepoint.com/php-sessions/
http://www.w3schools.com/php/php_sessions.asp
http://www.phpro.org/tutorials/Introduction-To-PHP-Sessions.html