Final Website Assignment: Design Writeup

My website was based loosely on a biographical Wikipedia article, featuring information about myself written in the third person (to make it seem like somebody else wrote about me to make me look cool).

I chose to use an analogous colour scheme, as blue and purple seemed pleasing to my eyes, while not being too brash for a website. I chose to make the background a deep blue and the header/ footer/ navigation a brighter purple to create a contrast in the background and foreground, drawing the user’s eyes closer to the centre. The content background (along with the links in the navigation) is a very light grey, as I wanted the most important portion of the website to command the most attention. Thus, giving it a monochrome hue made the most sense. For the text, I made the title of the website (“Stuart”) the largest I could make it without it being too obnoxious (h2). The title for each webpage was given a specific size of 20px, this is due to the “Friends” webpage having another set of subtitles, so a size between <h2> and <h3> had to be established for the webpage title as <h4> was too close to the size of the text. The borders and text kept black, so they could directly stand out from the bright centre of the website, and still be discernible from the deep blue background. However, the borders around the pictures I gave the same blue as the background to create a repetition between content and background.

To continue with repetition, I decided to make the general structure for each webpage the same (that being the positions of the header, footer, and navigation). This would make it easier for a user to become familiar with the website and how to understand/ navigate it. When it came to the content specifically for the “Friends” and “Quiz” webpages, I wanted to make a design that was interesting, but simple too, to go along with the colour scheme and overall feel I had decided to go with. Therefore, for the “Friends” webpage I chose to do photos alternating on different sides of the content section. This allowed users to become interested and understand the design, with it not being too complicated or too simple (this also helped create a contrast between each person, letting users know where one bio started, and another stopped). For the “Quiz” webpage I went with a simple linear design, as it would be confusing to place a list of questions in any other order, with a simple picture on the side to tie it together. All the text was serif to make it universal across the website. Besides the “Friends” webpage, both the “Quiz” and homepage have the same height, allowing for that sense of repetition.

The alignment section became most important when it came to positioning the images. For the summary, the picture of the dog was placed deliberately in the centre of the text, as it was more pleasing to the eye and made the most sense to create diversity in the article. As for the “Friends” webpage, alignment became a bit more challenging. To add that level of creativity and flare the pictures could not be lined up all along the same side, so I opted to alternate right and left alignments. To improve this choice, I made sure that each photo aligned bottom-top to the photo below it, creating a smooth transition between each. I also placed all the text for each bio within the limits of the image’s height, so the text wouldn’t flow into the next image and look bad. Even though the photos switch alignment, the text itself always remains left-aligned, this also extends to every other webpage. This was important, as it would look bad for the text to be changing alignment at random points in the site. The content was right-aligned, as it is more universally known that you find the navigation on the far left and to change that would bring users out of their element. The icon in the header being right-aligned was to fill a space where an account log-in would normally be in sites like Wikipedia, so the header wouldn’t look empty.

In terms of proximity, the focus was creating a clear disassociation between elements. Therefore, I opted to use the <p> element consistently, as it afforded a very large space between paragraphs, thus insinuating different ideas being expressed. Disassociation was also the main reason I focussed hard on creating a clear separation between each bio in the “Friends” webpage. The titles for each bio was close to the bio itself, creating that proximity association that is helpful to users. I also made sure to alter the height of the content and navigation based on how much space the content filled, so the footer could always be in a proximate position to when the content ends. The links in the navigation follow the user as they scroll through the site, this was used to place access to other webpages within proximity of the user always, no matter where they were on the site.

In conclusion, the goal of the website was to create a simplified form of a bibliographical article. The use of simplistic repetition and alignment helped compliment this, while proximity and contrast helped direct the user to the correct areas, thus creating an accurate, albeit more colourful, representation of a bibliographical article.