Helpers

Helpers

- In handlebars there are built-in helpers - namely (each, if, unless, and with)

- A customised helper is a function that is created (by the developer) to carry out some task such as capitalising each word in a sentence, summing up the duration of all the songs in the playlist, etc..

Steps to follow:

1. Add code to create and name the helper in server.js

2. Call the helper (by name) in the required expression

1. Add code to create and name the helper in server.js

- To create a helper, we add a *helpers* identifier to the *app.engine* declaration

```
app.engine('.hbs', exphbs({
  extname: '.hbs',
  defaultLayout: 'main',

  helpers: {

  }

})));
```

1. Add code to create and name the helper in server.js

- The helpers function is assigned a name, receives a parameter, and will return a value

- In this case the function name is *formatDate*, a date is passed in, and the month name, day number and year are returned

```javascript
helpers: {
  formatDate: function (commentdate) {
    let d = new Date(commentdate);
    let daynum = d.getDate();
    let month = d.getMonth();
    let thisYear = d.getFullYear();

    let months = ['January','February','March','April','May','June','July','August',
                  'September','October','November','December'];
    let monthname=months[month];

    return  monthname + " " + daynum + ", " + thisYear;
  }
}
```

2. Call the helper (by name) in the required expression

- When you wish to display the date, use an expression (as usual) but add the *helper* name first and then the value (date) that you want passed to the helper

- In this case we will pass the value *date* to the helper *formatDate*
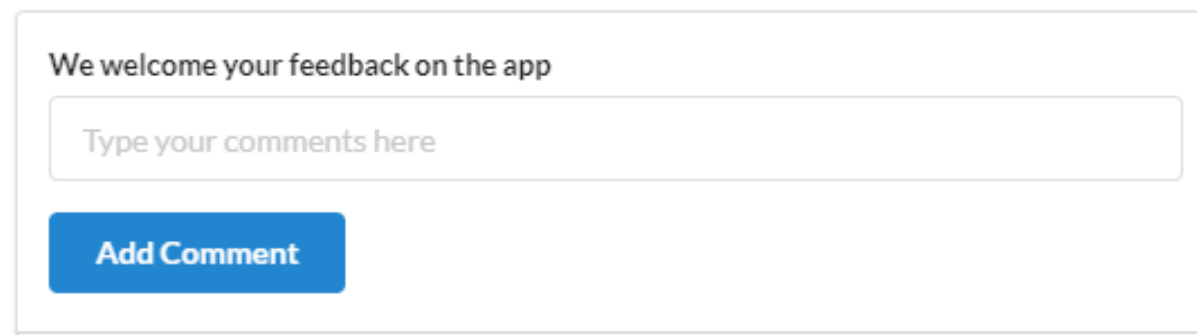
- The formatted date is returned and displayed

```
<span class="date">{{formatDate date}}</span>
```

Example:

- In this example, we will add a date when saving the comment added by the (current) user of the app

- When the comments are listed, the date will be formatted in a particular way

Example

- The form to add a comment

- The code to create todays date and time

```
const now = new Date();
```

Example

- When the comment is added this is what is stored

```json
{
  "comments": [
    {
      "id": "e4c2ed2d-f7d4-4785-bb5f-7f1c99689718",
      "username": "Mary Lyng",
      "comment": "Nice app!",
      "date": "2019-04-05T09:19:31.885Z"
    }
  ]
}
```

Example – without the helper

- The form to add a comment and the comments listed

- Note the date displayed

We welcome your feedback on the app

Type your comments here

Add Comment

Feedback

Mary Lyng   Fri Apr 05 2019 09:19:31 GMT+0000 (UTC)
Nice app!

Example – with the helper

- The form to add a comment and the comments listed

- Now, note the date displayed

We welcome your feedback on the app

Type your comments here

Add Comment

Feedback

Mary Lyng April 5, 2019
Nice app!

homer simpson April 5, 2019
Nice site

Exercise

- Add a helper to capitalise each name in a personal name, such as joe bloggs