





Learning Journal - Week 5: WordPress Child Themes Development

Learning Activities & Resources

This week I immersed myself in WordPress child theme development through multiple learning channels:

Primary Resources:

-  Completed LearnJCU weekly instructional video on child themes
-  Studied "WordPress: Building Child Themes" on LinkedIn Learning
-  Completed "Learning Responsive Web Design in the Browser" on LinkedIn Learning
-  Hands-on practice creating custom child themes for WordPress

Practical Application:

- Developed a complete child theme with 6+ visual customizations
- Implemented custom CSS styling and PHP functionality
- Tested responsive design across multiple devices
- Utilized browser developer tools for real-time debugging

Time Investment

Estimated Hours: 12 hours

Technical Insights & Content Understanding

Core Concept Mastery

1. **Child Theme Architecture:** I now understand that child themes inherit all functionality from parent themes while creating a safe space for customizations. This preserves the ability to update parent themes without losing custom work - a crucial maintenance strategy.
2. **File Structure Fundamentals:** Learned the essential components:
 - style.css with proper header comments referencing the parent theme
 - functions.php for enqueueing stylesheets and adding functionality
 - Template file overrides for specific layout changes
3. **Development Workflow:** Mastered the process of using browser developer tools to test CSS changes in real-time before implementing them in the actual stylesheet. This significantly improved my debugging efficiency.
4. **Responsive Design Integration:** Applied responsive web design principles using:
 - Relative units (% , em, rem) for flexible layouts
 - CSS media queries for device-specific styling
 - Flexible images and media containers
5. **WordPress Customizer:** Explored how child themes can extend the WordPress customizer, allowing for live previews of changes and user-friendly customization options.

Professional Development Insights

Career-Ready Skills Developed

1. **Technical Proficiency:** Gained marketable skills in WordPress development that are highly sought after in web development roles. The ability to create maintainable, customizable themes directly translates to real-world project requirements.
2. **Problem-Solving Mindset:** Learning to use browser developer tools for real-time debugging has transformed my approach to problem-solving. I can now quickly

identify issues and test solutions efficiently.

3. **Sustainable Development Practices:** Understanding child themes taught me the importance of building websites that can evolve over time without breaking existing functionality - a critical consideration for long-term project success.

Employability Enhancements

4. **Professional Networking:** Recognized the value of sharing learning journeys on platforms like LinkedIn. This demonstrates continuous learning engagement and can lead to valuable industry connections.
5. **Portfolio Development:** Created tangible project work that showcases my ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios. This child theme project serves as concrete evidence of my technical capabilities.

Practical Application & Project Work

Child Theme Implementation:

- Created a fully functional child theme with 6+ visible customizations
- Implemented custom color schemes and typography
- Added interactive elements and animations
- Ensured full responsive compatibility
- Developed reusable shortcodes for dynamic content

Key Technical Achievements:

- Successfully enqueued parent and child theme stylesheets
- Created custom page templates for specific layouts
- Implemented responsive design that works across all device sizes
- Added custom functionality through the functions.php file

Reflection on Learning Process

This week's learning journey highlighted the importance of balancing theoretical knowledge with hands-on practice. The LinkedIn Learning courses provided excellent foundational understanding, but the real learning occurred during the practical implementation phase. Building an actual child theme forced me to problem-solve and debug in ways that passive learning couldn't achieve.

The experience reinforced that professional web development requires both technical skills and strategic thinking about long-term maintenance and scalability. I'm developing not just as a coder, but as a solutions architect who considers the entire lifecycle of a project.

Resources

- LinkedIn Learning: [WordPress: Building Child Themes](#)
- LinkedIn Learning: [Learning Responsive Web Design in the Browser](#)

Next Steps

- Continue refining child theme with additional customizations
- Explore advanced WordPress hooks and filters
- Build a portfolio of different child themes for various use cases
- Research best practices for theme performance optimization