Markdown is a markup language. Markup languages are sets of rules for adding decorative features to text. The most popular markup language is HTML, but you might have also heard of XML and LaTeX. Markdown is a powerful markup language because it's small, intuitive, and readable when it's written as plain text. GitHub transforms Markdown files (which end in the file extension .md) into simple HTML web pages in your repository. If there is a file called README.md in any folder in your repository, then that file is rendered to HTML and displayed on GitHub. Let's create a README.md file for our repository. First we'll destroy the plain text readme file we already have:

```
rm readme.txt
```

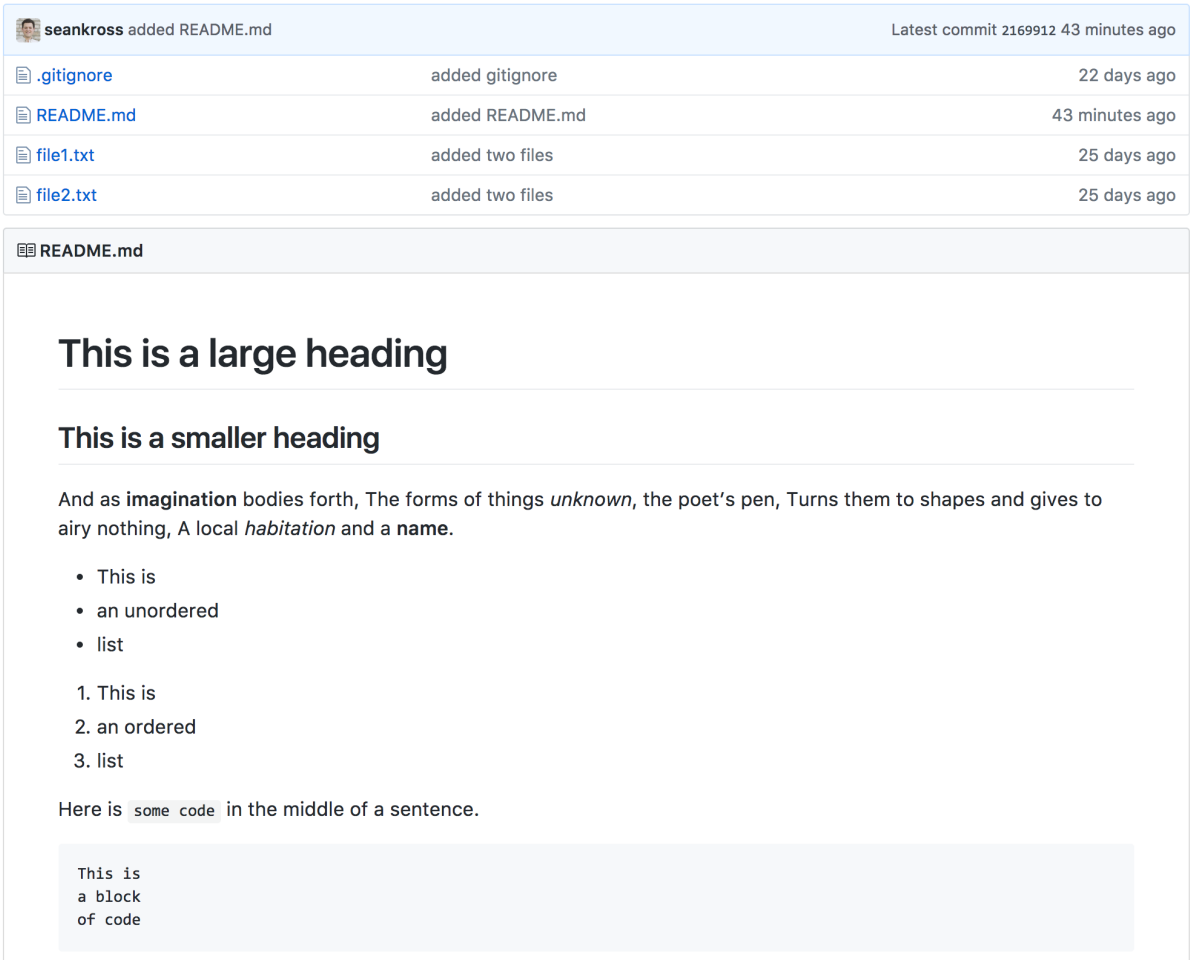
I've included a Markdown file below that attempts to explain some of Markdown's features. Copy the plain text below, create a new file called README.md with nano, paste the text in, and then save the file.

````
# This is a large heading

## This is a smaller heading

And as **imagination** bodies forth,
The forms of things *unknown*, the poet's pen,
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing,
A local *habitation* and a **name**.

- This is
- an unordered
- list

1. This is
2. an ordered
3. list

Here is `some code` in the middle of a sentence.

```
This is
a block
of code
```

Here is how you make [a link](https://www.wikipedia.org/).

![This is an image.](https://github.com/yihui/xaringan/releases/download/v0.0.2
  /karl-moustache.jpg)

nano README.md
````

Now let's add our changes, make a commit, and push those changes to our remote repository:

```
git add -A
git commit -m "added README.md"
git push

## Counting objects: 3, done.
## Delta compression using up to 4 threads.
## Compressing objects: 100% (3/3), done.
## Writing objects: 100% (3/3), 659 bytes | 0 bytes/s, done.
## Total 3 (delta 0), reused 0 (delta 0)
## To https://github.com/seankross/my-first-repo.git
##    ca04f67..2169912  master -> master
```

Since we set up a default remote repository the first time we pushed, we can now simply enter git push in order to send our latest commits to the master branch on the origin remote. Now the page on GitHub for your repository should look something like this:



We've got a much more complex readme file! Notice how the plain text that we wrote has been rendered according to a few rules:

- Pound signs (#, ##) make headings.
- A word surrounded by single asterisks (*word*) makes that word *italicized*.
- A word surrounded by double asterisks (**word**) makes that word **bold**.

- You can create lists with hyphens (-) or numbers (1., 2., 3.).
- Code can be placed in the middle of a line with single backticks (`code`).
- A code block can be created by putting code in between a set of triple backticks (```).
- You can insert a link with brackets and parentheses ([Link text here](http://jhu.edu)).
- You can use an image with an exclamation point, and a link to an image (![Alt text here] (http://jhu.edu/jeff.jpg))

Personally I really enjoy writing with Markdown, to the point where I wrote this entire book in Markdown! We're going to be using Markdown for the rest of this chapter, so I suggest that you take a few minutes to play around with the syntax in this in-browser Markdown editor. For more information about Markdown see GitHub's helpful *Mastering Markdown* guide.

Mark as completed