Visual Studio Configuration

Multiple Side-by-Side Environments

Personal editor preferences and installed extensions can cause confusion amongst learners when writing code or running demos through Visual Studio. While a developer may prefer a dark or custom color theme, the choice of colors can be hard to read when presenting. Similarly, some extensions, like Resharper, provide a lot of convenience when authoring code, but may automatically complete work that the learner still has to perform manually. Other extensions may present a different user experience than what a user experiences within their Visual Studio environment.

It is not tenable to ask an instructor to revert their environment or disable these productivity tools. Fortunately, Visual Studio supports multiple configurations via the "`RootSuffix`" command line argument. The "`RootSuffix`" argument allows multiple configurations to be stored separately [distinguished by the supplied root suffix].

To configure:

1. Find a shortcut to the Visual Studio executable [most likely available in the Start Menu].
2. Create a copy of the shortcut - rename it to something distinct from the source shortcut, but memorable: for example, "Visual Studio 2013 (Class Name)" or "Visual Studio 2013 (Canvas)".
3. Modify the shortcut properties:
   a. Right-click, select **Properties**.
   b. Navigate to the **Shortcut** tab [if not already selected].
   c. Modify the target: append **" /RootSuffix ClassName"** to the target, where **ClassName** is replaced with an identifier. For example, **" /RootSuffix Canvas"**.
4. Click **OK** to save the changes.

When launching a newly created root suffix, it will be like starting Visual Studio for the first time. It is configured independently and saved separate from day-to-day preferences.

When configuring, be sure to choose an easy-to-read color palette - preferably the standard Light theme; and disable any custom or non-standard productivity tools, like Resharper.