
ASSIGNMENT 2: A NO-FRILL COMMENT SYSTEM USING AJAX

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SYNOPSIS

You are going to build a basic comment system. To allow a more organized discussion, the system allows reply to a certain comment (“threading”). It also saves comments automatically into a file to retain the data for loading later.

ACCEPTING COMMENTS (20%)

(Done in Lab 3) Your work should start from this file:

<http://www.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/~chuckjee/2720lab3/index.html>

Insert an HTML form into this page to collect the following information from the user:

- ◆ Name
- ◆ Subject
- ◆ Your comment
- ◆ Color: *Red/Green/Yellow/Blue*

You are recommended to use **input** boxes for the shorter text, a **textarea** for the comment paragraph, and a group of **radio** buttons for the color. You may also decide your own implementation achieving similar user experience.

There should be an **Add comment** button which adds the comment at the bottom of all comments. After the new comment appears, the form should become blank again.

SAVING COMMENTS (10%)

(Done in Lab 4) Using a **Save** button, all the comments in the page should be saved into a file, without refreshing the page. This is normally done using Ajax.

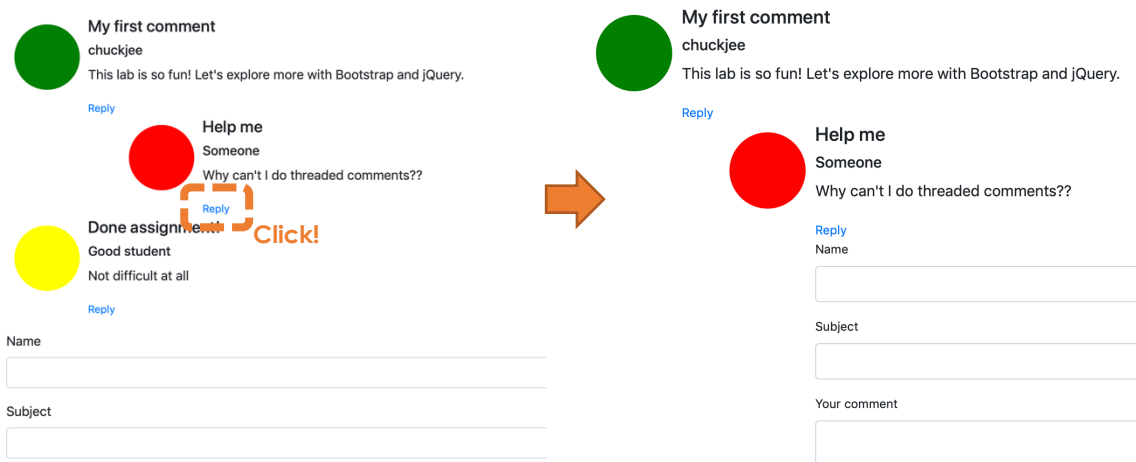
After saving, when the page is reloaded, all the comments except the original one should disappear. They would reappear when clicking on the **Load** button using Ajax.

You can use **writefile.php** (<http://www.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/~chuckjee/2720lab4/writefile.zip>) to save the text contents in the web server, as in Lab 4. Please upload **writefile.php** into the CSE web server, in your own **www** directory (or its subdirectory). For both the PHP file and the save file, please point to them in your code using their *full path*, i.e. with the host name, your username, and any necessary path.

Note: *www.cse.cuhk.edu.hk* is actually an alias of *appsrv.cse.cuhk.edu.hk*, and you have to use *appsrv.cse.cuhk.edu.hk* in the path to satisfy the *same-origin* requirement. When grading, we will test your work on *appsrv.cse.cuhk.edu.hk* as well. This requirement is slightly different from Lab 4.

COMMENT THREADS (50%)

To improve the comment system, threading support can be added. A **Reply** link is added to each of the comments. When clicked, the form of *Name/Subject/Comment/Color* should appear right there. The system could look like this:



There are multiple ways to implement the threading support. One possible way is to use **this** to locate the reply link being clicked, and look for its parents appropriately. Then, an extra block of **ul/li** structure similar to the one given should be added under the **div.media-body** of the current comment being replied to. After the comment is added, the extra comment form should disappear. There is no limit of thread levels.

The appearance of *nested Bootstrap Media Object* is a standard you could follow. You could also use any other way to show the thread relationships clearly in the page.

AUTO SAVE AND LOAD (20%)

To avoid the user from forgetting to save the comments, you can further simplify the program flow by:

- Load the comments from the save file when page is loaded
- Save the comments whenever a new comment is added

After this is done, you can remove the **Load** and **Save** buttons. The requirements here override that of the previous part on *Saving Comments*.

BONUS FEATURE

Besides the information supplied by the user, it is usual for comment system to keep extra information. Gather these data (without asking the user) and show them for each comment:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ◆ Browser information (e.g. WebKit) | ◆ User's location (e.g. Hong Kong) |
| ◆ User's date and time | ◆ Any one more item about the |
| ◆ User's IP address | client/server |

Only for this part, you are allowed to consult external web services.

This task is NOT a requirement of the assignment. But if you successfully do it, it contributes to a few bonus points for your course grade:

- ◆ All 5 items = **0.5 points**
- ◆ 3 items or more = **0.25 points**

FEATURES AND FRAMEWORKS

There is no cosmetic requirement for this assignment other than the “threading” requirement. You are welcome to implement extra styles and features at your own ability. You can make your own choice on the use of CSS, Bootstrap, plain JavaScript and jQuery.

Please put all your JavaScript code into an external JS file.

For the frameworks, please use the current CDN versions instead of a local copy:

- ◆ Bootstrap (4.1.3 or later)
`https://stackpath.bootstrapcdn.com/bootstrap/4.1.3/css/bootstrap.min.css`
- ◆ jQuery (3.1.1 or later)
`https://code.jquery.com/jquery-3.3.1.min.js`

Do NOT use any extra plugins or frameworks other than these two.

SUBMISSION

We will only visit your web page submission using **Google Chrome** (almost-latest versions). Please utilize the **Developer Tools** for debugging of your code.

Please read this article carefully: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty>

Include your full name and student ID in ***all code files*** using comments. Zip all your files and submit it on the course site on Blackboard. ***Only these files should be included:***

- ◆ 1 .html file
- ◆ 1 or 0 .css file
- ◆ 1 .js file