

# Reading and Writing Files

# Read the Documentation

- All programming languages have a set of doc.'s
- These provide the user with language's specific syntax
- Most of the time we can accomplish certain tasks by using a function
- To write and read files in PHP we can search the online doc.'s and find a variety of ways to do this

# http://php.net

- <http://php.net> is a website devoted to providing info on using php
- One of the functions we can use to write to a file is **file\_put\_contents**

# file\_put\_contents

- The reference site for this function can be found at:
- <http://php.net/manual/en/function.file-put-contents.php>
- Looking at this shows us that the function has 4 parameters, 2 of which are mandatory (the first two)
- Reading the description of these parameters tells that the first parameter is the name of the file to write to, the second parameter represents the data and the third is a predefined **flag** that indicates how we should write the file (the only one you should be concerned with is **FILE\_APPEND**)
- The function also has a return value
- This function returns the number of bytes that were written to the file, or FALSE on failure.

# Example Usage

- Example #1 Simple usage example

<?php

```
$file = 'people.txt';  
// Open the file to get existing content  
$current = file_get_contents($file);  
// Append a new person to the file  
$current .= "John Smith\n";  
// Write the contents back to the file  
file_put_contents($file, $current);
```

?>

- Example #2 Using flags

<?php

```
$file = 'people.txt';  
// The new person to add to the file  
$person = "John Smith\n";  
// Write the contents to the file,  
// using the FILE_APPEND flag to append the content to the end of the file  
// and the LOCK_EX flag to prevent anyone else writing to the file at the same time  
file_put_contents($file, $person, FILE_APPEND | LOCK_EX);
```

?>

# Reading a File

- The sister function to writing is **file\_get\_contents**
- **The reference site is:**

**<http://php.net/manual/en/function.file-get-contents.php>**

- Its description is:

```
string file_get_contents ( string $filename [, bool $use_include_path =  
false [, resource $context [, int $offset =  
0 [, int $maxlen ]]] ] )
```

# Reading a File

- This file reading function is simple to use
- Simply provide it with the filename (with proper file path) and it will return a string with its contents

Example #1 Get and output the source of the homepage of a website

```
<?php
    $homepage = file_get_contents('http://www.example.com/');
    echo $homepage;
?>
```

Example #2 Searching within the include\_path

```
<?php
    // <= PHP 5
    $file = file_get_contents('./people.txt', true);
    // > PHP 5
    $file = file_get_contents('./people.txt', FILE_USE_INCLUDE_PATH);
?>
```

# Exercises

On your homepage add a link entitled **User Registration**. It should take you to a page with a form containing the following fields:

**Name, Age, Gender, School**

When the form data is sent to a script, write the info separated by commas and terminated by a new line byte (\n) to a file named **userReg.txt**.

Sample file data:

**Joe Shmo, 17, Male, SDSS**

**Lisa Lopez, 18, Female, BA**

**Bob Smith, 16, Male, Port Perry**

Make sure to test your form and your script by running it off a webserver (i.e. by uploading it to your server or by testing it locally on a local web server that uses php).



## Exercise Part 2

In the second phase of this assignment you will be expected to include a new link on your homepage titled “**Site Registrations**”. When clicked simply link to a new php script that will read and display the list of users who have registered on your site.