Tiffany Zhu
tzhu2@andrew.cmu.edu
TA: Cole Gleason

HW 5 Reflection

Quick notes on website function:
1. *On the homepage, you can get to the product list page by either clicking on the "Shop Now" link on the hero image, or by going to "Pillows" in the "Decor" dropdown.*
2. *On the Product List Page, only the "Round Pillows" link is functional. This will take you to the Product Details Page.*
3. *On the Product Details Page, when you click "Add to Cart" this will automatically take you to the Sign-in/Checkout as Guest page (this is how it's currently set up, but once we fold in JS, I will change this functionality).*
4. *The Fluff Stuff logo will always take you Home.*

What challenges or bugs did you encounter and how did you overcome the challenges?

- I would say the three biggest challenges I ran into were as follows:
  a. Getting all the elements on the page to line up the way that I wanted them to.
     - At times (as an amateur programmer) it seemed like elements on the page (divs, buttons, headers) would just position themselves in random ways, regardless of if I had specified floats and alignments for them. A lot of this confusion was somewhat cleared up once I did some research online and gained a better understanding of how the DOM was interpreting HTML and what the default interpretations were (how divs stack on each other, how tags inherit attributes, etc.)
     - Additionally, there were a few times when I felt overwhelmed by how to create more complex elements (e.g. the accordion on the Product List page). I didn't feel like I knew where to start. In these situations, I would search for it and usually found suggestions on W3Schools or StackOverflow.
     - At the end of the day, I spent a lot of time just testing things and seeing how it worked out. Sometimes I was surprised that something worked and did my best to reverse engineer it. Occasionally, I happened upon a solution and was just happy that it panned out.
  b. The second challenge was trying to write clean code. There were a lot of places where I realized after that I could have made one class in the HTML to more quickly style in the CSS (for example, my .pink-button class) or that I should have used things like <h1> more judiciously so that I didn't have to style and restyle it based on the page it was on. In other places, it was unideal but I didn't see an alternative to making extremely specific classes that only applied to one or two elements.
     - In some cases, I went back and consolidated my HTML code so I could have just one style for consistency (again, see my .pink-button code), but in some places, I just let it be this time.

c. The last "challenge" I had was actually (funny enough) borrowing code from places like W3Schools. In a lot of cases, it still required that I truly understood what was happening within the borrowed code, since often times it isn't applied in exactly the same way. Hence, the real challenge ultimately was trying to read and understand the code.

■ The way I tried to reverse engineer this code was using W3Schools' "try it" feature, where I could actually simulate the code, edit things, delete things, to see how those changes affected the look of the element.

How is the brand identity of your client reflected through your design choices? What kind of look and feel did you design for them and why?

I imagined Fluff Stuff to be a fairly large decor shop competing with the likes of West Elm or Crate and Barrel. To that degree, I wanted to create a site that was inspired by simplicity and cleanliness, where the products are the main attraction rather than the website. Hence, the structure of most of the pages is image gallery grid style, where the pictures are big and the text is minimal. I wanted the website to be both inspiring for people just browsing the site, drawn in by the products, but also simple to navigate for people who came to the site already knowing what they wanted.

The ability to explore different colors and shapes was important for the brand as well because I wanted to encourage undirected exploration. While I couldn't implement all the features without Javascript, I laid the foundation for some of these features (ability to filter by fill and color, ability to see the product page image change as you chose different color options).

Citations:

1. Cart and Meeple (login) icons used were downloaded from The Noun Project.
2. Pillow images used by page (in order top to bottom, left to right on the screen):
    a. Homepage
        i. https://www.overstock.com/guides/how-to-use-decorative-pillows-in-the-living-room
        ii. https://www.potterybarn.com/m/products/faux-fur-pillow-cover/?%26=None
        iii. https://www.ikea.com/us/en/ideas/201912_idip10a/
    b. Product Listing Page
        i. https://www.potterybarn.com/tips-and-ideas/how-to-spot-clean-decorative-throw-pillows/
        ii. https://www.finnstyle.com/marimekko-tiiliskivi-throw-pillow.html
        iii. https://www.indiamart.com/proddetail/bed-pillow-12982126130.html
        iv. https://www.westelm.com/products/round-lush-velvet-pillows-t4646/?catalogId=91&sku=8097525&cm_ven=PLA&cm_cat=Google&cm_pla=Pillows%20%2B%20Decor%20%3E%20Pillows
        v. https://www.urbanoutfitters.com/shop/washed-corduroy-floor-pillow
    c. Product Page:
        i. https://www.bedbathandbeyond.com/1/1/1038742-velvet-tufted-round-throw-pillow-red.html