



WEB TECHNOLOGIES

React.JS – Refs and passing refs

Vinay Joshi

Department of
Computer Science and Engineering

React.JS – Refs and passing refs

Introduction



- We have said the DOM traversal and Manipulation is slow
- Also, JSX is a representation of HTML Element
- Accessing DOM Elements in JSX is not straight forward
- Hence, React provides *refs* to access DOM Elements or Components from other elements



React.JS – Refs and passing refs

Refs



- Refs can be used to induce changes in Components or Elements after they have been rendered (like animation, user action events etc.)
- To create a ref add a property which is set to a callback function that sets a reference to that element

```
<input type="text" ref={this.setTextInputRef} />
```

```
this.setTextInputRef = element => {  
  this.textInput = element;  
};
```

Here ***element*** refers to the input text element



React.JS – Refs and passing refs

Refs

- Now this.textInput is the reference to that element and can be used to perform raw DOM operations

```
if (this.textInput) {  
  this.textInput.focus();  
  console.log(this.textInput.value)  
}
```



React.JS – Refs and passing refs

Passing Refs

- Parent element can pass a ref callback to its child element, to get reference to the child element

```
function CustomTextInput(props) {  
  return (  
    <div>  
      <input ref={props.inputRef} />  
    </div>  
  );  
}  
  
class Parent extends React.Component {  
  render() {  
    return (  
      <CustomTextInput inputRef={el =>  
        this.inputElement = el} />  
    );  
  }  
}
```





THANK YOU

Vinay Joshi

Department of Computer Science and Engineering

vinayj@pes.edu

+91 80 2672 6622